

# Reasons to Believe the Bible

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[ 0 : 00 ] So much for this church, the people in this church, the way this body supports one another. I especially think of Bruce and the kind of support that they've gotten and love and just an outpouring of care.

It's so precious to me and I know precious to them as well. I thank you that you are the caretakers of our soul and that Bruce, throughout all this ordeal, he has always expressed his trust in you and it's just been a wonderful, wonderful thing to see.

So I want to thank you for your care and your promises to us. Regardless of what happens in this life, we have a promise of you for resurrection and life eternal with you in the heavens.

In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. Scripture verse. Okay, yeah. Before we release the kids, we'll do the memory verse. We've got a new one for July.

This one is in Ephesians, Ephesians chapter 1. Ephesians chapter 1, verse 3. Let me just read it by myself and we'll just talk about it briefly and then we'll do it together. It says, This is really speaking to what we have in Christ.

[ 1 : 25 ] This is another one, like last month's, which talks about the righteousness that we have in Christ. And so this is a theme, especially through the epistles of Paul, that for those of us who are in Christ, and is it hard to be located in Christ, to be in Christ?

Is that a difficult thing to do? Do you have to jump through it? Do you have to climb any mountains or swim any oceans? You don't, right? To be in Christ, you just trust that Jesus died for your sins. That's it.

That's all. Jesus died for me. And I'm putting my trust and my faith in him, not in myself, not in, you know, science or whatever people put their trust in these days.

You're putting your trust, the full of your trust in him. And when you do that, the Bible says that you are in him. And so this describes, just briefly, the benefits that we have of being in Christ, who has blessed us with some spiritual blessings in heavenly places.

No, that's not what it says. He has blessed us with most spiritual blessings in heavenly places. No, it says, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places.

[ 2 : 37 ] You know, a lot of times we wish that God blessed us with all material blessings in earthly places, right? That would be nice if we had lots of wealth and money and health all the time.

But that's not what God promised. Not right now, anyway, right? Those things are coming in the future. Right now, he has blessed us with every spiritual blessing, and for that we can be grateful. So let's do this together. We're going to start with the verse, so we'll read the verse reference together, and then we'll read the text. Ready? Here we go. Ephesians 1, 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.

All right, one more time. Ephesians 1, 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.

Amen. You thankful for that? Amen. Amen. All right, we'll go ahead and release the kids. And for the rest of us, we can open up our Bibles to, I think it's Peter.

[ 3 : 57 ] Let me grab my Bible. We looked at a passage last week, and I didn't have it written down, but let me see if I can find it for my notes from last week.

Yeah, 1 Peter 3.15. We'll read this together. 1 Peter 3.15. And here's the admonition from Peter.

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you with meekness and in fear.

So Peter's instruction to those he was writing to was to, hey, be ready in your life. There are people out there who might be interested in the hope, in your faith, in the things that you believe, and why

you have hope for the future.

You know, a lot of people don't have hope for the future. Their hope is only in this life. And that, to many, is very dim. Depending on where you live, what your circumstances are, the hope that you have could be not very much.

[ 5 : 20 ] But Peter's instruction was to be ready, to give reasons, to give a reasoned defense.

We talked about the quote from Mark Twain, who talked about what faith is. Mark Twain is famous for saying that faith is believing what you know ain't so.

And that was his idea of faith, but it's not an accurate one. Faith in anything needs to have some kind of reason behind it.

And if there's no reason, there are no reasons why you should believe. We need to have reasons why we believe the things that we believe, religious or otherwise. And so we've been doing a series. The plan is to do three different messages. Last time we did reasons to believe in God. And we just looked at a very modest claim. Does God exist?

[ 6 : 14 ] Is he real? And so as we give reasons for our faith, we have to really see where people are at. For actually many, many people, you don't even have to focus on does God exist.

They already know that. It's clear to them. It's intuitive to most people. Some people, though, you've got to really talk into it. Because there are many voices out there, especially in academia in this country and really most of the West, that hate the idea that God exists.

And there are many reasons for that. One of the reasons is if there's a God, we talked about this, that's where morality comes from. And hey, if there's no God, then you know what? We can do whatever we want.

And so that, I think, is a huge reason why there is this push in our culture to either ignore God or disbelieve in God altogether.

But that's just the very basic foundation. You believe in God. But that's not the whole of our faith. That's just a very basic part of it. Today, we're going to be looking at this idea of the scriptures, the scriptures, the Bible here that we use.

[ 7 : 24 ] And are there reasons why we should believe this book? And then in the future, next week, I think next week, we'll be looking at reasons to believe really the gospel message.

Did Jesus really die for our sins and then raise from the dead? Because that is the foundation of Christianity. Christianity. So we're building a case as we go along.

Does God exist? And then what about this book? Is this book reliable? Because this is really the foundation of our faith on what we believe for Christians.

And so there are two reasons why we're looking at this. One is to defend our faith. And the other benefit, I think, is just to strengthen our own faith. And like I mentioned a couple weeks ago, sometimes our faith falters.

A lot of times, you know, many of us have been Christians for a long time. And we kind of assume a lot of these things. That the Bible is reliable and that God exists.

[ 8 : 27 ] And it's just a regular part of our faith. But then whether it's tragedy strikes or suffering or whatever it might be, and sometimes it's just our feelings, right?

Our emotions and those intuitions seem cloudy. And so having very clear, reasoned arguments that we can look at for why we believe the foundational things of our faith can help during those times when our faith seems small, when it seems to falter.

Which, by the way, happens to all of us. So, I talk to so many people and they say, you know, I'm having doubts. And what does this mean? But really, you know, this is something that everybody deals with throughout their lives to some extent or another.

And so when we have doubts, let's go back to what are the reasons why we believe? And so that's what we're doing today. Well, here's the claim that we're going to look at.

The claim is that this book that I have in front of me, that many of you have in front of you, is God's word. The God who created us, the God of the universe, that this is a book from him.

[ 9 : 42 ] That these are instructions or accounts, words from him to us. We would say that the Bible is inspired.

And the word inspired, if you look at the root of that, it just, it means God breathed. In fact, there's a scripture verse that we'll look at later where that exact phrase is used. The Bible is breathed out by God.

It's from him. It's from his breath. The other part of that claim is that this Bible is authoritative. It's trustworthy. We can trust it because it's from him.

Not only is it trustworthy to build our lives upon, but really it's imperative that we do so. It's needful. It's necessary. And if we don't build our lives upon this, we have to build our lives on something. And many people build their lives on nothing or nothing substantial. Probably the most popular thing for people to try to build their lives on.

[10:49] And really, it's futility. But many people say, well, I'm building my life on this foundation of science. That's a very common thing today, especially in the kind of Western world.

I'm building my life on the foundation of science. And, you know, there are certain things that science can tell us as we look in microscopes and telescopes and look at the world around us and analyze the things in nature.

But there's a limit to what science can tell us through investigation. Through the investigation of science, we can find out really how the world is, right?

We can discover how the world is to some degree. There's lots of things that we still do not know. Many, many things. Some people, it seems like there's a lot of hubris out there in the scientific community.

Oh, we know so much. We know all these about gravity. Oh, really? We know what gravity is. But nobody has any idea why gravity works.

[11:56] They have no idea. Why is gravity this force? What's the fundamental nature of it? Nobody really knows. We can kind of measure it a little bit. We don't really understand so many things in our world.

But science can tell us how the world is. But there's something that science cannot do at all. And it cannot tell us how the world ought to be. Science completely fails at that.

And that's why we need something else. Because knowing how the world is, you can't just build a foundation on that. We need to know how things ought to be.

And that's where the Bible comes in. We're going to look at, I don't know how many reasons I have. Let me go to the end of my notes here. I've got eight reasons. So if you're writing notes, you know, you can kind of know where we're going to go here.

But we're going to look at eight different reasons why we should trust the reliability and the authority of the scriptures. The first one we're going to look at is reason number one, is the Bible claims itself to be inspired by God.

[13:07] Now that's a fairly modest claim, and it doesn't really get us very far. Because anybody, right, can write a book and say, this is a book from God. In fact, that has been done, right?

If you're familiar with the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith. And he tells this fanciful tale of how he met an angel. And there were, I can't get all the details right, but there were some plates and some spectacles and transcribed some words that were given to him.

And it's quite an interesting story, but it's just made up. He just made it up. And so, and I'm sure there's many stories like that in the past.

So anybody could write a book and make the claim that it is from God, that it's divine. But it seems to me that if you have a book that claims nowhere to be from God, then there isn't any reason why we should believe that it is, right?

And so the very first reason is the Bible claims to be divine, to be inspired by God. We're going to, I'm going to go through, what is it, like 10 passages here.

[14:17] And because there's so many, you know, well, you probably won't be able to keep up as we go through. But I'll, you can write down these references if you like. The first is Deuteronomy chapter 9, verse 10.

Deuteronomy 9, 10. And it says this. This is Moses speaking to the Jewish people about where the law came from, the Ten Commandments and the rest of it.

But he says this. Then the Lord delivered to me two tablets of stone written with the finger of God. And on them were all the words which the Lord had spoken to you on the mountain from the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly.

Saying, because this is later on, he's going back. Hey, remember that day there was fire and smoke up on the mountain and I went up there and I brought down two tablets of stone? You know who wrote those out?

It wasn't me. I didn't get out my chisel and itch it out. It was the finger of God. He wrote those words. So the really, and then he mentions the whole law.

[15:21] It wasn't just those Ten Commandments on those tablets, but it was the entire law came from, came from God. The prophets spoke, many of them, and they started what they spoke with, thus saith the Lord.

To use the King James, right? Thus says the Lord. This is what the Lord says. They claimed to be speaking for God. Just one reference, 2 Samuel 23, 2.

The Spirit of the Lord spoke to me, and his word was on my tongue. But we see this over and over and over again throughout the Old Testament from the prophets. As we get into the New Testament, we see Jesus.

Jesus assumes throughout his whole ministry that the Bible is authoritative. Matthew 21, 42. Jesus said to them, have you never read the scriptures?

The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone? This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes. And Jesus is constantly, throughout his ministry, pointing back to the scriptures.

[16:23] Matthew 23, verse 31. But concerning the resurrection of the dead. Have you not read what was spoken to you by God? Not what was spoken to you by Moses.

What was spoken to you by God? Saying, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. Jesus also, Matthew 22, 43.

Speaking of a psalm of David. And he said to them, how then does David in the spirit call him Lord? He's talking about the Messiah. We looked at this a few weeks ago in Mark.

About the prophecies about the Messiah, that he would be of a divine origin. But he says this, speaking of David's psalm. How then does David, in the spirit. He says, how then does David say, in the spirit.

He indicates that when David spoke, it wasn't just David's words. These were words that came him speaking through the spirit of God. Then Peter.

[17:34] 2 Peter 1, verse 19. Peter says this. 2 Peter 1, 19. And so we have the prophetic word confirmed. Which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place.

Until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Knowing this first. That no prophecy of scripture is of any private interpretation. For prophecy never came by the will of man.

But holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. Very clear, right? Peter's saying, hey listen. All those prophets in the Old Testament. The scriptures of the Old Testament.

It wasn't just men writing things down. Making things up. This was God speaking through them.

Paul says the same thing. In Acts chapter 28, verse 25.

Acts 28, 25. So when they did not agree among themselves. They departed after Paul had said one word. And this is what Paul said. The Holy Spirit spoke rightly.

[18:38] Through Isaiah. The prophet to our fathers. Saying, go to this people and say, hearing you will hear. And shall not understand. And seeing you will see. And not perceive.

So he was referencing Isaiah. But he made sure to be clear. That Isaiah was not speaking for himself. On his own behalf. But he was speaking. On behalf of God. That the Holy Spirit spoke.

That's what Paul said. The Holy Spirit spoke. But it was through a vessel. Through Isaiah. And then the last one that we'll look at. Is probably the most. Direct.

And in 2 Timothy 3.16. Paul says this. 2 Timothy 3.16. All scripture. All scripture. Is given by inspiration of God. And is profitable for doctrine.

For reproof. For correction. For instructions in righteousness. That the man of God. May be complete. Thoroughly equipped. For every good work. And so all scripture. Is given by inspiration.

[19:36] It is from God. It is God speaking. Not the man speaking. He is the vessel. The one who wrote it. But it's God speaking to us. And that is the claim.

Throughout the whole Bible. That's the claim. And so the Bible itself. Indicates to us. That it should be believed. As a word of God. So that's one reason.

Let's look at another one. Reason number two. Is. Fulfilled. Prophecy. There are hundreds. Now prophecy in the Bible.

Prophecy just means. Speaking on behalf of God. God. And prophecies. The prophets spoke sometimes. About things that happened in the past. Right. And sometimes they were talking about.

Things that are happening right now. But then. There are other times. Where they're speaking about. Things that God is going to accomplish. In the future. And there.

[ 20 : 37 ] Are many scriptures. From the Old Testament especially. That talk about things that are going to happen in the future. Things that. Could any man really know.

What's going to happen. 50 years in the future. 100 years in the future. 1000 years. In the future. Yet we see over and over and over again.

In this book. Prophecies. Things that prophets spoke. That would come to pass. That came to pass. Just. As were said.

In fact. Many have made claims. Well. The dating. Of some of these writings. Must not be accurate. Because they describe. Something that happened.

That was foretold. 200 years earlier. So either. The original prophet. That spoke of those things. Or the event that unfolded. 200 years later. One of them must be wrong. Because the only way.

[ 21 : 34 ] Someone could have known. That that thing. Was going to happen. A couple hundred years later. Is. They had to. Either have seen it. Or maybe they made up. The prophecy.

Right. And just pretended. Like somebody. Foretold it. Yet. A lot of times. When people investigate. They realize. Actually. All the evidence.

Points to. That these things. Were written. When the author. Said that they were. Probably the biggest. Event. That. That we see. Prophesied.

And come to pass. Is the life. And ministry. And death of Jesus. Jesus said. In Matthew 26. Verse 55. This is when he was arrested.

This is right after he was arrested. And he was speaking to. All the people that were there. At his arrest. Matthew 26. 55. In that hour. Jesus said.

[ 22 : 29 ] To the multitudes. Have you come out. As against a robber. With swords. And clubs. To take me. I sat daily with you. Teaching in the temple.

And you did not seize me. But all this. He was talking about. This arrest. All that you see in front of you. But all this was done. That the scriptures of the prophets.

Might be fulfilled. It says. Then all the disciples. Forsook him. And they fled. But Jesus' whole life. Was a fulfillment. Of dozens.

And dozens. And dozens. Of prophecies. Really Jesus is. A focal point. A central. Focus. Of so much. Of what the prophets. Of old.

Spoke of. Isaiah. Spoke of. A person called. Emmanuel. That would be born. Of a virgin. Micah.

[ 23 : 24 ] The prophet Micah. Spoke of. The Messiah. And said that he would be born. In a town called. Bethlehem. Many of the prophets. Spoke of.

The Messiah. Being from the lineage of David. King of Israel. Isaiah. The prophet. Again. He has this whole chapter. About this.

Suffering. Servant. That many people were. Not clear on who that was. Yet later on. People look back. And see the life of Jesus. And it lines up.

It's uncanny. How much that prophecy. Lines up with the life. Death. Life and death. Of Jesus.

Daniel. The prophet. Spoke. Of.

The Messiah. The prince. That he would be. Cut off. From. His people. Cut off. Is the euphemism. For. Killed. And it says.

[ 24 : 18 ] But not for his own sins. But for the sins of the people. I think Daniel. Was it that? Seven. Or eight hundred years. Before Jesus. Was even born. In the Psalms.

And in Zechariah. There are many. Descriptions. Descriptive details. About what happened. During the crucifixion. Of Jesus Christ. That his. That his.

Hands and his feet. Would be pierced. That his bones. Would be unbroken. For example. And so.

Reason number two. Fulfilled prophecy.

We see all these things. Hundreds of years. From when it was foretold. To. And sometimes. Close to a thousand years. And really. Even if you go back.

To some of the early prophecies. Prophecies in Genesis. Well over. Looking into the thousands of years. When prophecies were. Foretold. And when they. Came to pass.

[ 25 : 17 ] By the way. As I go through. There. We could probably do. A message on every single one of these reasons. And dive deep. Today is just kind of an overview. To whet your appetite. Kind of.

Think through all the reasons. We won't go as deep as we could. By the way. So. I brought up. A few weeks ago. Some books.

This is one that. By Josh McDowell. Josh McDowell wrote this book. The new. Original book was called. Evidence that demands a verdict.

And he also wrote a book called. More than a carpenter. About the life of Jesus. And the evidence that Jesus was who he says he was. Josh McDowell is still around. He is.

His son actually is very active. As an apologist as well. But he really helped popularize this whole thing of Christian apologetics. And made it really popular to investigate the claims of Christianity.

[ 26 : 14 ] Not just by scholars. But by anyone. He made books that were accessible to people. This book is actually very readable. It looks kind of intimidating. Right? It's big and thick. But it's actually very readable.

And easy to read. So. We're going to look at making this available in our library. I think we actually have it in our library already. So. Okay.

Reason number three. Reason number three. The Bible. Is a big book. Written. By many people. Over a long span.

A period of time. Of about 1500 years. That's a long time isn't it? Yet the message in the Bible. Is very consistent. Very consistent.

Looking at some of the details. The Bible has 40 authors. 40 different people. Authored. The many books in the Bible. Both the Old and the New Testament. Like I said.

[ 27 : 13 ] It spans. The authorship spans across 1500 years. People living. Not just in Israel. But in many cultures. Roman Empire. Babylonian Empire.

Assyrian Empire. Different parts of the world. In fact. Across three continents. These books were written. Across three continents. And from people of various walks of life.

By the way. Is there a sound. Is this. It sounds like when I touch this. Is that kind of reverberating through the. I'll try. I'll try to keep. Oh I. There we go.

Thank you. Now I can pound the pulpit. Won't. Mess with anybody. People from various walks of life.

So we've got kings. And. Shepherds. And fishermen. And tax collectors. Along with many other titles.

[ 28 : 19 ] We've got of course prophets. People called out as prophets. But a lot of these people came from. You know. A prophet wasn't like a. A means of earning a living. You know. You might think. Oh it's like being a pastor.

No. That wasn't what a prophet was. A prophet was being called by God. You usually had. A job. You were a farmer. Or a shepherd. Or whatever. And God just called you out of that. To speak to the people. They addressed many different.

Controversial subjects. Things like. Adultery. And divorce. And remarriage. Homosexuality. Parenting. How to handle authority.

And yet when we see these issues addressed throughout the Bible. By all these many different authors. Over 1500 different years. 1500 years. We see this consistency.

And the message. And the ethic that is prescribed. It's the same throughout. There's a consistent theme. Throughout the Bible.

[ 29 : 18 ] An unfolding story. It's not all these just disparate accounts. That don't. Don't really meld or merge together. They don't fit together. No. It's this unfolding story.

Where we see. You know. People back during the Old Testament. They. They didn't see to the end of the story. And we actually don't see to the very end ourselves either. But we see more right than they did. But it's a consistent theme and story that unfolds.

From Genesis to Revelation. Really. Genesis is the story of paradise. That was lost. Paradise. Paradise. Was given to man.

And it was lost. You get all the way to the end. To Revelation. Paradise. Regained. Paradise. Restored. And in the middle. It indicates and shows the problem in the world.

The problem is sin and death. In the Old Testament. So many accounts of the Messiah. A Savior. Somebody who's going to come. And make things right.

[ 30 : 20 ] And in the Gospels. We have that one. That one who the prophets foretold of. Who does come. And he does make things right.

And then in the end. Finally everything. From top to bottom. Will be finally restored. As we read about in the book of Revelation. It's consistent.

To such a degree. That it seems like. With all these authors. You know. There were. There are. Reference books. Encyclopedias. Other reference books.

That people will put together. Right. And sometimes you have. 10. 15. 20 different authors. And. In order to do something like that. And to maintain consistency.

Right. Among the authors. What do you need to have? You'd have an editor. Right. Even if you have one author. Right. If you have a. If you have a good author.

[ 31 : 18 ] Who has the. The means of the resources. They hire an editor. Somebody to edit the book. And make sure that it. Maintains its consistency. But especially. If you have many.

Many authors. You need collaboration. And one person in charge. To make sure. That it has a consistent. Storyline. Theme. Message. Throughout. As you read the Bible.

It seems as if. There must have been. An editor. Putting all this together. Could it be that. There was an editor. Yes.

There was. A divine. Author. Behind it all. The other thing. Looking at this. Consistent message. Is. The Bible is.

An amazing book. In that it. Constantly refers. To itself. Any of you have a. A Bible with. References in it.

[ 32 : 16 ] A reference Bible. As you read through. The passages. You'll see. Either in the margins. Or maybe. Between the lines. A reference. To another. Scripture verse. Well.

Those are all. Throughout the Bible. I bought this. Poster. Let me see if I can get it out. That illustrates. That in kind of. One picture. Because it's hard to see.

As you're reading through the Bible. You read a passage. And it's like. Oh. This actually references. Either directly. In some kind of. Clear direct way. Like a. A quote. Or just maybe. An allusion. To. A passage. Or a scripture. Or an idea. Found elsewhere. And so. Could I get. David. Could you come up. And help me. Kind of. Roll this out. And so.

The Bible. Quotes itself. Thousands. Thousands. Of times. Here you hold that part. So this is an illustration. This might be confusing at first.

[ 33 : 14 ] But what are we looking at here? So down here. There are these little bar lines. And each little line. Is a book. A chapter. One chapter. In the Bible. You can see.

This is Psalm. Anybody know what Psalm that is? The big one? 119. Good job. Psalm 119. That's the longest chapter. In the Bible. So. These lines.

Indicate. References. In those. In each chapter. That refers. To some other. Verse. In some other chapter. Of the Bible. So.

All of these lines. Create this. Really. A tapestry. Right? A woven tapestry. Of connection. Of interconnectedness.

Between the whole Bible. Bible. In fact. One of the. In the. In the early years. Of Christianity. There was this. Question. Of what books. Are really part of the Bible.

[ 34 : 10 ] Because. There are actually people. That faked books. There's the gospel of. What are some of the. Thomas. I think. What are some of the other ones? There's a bunch of other gospels. That just. Are not legitimate.

They don't have a. They don't have an authentic feel to them. But one of the. Primary things. That people use that. To decide which books. Should we include in the Bible.

Are the references. To each other. Jesus himself. And I don't remember the count. But Jesus himself. In the gospels. Actually quotes. Or references. Almost.

Every single book. In the Old Testament. Just in the gospels. But we see that. Throughout the whole of scripture. Thanks. Put that down. Maybe we can. Stick that on the hallway.

Or something. After service. We'll see if we can. Mount that up on a wall. At some point. So. Either through direct quotes.

[ 35 : 06 ] Or illusions. Just. This tapestry. Of. Of. Reference. The Bible. To itself. And the many authors. And books in it. Reason number four. The preservation.

Of the Bible. So. There's a concern. That many people have. The Bible was written. A long time ago. Right. The New Testament. Written about. 2,000 years ago.

The Old Testament. Written. Even longer. Up to. Up to 1,500 years before that. So. 3,500 years ago.

Is the earliest. Idea. Of when the Old Testament. Started. To be written. So. Here's the concern. How do we know that the Bible that we have today. Can be trusted.

Because we don't have anywhere. The original paper. Or. Sheepskin. Or papyrus. Or whatever it was that was written on. We don't have the original stone commandments.

[ 36 : 04 ] That God wrote on. Up on Mount Sinai. We don't have those originals. Anywhere. All we have today are copies. So how do we know.

That the copies. Are. Are real. Are legitimate. Can be trusted. That they were preserved. To reflect what was in the original. Well did you know that the Bible.

Is actually the most. Well preserved. Historical document. In all of history. And.

It's not even close. To any other. Document. It's not even close. We have manuscripts.

Copies. Of the Bible. That go back. And we'll talk first about the New Testament. They go back.

Almost 2,000 years. Physical copies.

[ 37 : 01 ] Of. Of. Actual writings. In Greek. We'll. Also talk about some other. Translations. But in Greek. The original. Because that's what.

The New Testament. Was originally written in. In Greek. We have. Manuscripts. That are very old. But let me talk about. Some other manuscripts. When you. When it.

When it comes to documents. That have been preserved. Old documents. That have been

preserved. A second to the Bible. Is. A book called. The Iliad. How many of you read. The Iliad. In high school. Okay.

You are. So blessed. Iliad. By Homer. This was. A Greek. Who wrote. A book. An epic.

Poem. called. The Iliad. Back in. 800 BC. 800 years. Before Christ. So this is the second. Most well preserved book. We have today.

[ 37 : 56 ] You can find. In museums. And. Wherever else. 643 copies. Of the Iliad. That date back.

Hundreds. And. Even. Thousands. Of years. The earliest. Copy. That we have. Is. 400 years. After it was written. About four.

It's dated. To about 400. BC. But that's actually. A lot. Right. 643. Manuscript. Copies. And so you can. Compare the copies. And see how they relate.

To each other. And where the. Are they consistent. Among each other. And that really. Tells you about. How close they were. To the original. No. But.

After the Iliad. Things really. Degrade. As far as. How many copies. We have. And. How long it was. From the original writing. To. The copies.

[ 38 : 51 ] The earliest copies. That we have. Just one other example. Plato. Anybody heard of Plato? He was. He wrote some things. His dialogues. Around 400 BC. Today.

We have. Six copies. Of. Of. Works. That were. Fairly close. To when. He originally.

Wrote them. Like ancient copies. If you will. The earliest we have. Is from 900 AD. This is. What is. What's the math there?

1300 years. There's 1300 years. From when he actually. Wrote those dialogues. To when. When. To when the earliest copy. That we have. Was.

Was written. Down. Or copied down. Now. In order to have a copy. From 900 AD. You have to have. At that time. When the copy was done. You had to have something.

[ 39 : 45 ] To copy it from. Right? So you can really trace back. That there were. Things around. Other documents around. You had to be able to copy from. We just don't have them. What happens? Right?

There are fires. And wars. And. Hurricanes. Or earthquakes. And volcanoes. And things get destroyed. Over time. A lot of times. Things. Books get read. And used.

And then. What do you do? After. It's been read. For 100 years. You throw it in the trash. Because. You can't. Read it anymore. The New Testament.

The New Testament. Was written. Between. Most people think. Between 50 and 100 AD. So between 50 and 100 AD. Is when most of the New Testament.

Or all really of the New Testament. Was written. Both the Gospels. All the way to the book of Revelation. Today. When we look at. Original. Or not original. But Greek manuscripts.

[ 40 : 41 ] That we have copies. In the original Greek. We have 5,686 copies. Of the Bible. To some degree.

Not. Not all fully. Fleshed out Bibles. But. Renditions of the Bible. In some form. That are unique. You know. They're not. One. We're not talking about pages.

Of the same one. But these are unique. Representations of the Bible. In some form. 5,686. Not only that.

But we actually also have. Translations. Of the New Testament. That go back. Very early on. Because people wanted to be able to. Not everybody read Greek. And so they wanted to be able to. Read the Bible in their own language. So we have. Syriac. And. Where some of the other languages. Latin is a big one. That was the. Kind of. Academic language of.

[ 41 : 34 ] Rome. And if you take all those. Manuscript. Translations. That are. That are old. Ancient. Back in. The first few centuries.

There are almost 20,000 of those. So between the Greek manuscripts. And the other translations. We have. 25,000.

Copies. Of these. Early. Early. Early. Manuscripts. And like I said. The next. Closest that we have. Is the Iliad. With. What did I say? 600 and some.

Quite a difference. The very. Earliest. Copy. That we have. Of the New Testament. It's just a fragment. Of a page. But.

But it's dated. To the year. 114 AD. Which is just. Within less than a generation. Of when it was originally. Written. We have a physical copy.

[ 42 : 33 ] Of that. The first. The earliest copy. We have of an entire book. Of the New Testament. Is around 200 AD. And the earliest. Copy. That we have.

Of the entire New Testament. In. In its entire form. Was around 250 AD. Now that's. A shorter time period.

Than the age. Than the age of our country. Which is fairly young. Right? The Old Testament. Is actually. Not quite as astounding. The Old Testament. We have. Most of our Old Testament. Is based on Hebrew text. Called the Masoretic text. And it's a collection. Of.

Of Hebrew texts. That. Were. Evidently copied. Right over the years. But the oldest one. That we actually have. Is from. Around 900 AD. So not nearly as old.

[ 43 : 28 ] As the New Testament text. That we have. Except. Something happened. In 1947. And there was this. Shepherd kid.

Out. In. I don't know. Was it in Israel? It was somewhere. In the Middle East. I think it was in Israel. Qumran. And.

He was looking for a goat. He lost his goat. And he's looking for his goat. And there's some. Caves. Up. Up high. And in trying to find his goat. He gets some rocks.

And he throws those rocks. Up in the cave. To see if he can hit the goat. Right. And hear. The goat sound. And he's throwing the rocks. And he hears them clatter on the ground. And throws some more rocks.

And he hears them clatter on the ground. And then he throws one. And he hears something break. Like a jar. And he goes and investigates. And here he finds these clay pots.

[ 44 : 22 ] With these scrolls. In them. And he goes. And he finds his family. And next thing you know. The authorities come. And they check it out. And they find these scrolls. That date back.

To between. 100 and 200 years. Before. Jesus Christ. That have. Huge amounts. Of the Old Testament text. And they've been studying them.

Since that time. And they haven't even gotten. The opportunity to study. Even all of them at this point. They're continuing to. Some of them are very. As you can imagine. Very very brittle. And so. As science improves.

And technology improves. They're able to. Actually start to read these scrolls. Without having to unroll them. Because they're so brittle. It would destroy them. So they're using technology.

To be able to scan them. Without. Having. Without destroying them. But it's been. A tremendous. Really evidence.

[ 45 : 19 ] For the. Historicity. And the reliability. Of the translation. That we have. Of the Old Testament. Because when you compare. That meseretic text. That we have today. Of the Hebrew. Scriptures. To what's in those.

Dead Sea Scrolls. That is over a thousand years. Older. We can see. That the people. That took such care. To copy that text. Did so.

Tremendously. With such accuracy. In what they did. Another thing. Another thing that we have. Is we have.

Something called. The Septuagint. And so. Back around. 250 years. Before Christ. The Greeks. Were really interested. They wanted to have. A library. Of their own. That had basically. All the books of the world.

In it. That. And so. They went to. Some Jews. And they said. Hey. We've heard about. Your Bible. The scriptures. And we want a copy. And we want to translate it. Into Greek. Which is. The language. That. That we read.

[ 46 : 14 ] And so. They hired. All these Jewish scholars. To translate. The Hebrew scriptures. Into. Greek. And today. We have that book. And you can actually read it. You can read. An English version.

Of the Greek Septuagint. That was translated. From Hebrew. So it's a. It's a translation. Of a translation. But. You can. Really compare. What the text is. In the Greek.

To what. We see in the Hebrew. Like meseretic text. And see that. There is. A huge. When you compare it. They're very. Very similar. To an uncanny degree.

For the sake of time. We'll. Kind of move. A little bit more quickly here. But the early church fathers. We have this group of people. In the first couple centuries. Who we call.

Early church fathers. And these were people. Who. Who. Were Bible teachers. Leaders. And they. Taught things. About the Bible. And we have their writings. That they wrote. About the Bible.

[ 47 : 11 ] And we can look at their writings. And some people have said. That if you take. All the writings. Of the early church fathers. And the quotations. That they make. Of the Bible themselves. You could actually. Recompose.

The entire New Testament. Just from their writings. And so. We have all this. All these things. That we can compare. To look. The words in our Bible. Are they really accurate?

Have they really been preserved? And all the evidence says. Yes. By far. Reason number five. The Bible has incredible staying power.

Endurance. You know the Bible is the most published book. In all of history. Even to this day. Every year. The number one book published. Every single year. In the world. Is the Bible.

And despite all the odds. Right? You have all the conquests of Israel. When Israel was subjugated as a nation. And you know. Their temple destroyed. And their cities destroyed. And the Bible.

[ 48 : 12 ] Continued on. Through all that. Through persecutions. And censorship. And burning. And banning of the Bible. Throughout. A lot of history. In fact.

The Roman emperor. This is in around 300 AD. The Roman emperor. Diocletian. He ordered the burning. Of all the churches. All the Christian churches. And all their Bibles. That they should all be burned.

The Bible just. Came. Skirted right through. And even. It survived. The intense scrutiny. And criticism.

Of the skeptics. Many people. Have taken. Taken their sights. At the Bible. To criticize it. To undermine it. To try to prove.

Its lack of. Truth. Or veracity. Not only that. But the Bible. Has had this tremendous. Impact. On the whole world. Not only in. American culture.

[ 49 : 10 ] Not only in. European culture. But really in the culture. Now it's had the most impact. Probably in. Western culture. But it's had an impact. On cultures. Everywhere.

Law. And ethics. Human rights. Marriage. You know. Basically across the globe. Everybody takes off. One day a week. Everywhere in the world. In almost every country.

In the globe. People take off. What day? Sunday. Why is that? Why every seventh day anyway? Why not every fifth day? There's only one reason.

And it's because of this book. That says that Jesus Christ died. On a Sunday. And the week. There's no like.

Celestial reason. Why we have a week. You know. There's celestial reasons. The moon. Why we have months. The year. Because of the sun. And the earth going around the sun. But a week is just somewhat.

[ 50 : 04 ] It's arbitrary. Why would we take a rest day. Every seven days. It's because of this book. The Bible. It says God created the earth. In six days. And on the seventh day.

He rested. And Jesus himself. Died on that day. And Christians. Have used Sunday.

As a day. Where they rest. And worship. Isaiah 40. Verse 8. Says this. The grass withers. The flower fades. But the word of our God. Stands forever. And we have found that.

To be true. Haven't we? Alright. Real quickly. Reason number six. And maybe we'll skip a few of these. But reason number six. Historical accuracy. The Old Testament. Is by far the most reliable account of the ancient world.

If you're looking for history books. Books to describe the history of the ancient world. Go to the Bible. That's where you're going to find the most accurate portrayal. Of what actually happened in history. Archaeology.

[ 51 : 02 ] Today. You know that the Bible is used as an archaeology textbook. If you want to go try to find old sites. Old cities. Old civilizations. In the Middle East anyway.

You open up the Bible. And there are many people throughout the years. And there was a golden age of archaeology. Probably in the 1800s. In which many people took their Bible. As their map. And they went to the Middle East.

And they went to the places where the Bible said things happened. And they started to dig. And they uncovered the cities that the Bible described that were there. And today there's. Dozens and dozens of cities.

And civilizations. And artifacts. Many hundreds and thousands of artifacts. That have been dug up. And they all. It seems all. The time. Corroborate.

What's in the Bible. In fact there's an entire field today. Called biblical archaeology. And this is not a. A field that's in Christian universities. This is a field that is in secular universities. Where we study the archaeology of the Bible.

[ 52 : 01 ] Because it's been so fruitful. I watched a National Geographic. And. Recently. And it. It actually looked back.

It's. Biblical history has been validated. Over and over. You know. Almost for. For a long time. People have known that what is written and recorded about Jesus. As far as many of the basic facts.

Is accurate. Historically. But then people. And. And. And we look back at. The life of the Jews in Babylon. And so many of. The history of the Jews in Babylon.

We have. Other external evidence. Outside the Bible for. Many of the kings of Israel. We have. Tablets out there. Or. Monuments. Or whatever. That we found. That mention.

Some of the kings of Israel. For a long time. It's that well. You know. The kings of Israel. They're. They were definitely historical. But like King David. That was made up. King David wasn't real.

[ 52 : 55 ] The Jews just made him up. And then later on. You know. They were. More historical. And then. I don't know. This was in the last. 20. 30 years. They find this stone.

And I forget. Which people group it was. But this was a people group. That fought against. The kingdom of David. The house of David. And there's a mention. A reference to. The house of David. From this ancient.

Artifact. That was found. There's even some evidence. For the exodus. Though. You know. It's not. Not quite as strong. But National Geographic.

Did this. This video. Or documentary. On. The city of Sodom. Which has. Just really. In recent years. Been unearthed. The city of Sodom. They know. This is where Sodom was.

This is where the Bible. Describes it to be. And they've looked. And they've studied. And there are. These really. Weird. Wild. Interesting. Things. About Sodom. There are these.

[ 53 : 52 ] Fragments. Of. Clay pots. But they're. They're like glass. How do you. How do you. Turn these fragments. Into glass. They look at the evidence.

And there's like. Some kind of. Destructive activity. Happened here. And because of. What we see with. These pots. Being turned into glass. Something had to have. Heated these things up.

To a temperature. That's actually. Even hotter than the sun. These are not. Christian people.

Saying this. These are the secular. Archaeologists. So they say.

You know this story. Obviously. It's false. I mean. The Bible's just. Making this up. That God.

Rained down fire. And brimstone. On Sodom. But it's probably.

Based on something. That actually. Really happened. Because well. Actually. What we see is. It looked like. It got burned. By an intense heat. And so. Some of our theories. We think. It was probably. A meteor. That came down.

[ 54 : 45 ] From the heavens. And flew right over top. Of Sodom. And just. Burned it right up. Wow. That would be wild. Huh? Have we ever seen.

Anything like that? No. Or maybe. The Bible is true. And accurate. In what it says. Just to finish up.

Reason number seven. We'll just do these. Kind of together. Well. The Bible really aligns. With reality. The Bible is a book. Lewis Sperry Schaefer. Said this. He said. The Bible is not such a book. That a man would write.

If he could. Or that he could write. If he would. And what he's saying. With that is. Listen. This is a book. That. If you're a Jew. And the author of. Most of the Bible. Are Jews.

And. They depict themselves. As what? This amazing nation. Of righteous people. That conquered everyone. Around them. And built such an amazing empire. I mean. If you're writing a book. Of mythology.

[ 55 : 41 ] That's what you would do. Right? But no. They write stories. About the failures. Of their kings. And their people. And how they were conquered. By this group. And that group. And how God told them.

That they should live this way. And they didn't. And the reason number eight. The message of the Bible.

Has transformed so many lives. And you know. What I have observed. And I think what many people. Throughout history. Have observed. Is that to the degree. That people take the Bible seriously.

Not even Christians sometimes. But people who take it seriously. As a book. That should be read. That they take seriously. Looking at the wisdom. That it mentions. Those people seem to have. More stable lives.

They live their lives. More firm ground. But those people. Who have given themselves. Over to this book. To found their lives on it.

[ 56 : 36 ] To trust in its promises. To heed its wisdom. And to even love. The author. Of the book. That their lives. Are tremendously different. From others.

Despite their imperfections. Their weaknesses. And failures. So to wrap this up. The Bible is God's message to us.

In Romans 15. 4. Paul says this. For whatever things were written before. Were written for our learning. That we through the patience. And comfort of the scriptures. Might have hope. The Bible is meant.

It's a message for us. And like Paul said. In that scripture that we read. In 2 Timothy 3. 16. All scripture is given. By inspiration of God. And it's profitable. It's profitable.

For doctrine. For reproof. For correction. For instructions. In righteousness. That the man of God. May be complete. Thoroughly equipped. In every good work. In other words. The Bible is what we need. To build our lives on.

[ 57 : 35 ] That's what it was intended. To be for. To build our lives on it. So is that what we're doing? Are you building your life. On the scripture. Are you letting it.

Have authority over. Your life. And how you live. Your life. And how. Can it have an impact on you. Unless one. You read it. Two.

Dig into it. Study it. And number three. Figure out. And understand. What it says. And what it. What it means. And above all that. The Bible is about getting to know.

The author. The one who wrote it. The author. The author. And that is his intention. That we know him. That's why he gave us his book. That we would know him. What he has for us.

What he wants for us. And his great. Love for us. Amen. Amen. I've gone way over time. So I was planning to take questions. But. Maybe.

[ 58 : 31 ] Maybe next week. We can. We can get to those. Stand if you would. And we'll. We'll end in a word of prayer. Father. Father. We love you. Thank you for this book.

It's. It's tremendous. Sometimes it's difficult to read. Sometimes it's hard to understand. It just is. Different parts are easier than others. Some parts are really challenging.

But. We really want to know. And understand. What. What you would have for us. How you would have us to live. Your love. And your care for us. We pray that as we. Look.

As we read these scriptures. And dig into them. And. Do our best to understand. That you would help guide us. To know you more. That you would help us to understand.

The things that are in here. That we might live lives. That are pleasing. To you. And to know. And to enjoy you. We thank you for all these things. In Jesus name. Amen.