

I Believe: What We Believe, and Why It Matters

The Bible is the Perfect Word of God

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The Bible is the Perfect Word of God

What we believe: The Bible contains all that is needed for guidance in godliness and practical Christian conduct.

John 16:13 NLT

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future.

2 Peter 3:15–16 NLT

And remember, our Lord's patience gives people time to be saved. This is what our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you with the wisdom God gave him—speaking of these things in all of his letters. Some of his comments are hard to understand, and those who are ignorant and unstable have twisted his letters to mean something quite different, just as they do with other parts of Scripture. And this will result in their destruction.

The truth is, the Bible is the most revered, most studied, most curated, most copied, most examined book in all of human history!

2 Timothy 3:14–17 NLT

But you must remain faithful to the things you have been taught. You know they are true, for you know you can trust those who taught you. You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is *inspired by God* and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.

Six truths about the Bible:

1) The Bible is inspired by God.

2) The Bible teaches us what is *true*.

Genesis 4:7 NLT

[The LORD said to Cain,] “You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you. But you must subdue it and be its master.”

3) The Bible helps us realize what is wrong in our lives.

Romans 7:7–12 NLT

Well then, am I suggesting that the law of God is sinful? Of course not! In fact, it was the law that showed me my sin. I would never have known that coveting is wrong if the law had not said, “You must not covet.” But sin used this command to arouse all kinds of covetous desires within me! If there were no law, sin would not have that power. At one time, I lived without understanding the law. But when I learned the command not to covet, for instance, the power of sin came to life, and I died. So I discovered that the law’s commands, which were supposed to bring life, brought spiritual death instead. Sin took advantage of those commands and deceived me; it used the commands to kill me. But still, the law itself is holy, and its commands are holy and right and good.

4) The Bible corrects us when we are wrong.

Psalm 139:23–24 NLT

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.

5) The Bible teaches us to do right.

John 13:33–35 NLT

Dear children, I will be with you only a little longer. And as I told the Jewish leaders, you will search for me, but you can’t come where I am going. So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.

6) God Himself uses the Bible to prepare and equip His people!

2 Timothy 3:17 NLT

God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.

Why it matters: The Bible is the Word of God. It is the standard for Truth. Other books can educate and *inform*, but the Scriptures *transform* us, making us more like Jesus.

Small Group Guide: The Bible is the Perfect Word of God

Opening Question

When did the bible stop being just a book to you and start feeling like something alive? If you're still in that process, what's something that has surprised you about it?

Other Books Inform, but Scripture Transforms

Here is a fact worth sitting with: the Bible is a library of 66 books written by around 40 different authors across 1,500 years, on three continents, in three languages, with authors ranging from a shepherd-king to a tax collector to a physician. And yet it tells one unified story. That remarkable coherence is itself a kind of testimony.

The word "Canon" comes from the Hebrew word *canna*, meaning "measuring rod." The image matters. A canon serves as a standard, not merely a collection. The Old Testament canon was largely settled by the Rabbis around 435 BC, at the end of the age of the prophets. When Jesus walked the earth, He quoted those 39 books, fulfilled them, and treated them as the authoritative Word of God.

The New Testament came together through eyewitness accounts and Apostolic authority. Paul alone wrote 13 books in 17 years. Peter, in his letters, explicitly referred to Paul's writings as Scripture, an extraordinary moment of one Apostle recognizing another's work as carrying the same divine weight as the Old Testament. The books of Mark, Luke, Acts, Hebrews, and Jude were included based on their close association with Apostolic teaching and, in the case of Hebrews, the sheer undeniable truth of their content.

As for the question of whether we can trust a text copied by human hands: we have over 23,769 known copies and manuscript fragments of the New Testament. The earliest known copy dates to just 30 years after the originals were written. By contrast, Plato's Tetralogies survives in only 210 copies, with the earliest dating 1,195 years after the original. The sheer volume and consistency of the biblical manuscript tradition is staggering, and modern translations account honestly for variants and textual questions directly in their footnotes.

But here is the deeper question the sermon pressed us toward: Is the Bible merely accurate? Or is it alive? The Greek word for "inspired" in 2 Timothy 3:16 is *theopneustos*, literally "God-breathed." This goes far beyond poetic influence. It is a claim that the Scriptures carry the very breath of God. Research from the Center for Bible Engagement found that people who engage with Scripture four or more times per week experience measurable, dramatic life change, while those who read once or twice a week see almost none. The Bible, when we actually let it in, transforms us.

For Discussion

1. The Bible is the most revered, most studied, most examined book in human history. Does that historical weight change how you approach it personally? Why or why not?
2. The sermon uses a vivid image: our moral conscience is the "hardware" we are born with, and Scripture is the "software" that tunes it toward true Godliness. How have you experienced the Bible recalibrating something you thought you already understood about right and wrong?
3. Look back at the six truths in your notes (points 1–6). Which one resonates most with where you are right now, and why?

Reflect

The sermon closed with this distinction: other books can educate and inform, but the Scriptures transform us, making us more like Jesus.

Take a moment to sit quietly with this question: **Is there an area of my life where I have been letting the Bible inform me, but I have yet to allow it to truly transform me?** Share as you feel comfortable.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, You are the Author of all truth, and in Your Word You have given us a gift unlike any other. Stir in us a hunger for Scripture that goes beyond information into transformation. Jesus, You are the living Word made flesh; meet us in these pages as we read. Holy Spirit, be our Teacher and Guide, making what we read come alive in how we think, love, and act this week. May our lives be a testimony, showing not only that we believe the Bible, but that we have been changed by it. In Jesus' name, Amen.