



The Bible

The sole basis of our belief is the Bible (also "Scripture" or "the Scriptures"), composed of the sixty-six books divided between Old and New Testaments. All Scripture originated with God and was given through God's inspiration of His specially chosen men. Their original writings of God's words were perfect and therefore perfectly trustworthy. The Bible is the unique, full and final authority on all matters of faith and practice, and there are no other writings similarly inspired by God.

The Bible is truly a miraculous book, literally unlike any other document in the world, including the writings other world religions consider sacred. God's words were written by 40 different people in three different languages on three different over a span of 1500 years, yet it has and incredible unity. It tells one story: God's redemption of mankind.

There is more physical evidence for the accuracy and reliability of the Bible than for any other ancient document. For example, there is a world famous book called the *Illiad* that dates to the 9th century BC; it is considered by scholars as "the oldest work of western literature." We have about 643 surviving copies of this book, and the oldest copy we have dates to about 500 years *after* the original writing. Now consider the 27 books of the New Testament of the Bible: we have over 25,000 surviving manuscript copies and the oldest is only about 125 years after the original!

We call the Bible "the word of God" because of all of the evidence against the alternative: that it is a fictional book written by men trying to create a religion. Here are just two of many reasons:

- The Bible contains descriptions of many miracles that could easily be verified by eyewitnesses who were alive at the time of the writings; yet no historical evidence exists showing any dispute by such eyewitnesses, including those who the Bible claims saw our resurrected Lord before He returned to heaven.
- The Bible stands alone among all religious writings in the vast number of prophecies it contains that have already been fulfilled exactly as predicted, long after the death of the prophet who made them. The Old Testament alone contains something like 2,000 specific and detailed predictive prophecies.

Of course, the Bible itself claims that it is the word of God: 2 Timothy 3:16 tells us that "all Scripture is God-breathed." Because it is the accurate and reliable word of God, it is a rock solid foundation for our Christian faith.

If you want to learn more about the Bible, watch for our Crossroads University class called "Bible 101." It will help build your confidence in Scripture and help you learn how to study the Bible as well as apply its truth to your life.