

Trends

According to a 2017 poll, there are only 24% of "Americans who believe the Bible is the literal word of God." Another 26% believe the Bible "as secular stories and history." The largest segment of the poll, 47%, still think the Bible is the "inspired word of God."

- via Gallup News

2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Sentence Sermons

"The canon is not an authorized collection of writings (in that the church conferred its authority or approval upon a list of books). Rather, the canon is a collection of authoritative writings...that have an inherent authority as works uniquely inspired by God. Canonization is the process of recognizing that inherent authority, not bestowing it from an outside source." —Robert Plummer

Psalms 119:105-106: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. 106 I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments."

Psalms 19:7-8: "The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; 8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes;"

News & Notes

Please pray for Zachary Wallace. He is not faithfully attending services as he should (Heb. 10:24-25). "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (Jas. 5:16)

Please remember to keep Ron Daly in your prayers! He has a long recovery ahead.

Remember the saints in Zimbabwe who we helped buy food! Let's follow-up! Remember, when YOU help, YOU are a tool of God's providence! Matt. 6:25-33

Remember sister Wilma Cardwell in your prayers; she's such an encouragement!

Pray for all our members who do not attend regularly. Try to encourage them!

Pray for all the lost souls, especially those in the greater Bloomington area. Pray that Westside might be an influence for good in this community.

Pray for the all of our students: elementary, secondary and college. Our young people face many trials and temptations at school.

There are many needy saints, incl. preachers! Can you help?! Let me know.

Anyone else need prayers? Let us know so we can announce it and post it.

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"Lord, to whom shall we go? You
have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68



Has the New Testament Been Tamed With?

David Dann

There are some who claim that the New Testament Scriptures were written so long ago and copied so many times that they cannot possibly have retained their original meaning. They would have us believe the New Testament has been tampered with. However, Jesus promised: "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away" (Matt. 24:35). His promise is borne out by the weight of the evidence.

1. The King James Version. In 1604 King James I of England authorized the making of a new translation of the Bible into English. This new version was completed in 1611. The King James Version has been widely used for nearly 400 years. Interestingly, nothing that would substantially change our faith, or any command of God has been changed in the many revisions that the King James Version has undergone. Therefore, we can be sure that the New Testament can be, and has been, preserved for the last 400 years.

2. The Latin Vulgate. A translation of the Bible from Greek to Latin was made around A.D. 150 and came to be known as the "Old Latin" version of the Scriptures. In A.D. 382 the scholar Jerome was commissioned to revise the Old Latin version. He undertook the task and completed his work around A.D. 400. His revision is known as the Latin Vulgate, which means, "common Latin." The Latin Vulgate was widely used from the 5th to the 15th century and is still used today. The Latin Vulgate can be used to prove that the New Testament can be, and has been, preserved substantially unchanged for 1600 years.

3. The surviving manuscripts. When the New Testament was first written, early Christians made many hand-written copies in the original Greek language in which it was written. These copies are known as "manuscripts." Of the approximately 5,000 known manuscripts of the New Testament in existence, few contain the entire New Testament and some are only fragments. Among the most complete are the Vatican, Sinaitic, and Alexandrian manuscripts, which were written during the middle of the 4th and 5th centuries. These early copies of the Scriptures had not yet been discovered when the King James Version was made, however, a comparison shows no substantial differences between these

manuscripts and the text of the King James Version! This proves beyond all question that the New Testament has been successfully preserved for at least the past 1650 years.

4. The early Christian writers. These men, also known as the “apostolic fathers,” lived and wrote near the end of the first century and the beginning of the second century A.D. Their writings are filled with quotations from the New Testament. We will consider the writings of only three of these men, Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp. The writings of these three men survive from a period beginning between A.D. 96-110. In their writings we find quotations and references from 25 of the 27 books of the New Testament. The Scripture quotations of these and other early Christian writers are so extensive that the entire New Testament could be effectively reconstructed from their writings. These writers take us back to the time when the New Testament was first written, and their writings prove that the New Testament they had is the same as the New Testament we have today. There is no substantial difference.

Conclusion

The New Testament has not been tampered with. In light of the available evidence, the message as we have it today is the same as when it was first delivered.

Concerning the Evidence for the New Testament . . .

F. F Bruce writes that there are about 5,000 Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, whole or in part, in existence and these constitute the most abundant manuscript evidence of any ancient book. He writes, “The evidence for our New Testament writings is ever so much greater than the evidence for many writings of classical authors (e.g., Julius Caesar’s ‘Gallic Wars,’ Titus Livy’s ‘The History of Rome,’ and Tacitus’ ‘Histories’), the authenticity of which no one dreams of questioning”

☛ **F. F Bruce**

The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?

Concerning the Accuracy of the Bible...

“In speaking of these supposed inaccuracies (of the Bible) we are of course referring to the original autographs and not to translations. Considerations of the subject of inspiration must be based upon the originals as now represented in the ascertained texts, always bearing in mind that extant manuscripts are copies of copies of the originals. . . . Though the autographs themselves do not exist, the evidence goes to show that the resultant text arrived at by the collation of the best manuscripts practically represents the originals.

“The importance of most of the variations in the manuscript readings has been greatly exaggerated. Westcott and Hort tell us that the “proportion of words virtually accepted on all hands as raised above doubt is very great, not less, on a rough computation, than seven-eighths of the whole. As to the remaining eighth, the variations here are formed

in great part by changes of order and other comparative trivialities.” These writers further tell us that “the amount of what can in any sense be called substantial variation...can hardly form more than a thousandth part of the entire text.” There is no doctrine in Scripture which would be affected if all the disputed words, or those about which there is any doubt, were omitted.”

☛ **W.E. Vine,**

in ‘The Divine Inspiration of the Bible’

The Bible as an Ancient Text

How does the Bible stack up against other ancient texts? There are over 25,000 early manuscripts containing all, or substantial portions, of the New Testament. Compare that to only seven manuscripts for the works of Plato, five for the works of Aristotle, and seven for the plays of Sophocles. In light of this, John Warwick Montgomery, recipient of 11 earned degrees including PhD, ThD and LLD, rightly said, “to be skeptical of the resultant text of the New Testament books is to allow all the classical works of antiquity to slip into obscurity, for no documents of the ancient period are as well attested bibliographically as the New Testament.” Isn’t such a book worthy of your investigation and careful consideration?

—excerpted from: *Is It Worth Investigating God?*, Craig Thomas

Sword Tips #1787 (August 21, 2019)

Joe Price

14 When He had called all the multitude to Himself, He said to them, “Hear Me, everyone, and understand: 15 There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man. 16 If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!” (Mark 7:14-16, NKJV)

We can understand the teachings of Jesus by listening to them. It concerns us when Christians take exception with that simple statement of trust in the inspired word of God (2 Tim. 3:16-17; Eph. 5:17). When we reduce the teachings of Christ and His apostles (who taught His commands, 1 Cor. 14:37) to personal and relative “interpretation,” we have elevated ourselves above the Lord and surrendered our allegiance to His authority (Matt. 28:18-20; Col. 3:17). In today’s passage, Jesus taught that spiritual corruption does not occur because of what one eats, but is due to what comes out of the heart (Mk. 7:17-23). Understanding that evil proceeds from the heart and is identifiable is not a personal, relative, or so-called traditional interpretation of the Scriptures – it is what Jesus said (read Mark 7:20-23). We ought to ask ourselves, “Do I have ‘ears to hear’ Jesus?” If so, you will understand Him. Do not be deceived by attempts to persuade you that understanding God’s word amounts to accepting a tradition about the Scriptures. Truth is not open to different interpretations or opinions. Therefore, neither is understanding it. We open our hearts to the devil when we close our ears to the word of God by reducing an understanding of it to “our tradition.”