

# Gateway #3 – Discovering the God of the Word



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## Can we trust the Bible?

- ◉ What do you think about the Bible?
  - Is it just a good book with good teaching – but just like any other book written by men?
  - Is it all true or just parts of it?
  - Do think it is “divinely inspired”?
  - Do you think what it says has authority over your life?

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## Can we trust the Bible?

- Questions we will attempt to answer in this talk
  - What is the Bible?
  - Where did it come from?
  - What is its message?
  - Do we need it to find God?
  - Can we trust it?
  - Is it true? How do we know?
  - Does it have authority over us?

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## ○ The History of the Bible

- The word “Bible” means books
- 2 parts – Old Testament & New Testament
- 66 Books (39 OT & 27 NT) written in 3 languages by 40 different authors over the period of 1500 years
- The NT quotes the OT about 300 times and alludes to it over 4000 times (inter-related and connected)
- Chapters (book divisions) added in 1200’s and verses added in 1500’s
- OT – Law, Prophets & Writings
- NT – Gospels & Acts, Epistles (Letters), Apocalypse

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## ● The Message of the Bible

- 1 Peter 1:10-12...

<sup>10</sup>Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, <sup>11</sup>trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. <sup>12</sup>It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

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## ● The Message of the Bible

- 1 Peter 1:10-12... The Bible is primarily about 3 things: **Salvation, Grace, Suffering of Jesus**
- The Bible is the story of God revealing himself to us and his plan to save his beloved creation from sin
- Our sin has separated us from God
- Story about a hero (Jesus) who conquers sin & death by taking our punishment upon himself rescuing us from the penalty of sin (death)
- The Bible's central figure is Jesus – he's the hero!!!
- We can have life and forgiveness through Jesus!

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- Can the Bible be trusted? Is it true?

- 2 Timothy 3:16...

- <sup>16</sup>All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup>so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

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- Can the Bible be trusted? Is it true?
  - 2 Timothy 3:16...
  - Trustworthiness... Inspired by God
  - Set apart from other religious texts because of prophecy (100's – all have come true)
    - Only God knows the future and only he can predict it perfectly
  - God used human authors to write his revelation and his plan of salvation
  - The Bible is God's book – he wrote it through human authors!

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## ○ Criticism of the Bible

- Matthew 5:17-20...

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

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## ○ Criticism of the Bible

- Matthew 5:17-20
- Since it was written, men have tried to destroy it
- Antiochus IV Epiphanes – 170 BC
  - Greek King who ruled over Jewish people
  - Wanted to destroy Jewish religion
  - Tried to destroy all known copies of the Jewish Bible
- Emperor of Rome, Dychlysian, outlawed Bible – every copy destroyed and Christian owners killed
- Many stories of people murdered, tortured, persecuted because they believed/had a Bible

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## ○ Criticism of the Bible

- Enlightenment: 1728 Voltaire – French philosopher
  - Believed the Bible was an outdated book and would be obsolete in 100 years
  - After his death, his home became a distribution hub and a place to print Bibles for the Geneva Bible Society
- Modern day communism – was illegal to own a Bible
- 1 Peter 1:24-25... For, "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord stands forever." And this is the word that was preached to you.

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- **A Conclusion to our investigation**
  - After thousands of years of criticism and intended destruction, the Bible is still here – it has outlasted all of its critics and will continue to do so
  - After considering all the information and evidence from our investigation into the Bible...
    - This is why we believe it is true and trustworthy
    - This is why it has authority over us (it's God's book)
    - This is why we teach from it – it tells us who Jesus is!
- **A word of caution... Overwhelming evidence does not mean you will believe. People saw Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead, yet did not believe!**

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## ◉ The Gateway... How do you read it?

1. With prayer – you should always begin reading by praying that...
  - The Holy Spirit would speak to you and reveal himself to you
  - He would help you understand what you are reading
2. Slowly – the bible is not to be read like a novel or a magazine. You need to read it slowly and stop when you don't understand something
3. It is important to wrestle with God's word because it will often not fit your experience.

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- **The Gateway... How do you read it?**
  4. After reading a passage, stop to pray and think about it. Ask God to show you what he wants to teach you
  5. The primary purpose of reading the Bible is to get to know God. The Words are very important, but it is what/who they point to that is of greatest importance
  6. You need to talk about what your reading and learning with other believers.
- Remember - the Bible is God's living and active word. It's not dead words on paper!

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