

Is the Bible reliable?

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

John 14:6 ESV

Jesus declared Himself to be the way, the truth and the life. He didn't say "A way, a truth and a life..." He was making a statement that He is the only way, truth, and life. Many people question this because it doesn't seem very open-minded or tolerant. Is Jesus saying that all other religions are wrong? Yes, that's what He's saying! Jesus is either right in saying this, or He's wrong. Why should we believe Him?

If we can prove the validity of the Bible (that it is in fact a reliable document) then we must take note of what it says and accept its message. Likewise, if there is evidence that Jesus lived, died, and rose from the dead, this would validate all of Jesus' claims and we would be wise to listen to what He said.

We might not like something, but truth is truth - regardless of how we feel about it. Your feelings towards your country's current president or prime minister are irrelevant because the person in that position is the person in that position. What we feel about truth doesn't change truth. You might feel that gravity is unfair and that you believe you can fly. Regardless of how hard you believe that you can fly, if you jump off a 30-storey building, you will not suddenly start flying. The truth concerning the law of gravity will cause you to drop to your death.

Can the Bible be validated? Did Jesus really exist? If yes, did He rise from the dead, as Christians claim?

The trustworthiness of the Bible

The Bible is a miracle! Many people try to discredit the Bible by saying that “it was written by man”, or they claim that there are many contradictions and errors in it. But if you study out how the Bible came about, you’ll see that it could only be by divine inspiration and leading.

The Bible is a compilation of 66 books with a total of about 611, 000 words written by 40 different authors, on three different continents, in three different languages (Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic), over a time period of 1,500 years – all with one harmonious message.

God inspired people from a variety of backgrounds to write down each of Old and New Testament books of the Bible – prophets, poets, princes, kings, sailors, fishermen and soldiers all had a part in writing part of the Bible, and although many of the writers had never met and some of which even lived hundreds of years apart, the message that they recorded was in harmony with each other’s. Some of the books of the Bible were written in homes while others were written in prison or on ships.

It’s a miracle that the Bible contains one consistent unified message from Genesis to Revelation. This message is the message of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

Please watch this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H4u474ZYQeY>

Imagine I gave 48 people a piece of paper each, and I told them to tear their pieces of paper into different shapes. No two pieces of paper would end up looking the same. Now imagine if my intentions were to use those pieces of paper to make a map of Africa. What’s the likelihood that those 48 pieces of paper would perfectly fit together the way that the 48 countries of the mainland African continent do? That’s virtually impossible! And yet that is the miracle of how the Bible was put together.

The Old Testament Scriptures were written hundreds of years before the birth of Jesus. One of the things that points to and supports the trustworthiness of the

Bible is the way that the Old Testament Scriptures accurately, and in detail, foretold of the coming of Jesus as recorded in the New Testament section of the Bible. Did you know that there are over 300 prophecies in the Old Testament division of the Bible that foretell (prophecy) that the Messiah would come? Did you know that every one of those prophecies are fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ? These prophecies were written hundreds of years before Jesus came, and He perfectly fulfilled them all. If this really happened – which, historically speaking, we have more reason to believe than to disbelieve – then it is a fact worth considering. There are prophecies in the Old Testament scriptures that foretell that the Messiah would be a descendent of Abraham (Genesis 12:3; Matthew 1:1), Isaac (Genesis 17:19; Luke 3:34), Jacob (Numbers 24:17; Matthew 1:2) and David (Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 1:1). The prophecies also detailed that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2; Luke 2:4-5, 7) and born of a virgin – which is biologically impossible (Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:26-27, 30-31).

Think about it for a moment: no baby could ever orchestrate their lineage or place of birth. The fact that Jesus perfectly fulfilled these prophecies concerning His birth is miraculous, and helps prove that He is the Promised Messiah. It also adds to the proof which validates the Bible as true and accurate. These prophecies were recorded centuries before His birth. This is an historically reliable claim. If He indeed fulfilled all these prophecies, especially the ones that are impossible to control, then we have logical reason to take notice and it is reasonable to believe that He is who He claims to be.

There are also detailed prophecies about how the Messiah would suffer and die and rise from the dead. Again, Jesus perfectly fulfilled all these prophecies, which is miraculous.

Anyone can make predictions but having those predictions accurately fulfilled isn't as easy.

Old Testament prophets accurately predicted that the Messiah would be betrayed by a close friend (Psalm 41:9; 55:12-13; Luke 22:47-48) for 30 pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12; Matthew 26:14-15) and that the silver would be used to buy a potter's field (Zechariah 11:13; Matthew 27:6-7). It was accurately

we cannot sit on the fence and be indecisive about what the Bible communicates to us.

Please watch this video, "How Were the Books of the Bible Compiled?":

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JOIHRjXD95c>

Questions for reflection

1. Was there something in this lesson that stood out for you? Or something that you previously did not know?
2. What would you expect from a document in order to consider believing what it says?
3. Historians admit that the Bible is one of the most historically reliable texts that we have. How does this influence your view of the Bible?
4. Considering how the Bible was compiled, does it give you more confidence in the Bible as a reliable source of truth?
5. After considering the information in this lesson, how has your opinion of the Bible changed?