

“God – His Word, Part 2”

II Timothy 3:16-17

Introduction

- Tonight we continue our series we have entitled “ground work – laying a foundation for faith”
 - The reason we are doing this is it is so important that everyone of us are able to give a reason for the things we believe
 - That is what Peter encourages us to do

“Always *be* ready to *give* a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you.” – I Peter 3:15

- We are suppose to understand what we believe and as the verse above states, we are to consider, ‘why’ we believe it
 - Why do we hold the convictions that we do

Now we started at the very foundation.

- why do we believe that God exists?
 - if we are going to take the time to study theology, the study of God, then it makes sense that we need to know why we believe that God exists
- Now that I believe we have that established, the next question we need to answer before we take time to open God’s word and learn what it says about God and us is why is the Bible to be trusted
 - Why is it different than every other religious book that is written

I see that is logical, in fact even probably that someone out there greater than myself exists and designed this world and holds it together

But why would I believe what the Bible says about such a god?

- why would I not believe what the Qur’an says about the god of the Muslims or what the Veda says about the gods of the Hindus?
 - What makes this religious book different that all the rest?
 - That is the question we started to answer three weeks ago and we will finish tonight

The most important verse in all the Bible when it comes to understanding what this book is and why it is important is found in II Timothy 3:16

“All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – II Timothy 3:16-17

- Let’s consider what this verse teaches us about the Word of God

This verse teaches us that God inspired – that word means, “God breathed”, He inspired all of His Word

- but it is easy to say that but how do we know that?
 - How do we know that the Bible we have in our laps tonight is anywhere close to what was originally put down on papyrus or animal skins

Well one reason is the intense process of how God’s word got from God to us and it was as we studied last time, so I will just quickly review

From God to us

Step #1 - Inspiration

“Prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” – II Peter 1:21

The apostle Peter, who should know what it was like to be inspired to write the Bible describes it for us first hand in his book

- Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit
 - The word is the same one used in the book of Acts to talk about wind driving a ship – God was behind the whole process, pushing men to put what He wanted in those books

From God to us

Step #1 – Inspiration

Step #2 – Duplication

- After the process of Inspiration, men gave their lives to copying the Bible
 - Men like the Masorites who counted every word, in fact every letter – they would know where the middle letter of the text would be and if the number was off, they burned and buried the text so no one would repeat the mistake
 - The same thing happened as the text got old, they would burn and bury the ashes to preserve the duplication process
- The proof they did their job's well is when you compare the Masorite text with the Septuagint Greek version of the old testament, and even older the dead sea scrolls – it matches word for word

The duplicators of the New Testament had no such tradition of burning and burying old text – so we have over 5,700 early copies of the New Testament to compare and check text with

- and compared to 9 copies of Josephus that we base much of Roman and Jewish history on – that is amazing

The duplicators did their job, but then others began to write books they considered inspired of God – so next the bible had to go through a process called...

From God to us

Step #1 – Inspiration

Step #2 – Duplication

Step #3 – Canonization

- Again someone asked last week – doesn't the human process of picking books kind of take away from the inspiration of the scriptures
 - But understand – most of the books of the Bible were already accepted as scripture
 - Most of them, their authorship, the date of writing, had all been verified before
- There were only a handful of books that were in question
 - So they ran those books through a series of test questions – like

The Question of Canonization

#1 – Was this book accepted by the early church

#2 – Was it written by an apostle, prophet or accepted biblical author

#3 – Does the book contradict the rest of scripture?

#4 – Was the book self evident

- These questions weeded out a lot of books that are now located in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha
 - And books like James, Hebrews, II Peter, and II and III John were let in
- So now you had an accepted Hebrew and Greek Bible, but that final process in God to us involves...

From God to us

Step #1 – Inspiration

Step #2 – Duplication

Step #3 – Canonization

Step #4 - Translation

The Word of God was translated into English by many men who loved God and believed the Word of God should be in the common tongue of the English people

- many people gave their lives to eventually bring about the 7th English translation of the Bible – the King James Bible
 - the authorized version, accepted by the King of England and given to the hands of the people

So the process of God to us was very intense and all along the way there were safety guards and checks to make sure – what you have in your laps was as close to the original inspired Word of God as possible

- okay I understand that the process was intense to bring about what you say is God's Word, but how do we really know, even what those men originally wrote down was from God
 - is there any evidence that is so
 - absolutely!!!!
- I give full credit to my friend and college pastor Charlie Campbell for coming up with this acronym to help you remember 5 evidences for the inspiration of the scripture
 - He used to say to us, "if they don't believe God's word is inspired, take them to the CAFES
 - He has now changed it to FACES, for his teaching material – so I told him I was going to steal CAFES
 - But anyway – lets start with the C

C-A-F-E-S

#1 – Consistency of Scripture

- people say I don't believe in that book, I don't believe in that Bible book and I always ask – which one?

The Bible is not one book, but actually a collection of 66 books

- 66 books written by at least 40 different authors, who when you think it through all lived in different times and had different jobs, even lived on different continents
 - Moses lived 1,500 years before Paul
 - Some of the authors were shepherds, some were Kings, some were doctors and some were simple fishermen
- And yet from even though these men were separated by thousands of years of culture and miles, and jobs that were worlds apart as well – everyone of them agree from Genesis to Revelation on all controversial subjects like - where did we come from, what happens when I die – what is the purpose of life

Now the significance of that can not be overstated

- we live in the same area, same general age, I'm older than some of you, but not by 1,500 years, but if I ask one controversial question, we would get different answers even in this room
 - and so the fact that the Bible agrees and compliments each other and builds on each other, that it is consistent from Genesis to Revelation, from things

written in 3,500 BC all the way to 70 AD is evidence number one, something supernatural is responsible for this book

- but that is not all

C-A-F-E-S

#1 – Consistency of Scripture

#2 – Archeological Evidence

- critics will say, this is just fantasy, these stories are not real, but consider this

We have evidence outside of the Bible, historical documents, finds in the earth that verify 80 people mentioned in the Bible

- 50 from the Old Testament
 - 30 from the New
- Writings from men such as Josephus and Philo who weren't believers verifying many of the people in the scriptures
 - In fact it is hard today to find serious scholars who do not believe Jesus was a real person – now they may not believe He was God, but they know He was real

Bible critics used to believe Pontius Pilate, who condemned Jesus to death was a made up figure

- but in June of 1961 while digging in the seaside city of Caesarea, archeologists found a stone in the Roman theater with the inscription **“Pontius Pilate, Prefect of Judea” – picture of the stone**
 - showing not only did Pilate exist, but he was exactly who the Bible said He was

Until 1993 there was no evidence that King David was a real person outside of the testimony of the scriptures

- that all changed when an inscription on black basalt was discovered just north of the sea of Galilee, it was written in Aramaic by Israel's enemies. They were bragging about defeating the Kings of Israel and the Kings of Judah, which they called the **“Kings of the house of David” – picture of the David stone**

Biblical places once thought fantasy like Nineveh and Biblical peoples like the Hittites once believed made up, have all been verified by archeology

- that is not true of any other religious book

Not one city, mountain, river, coin, or fragment of evidence has been found that supports the book of Mormon.

But compare that with over 25,000 discoveries of people, places, coins, writing fragments that back up the Bible is telling you a true story of history

- and archeological evidence becomes evidence number two that the Bible is inspired

C-A-F-E-S

#1 – Consistency of Scripture

#2 – Archeological Evidence

#3 – Fulfilled Prophecy

- there are 26 other books considered religious, and not a single one contains any predictions of the future or prophecies that have been proven to be fulfilled

Contrast that with 27 percent of the Bible that was predictive prophecy at the time it was written

- over 150 prophecies about Jesus coming to the earth the first time

- And not stuff he could just fulfill deciding He was the Messiah, but things Jesus could not control like where He would be born and die, and historical events at the time
- Now this is just a powerful argument that skeptics try to cast doubt and say, well those prophecies were inserted after the time of Christ by His followers
 - But the problem with that is we have copies of the Old Testament that are dated before the time of Christ – that fact alone makes it impossible those prophecies were added to the Old Testament after the time of Christ
 - This is such a powerful evidence for the inspiration of the scripture

Peter Stoner, (Picture) a mathematician wrote a book called Science Speaks, calculated the odds of fulfilling 8 prophecies of Jesus at 1 in 10 to the 28th power – (this was peer tested research not some Bible teacher making things)

That is a 1 with 28 zeros after it in 10 to the 28 power or 1 in 10,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000

Now not even congress deals in numbers that big

- so what does that chance look like in real life
 - Peter stoner gives us an illustration

If you took a silver dollar and put an X on that silver dollar

- And then filled the state of Texas, two feet deep with silver dollars, and put that one silver dollar with an X on it somewhere randomly in that pile, not on top, somewhere randomly in the 2 foot pile over the state of Texas
 - Then you sent some guy with a blindfold out to walk the state of Texas
 - The chance that the man would stop, reach down in the 2 foot pile and pull out that one silver dollar with an X is..

1 in 10 to the 28th power or 1 in 10,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000

- And friends remember that is fulfilling 8 prophecies
 - If you took that number to 16 prophecies
- Then chances would be the same as reaching down and finding a silver dollar marked with an X in a two feet deep pile, not just on the state of Texas, but over an area 30 times the distance between earth and the sun
 - Did you hear me on that?
- The distance between earth and the sun is a long way – 93 million miles
 - If a train left earth going 60 miles an hour on the day the Declaration of Independence was being signed, it would just be arriving at the sun now
- But we are talking 30 times that distance

That is a lot of ground to hide that silver dollar with an X - and that is 16 prophecies

- Jesus fulfilled over 150 – there is no illustration to show the chances of that happening randomly
 - There is something about this book – God was showing off to let you know – I am real!!!!
 - I will tell you the future in advance
- In Isaiah 44-45 - The Persian King Cyrus was named hundreds of years before his birth
 - The same thing was true of Josiah King of Judah his birth was prophesied years before his birth in I Kings 13

C-A-F-E-S

#1 – Consistency of Scripture

#2 – Archeological Evidence

#3 – Fulfilled Prophecy

#4 – External Verification

- we went into this a little bit with some of the other topics, but people will say – you just used the Bible to prove the Bible
 - but archeologist who are not believers have verified the places and people mentioned in the Bible
 - historians like Josephus and Philo who were not believers, all verify, the people, places and events of the Bible actually happened
- so its not just the bible that is used to show the bible's validly, many sources outside the bible verify the validly of what the scripture says

C-A-F-E-S

#1 – Consistency of Scripture

#2 – Archeological Evidence

#3 – Fulfilled Prophecy

#4 – External Verification

#5 – Scientific Facts

Even though the Bible was completed 1,500 years before the invention of the telescope or microscope, it contains no scientific errors

- That is a miracle in itself when the scientists who lived at the time of Moses and Job, believed the world was on the back of a turtle or atlas and if you sailed to the end of the ocean you would fall off
 - But none of that ridiculous stuff is in the Bible
- Compare that with the Qur'an which states, **“When he reached the setting place of the sun, he found the sun sitting in a muddy spring” – Qur'an 18:86**

What the Bible says about the Sun

- **Psalm 19:6 – “The Sun rising is from one end of heaven, and its circuit to the other end”**
 - For many years scientists said, everyone knows the sun revolves around the earth, or they believed it was stationary – but now we know it travels through space on a circuit at 600,000 miles an hour – just like the Bible says

What the Bible says about the Earth

- **Isaiah 40:22 - “It is He who sits above the circle of the earth”**
 - The word for circle in Hebrews literally means sphere
 - The scientist at the time believed the world was flat
 - In 1492 when Columbus sailed the ocean blue, the scientist of the day told him he would sail right off the edge of the world
 - But if they had just read their Bible
- **Job 26:7 – “He hangs the earth upon nothing”**
 - When science believed it was on the back of an elephant or swimming in a great endless sea

What the Bible says about the Stars

- Before the invention of the telescope science believed you could number the stars
 - Hipparchus – 1,026
 - Ptolemy – 1,056

- Kepler – 1630 said there are clearly 1006

➤ **Jeremiah 33:22 – “The stars of heaven can not be counted”**

Well the Bible says, In the beginning God created the Heavens and the earth

- and science says we evolved – so that is a scientific error
 - science says - you mean the same guys - who said there were 1,006 stars
 - that the earth was swimming in an endless sea
 - that the earth was flat
 - and the sun stood still or rotated around the earth
 - those people
- I have a theory that someday science will come around to what the Bible has always said – in the beginning, (most scientist are already there) God (some are there) created the heavens and the earth
 - Because there is nothing like this book

And that is why we need to get it in us every single day

- I want to become more like Christ, I want to see my sinful heart stop dominating me
 - I want to have His priorities and His heart
 - How do you think that is going to happen
- As I, morning by morning, incline my ear to his Word and let who He is shape who I am

David said, “How can a young man cleanse His way, by taking heed according to your Word.”- Psalm 119:9

“Your Word I have hidden in my heart that I might not sin against you” – Psalm 119:11

It’s the Word, It’s the Word, It’s the Word

- there is nothing like this book, by it the simple are made wise, the wretched mind is made pure, and the evil heart is cleansed and changed to reflect His heart
 - it by being in His Word
 - do it – because there is nothing like this book

C-A-F-E-S

#1 – Consistency of Scripture

#2 – Archeological Evidence

#3 – Fulfilled Prophecy

#4 – External Verification

#5 – Scientific Facts

- all adding up to the fact this book is from God
 - carefully preserved by duplication and canonization and then translated so we can read and understand – and we will use this book to learn about who God is – starting next week