

Biblical Apologetics
Session Seven: Defending the Faith (ETC pp. 111-122)

The Authority of the Bible

Why do you accept the Bible as the Word of God? Why should I accept it?

ARGUMENT BY TRUTH

Admit: *I accept the Bible as the word of God because of my faith commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord.*

Give: *There are many lines of evidence which support the fact that the Bible is the word of God. Here are just a few of them.*

• **Scriptural evidence -**

1. The Scriptures are inspired by God in such a way as to be authoritative in all that they say (**2 Timothy 3:14-17**)
2. The writers of the Scriptures knew that they were speaking for God and thus that their words were authoritative (**1 These. 2:13; 1 John 4:6**)
3. The New Testament repeatedly refers to OT events and people as historical realities (see chart)
4. God has promised to preserve His word for His people (**Matt. 5:17-18; Isaiah 40:8; Cf. Isaiah 59:21; Psalm 119:89**).
5. The New Testament writers always appealed to the Old Testament as an infallible and authoritative guide (**Matt. 19:4; Heb. 3:7-11; Psalm 95:7-11**)
6. The New Testament claims the same authority for itself as it recognizes in the Old Testament (**1 Tim. 5:18; 2 Peter 3:16**)
7. Because the Bible is the word of God it cannot be judged by any higher standard - it is the self-verifying product of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit
8. From the Christian perspective any parent difficulties with the teaching of the Bible rest upon our misunderstanding of the world, the Bible, or both of them.
9. We can have confidence that the Holy Spirit is teaching us as we earnestly seek to understand the Bible (**1 John 2:25-27**). Because the Bible is the word of God, even though I do not understand every bit of it, that does not take away from the fact that it is true.

• **Evidence from the External world -**

1. Throughout the centuries the Bible has shaped Western civilization
2. The text of the Old and New Testaments have been preserved with great accuracy. For example: there are 5,656 Greek partial and or complete NT manuscripts dating from as early as 50 years after the original writing. Overall, there are 25,000 full or partial copies of the NT, dating from the second through the fifteenth centuries. Homer's Iliad is the second most attested literary work with only 643 surviving manuscripts, the oldest of which is dated to 400 years after the original work.
3. There has never been a proven contradiction between what the Bible says and the reality of the world. Again and again archeological digs have demonstrated the reliability of the Bible ("Tel Dan Stela" - discovered in 1993 confirmed the historicity of King David and His house Cf. **2 K. 8:28-29**).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OSBNuOdj8CM>

• **Evidence from Personal Experience -**

1. Christians accept the bible as the Word of God because of the Holy Spirit's testimony to their hearts that the Bible's own claim is true.

2. When we trust in Christ through the message of the Gospel we begin to hear the voice of God in the bible and to obey (**John 10:27**). As we grow in the Christian faith the testimony of the Spirit is confirmed again and again.
3. We know the testimony of the Spirit by receiving Christ whom the Father sent and we know the Father, Christ, and the Spirit by the testimony of Scripture. These testify to themselves and to each other (**John 8:12-20**).

Show: *You are committed to your own independence as the final source of truth, and I can demonstrate that by asking you a few questions:*

Why do you think the evidence is unconvincing? Why do you not believe the witness of the Bible? Why do you believe that your argument against the Bible is trustworthy? How do you know that is true? Where did you learn that?

ARGUMENT FROM FOLLY

Question - *Since you are obviously committed to independence, by what standard to you hold to your position that the Bible is not the word of God? Logic, Human reason? Third party authorities? etc. Please justify your position.*

Demonstrate - *If you will permit, I can demonstrate to you that your particular objection to the Bible being the word of God is self-refuting, by your own standard of "proof."*

- **Statement of Absolute Certainty** - *"The Bible contradicts itself / "The Bible is not God's word because it was written by men"*
 1. *"You have not examined both the Bible and all of the other resource materials in order to know that you have not simple misunderstood either the Bible or those materials which you think are contradictory. I would be delighted to help you harmonize them."*
 2. *"You have not and cannot examine the Bible and the other resource materials enough to know that you have exhausted all the possible explanations of this so-called contradiction."*
 3. *"Until you can say with complete certainty that there is no possible explanation for the so-called contradiction which you allege, you can not reject Biblical authority on this basis."*
 4. *"you have not established and you cannot establish with certainty that the human authorship of the Bible under the miracle of inspiration means at there are errors in the Bible."*
- **Statement of Total Uncertainty** - *"Because we do not have the original autographs of the Bible we can not know that we actually have the Word of God."*
 1. *"You have not, and cannot examine all of the manuscript evidence which exists demonstrating that we have accurate copies of the original autographs. Furthermore, you have not mastered the science of textual criticism, therefore you are unable by your own standard to reject the authority of the Bible on the basis that we do not have the original manuscripts."*
 2. *"Even though you hold a PhD in textual criticism you have not, and cannot study all of the existing manuscripts in order to prove that the promise of God to preserve His word is not true."*

Challenge - *The only way out of the irrationality and self-defeating position in which you find yourself is to repent of your commitment to independence and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved.*