

Question: "Is the Bible truly God's Word?"

Answer from GotQuestions.org: Our answer to this question will not only determine how we view the Bible and its importance to our lives, but also it will ultimately have an eternal impact on us. If the Bible is truly God's Word, then we should cherish it, study it, obey it, and fully trust it. If the Bible is the Word of God, then to dismiss it is to dismiss God Himself.

The fact that God gave us the Bible is an evidence and illustration of His love for us. The term "revelation" simply means that God communicated to mankind what He is like and how we can have a right relationship with Him. These are things that we could not have known had God not divinely revealed them to us in the Bible. Although God's revelation of Himself in the Bible was given progressively over approximately 1500 years, it has always contained everything man needs to know about God in order to have a right relationship with Him. If the Bible is truly the Word of God, then it is the final authority for all matters of faith, religious practice, and morals.

The question we must ask ourselves is how can we know that the Bible is the Word of God and not just a good book? What is unique about the Bible that sets it apart from all other religious books ever written? Is there any evidence that the Bible is truly God's Word? These types of questions must be seriously examined if we are to determine the validity of the Bible's claim to be the very Word of God, divinely inspired, and totally sufficient for all matters of faith and practice. There can be no doubt that the Bible does claim to be the very Word of God. This is clearly seen in Paul's commendation to Timothy: "... from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" ([2 Timothy 3:15-17](#)).

There are both internal and external evidences that the Bible is truly God's Word. The internal evidences are those things within the Bible that testify of its divine origin. One of the first internal evidences that the Bible is truly God's Word is seen in its unity. Even though it is really sixty-six individual books, written on three continents, in three different languages, over a period of approximately 1500 years, by more than 40 authors who came from many walks of life, the Bible remains one unified book from beginning to end without contradiction. This unity is unique from all other books and is evidence of the divine origin of the words which God moved men to record.

Another of the internal evidences that indicates the Bible is truly God's Word is the prophecies contained within its pages. The Bible contains hundreds of detailed prophecies relating to the future of individual nations including Israel, certain cities, and mankind. Other prophecies concern the coming of One who would be the Messiah, the Savior of all who would believe in Him. Unlike the prophecies found in other religious books or those by men such as Nostradamus, biblical prophecies are extremely detailed. There are over three hundred prophecies concerning Jesus Christ in the Old Testament. Not only was it foretold where He would be born and His lineage, but also how He would

die and that He would rise again. There simply is no logical way to explain the fulfilled prophecies in the Bible other than by divine origin. There is no other religious book with the extent or type of predictive prophecy that the Bible contains.

A third internal evidence of the divine origin of the Bible is its unique authority and power. While this evidence is more subjective than the first two, it is no less a powerful testimony of the divine origin of the Bible. The Bible's authority is unlike any other book ever written. This authority and power are best seen in the way countless lives have been transformed by the supernatural power of God's Word. Drug addicts have been cured by it, homosexuals set free by it, derelicts and deadbeats transformed by it, hardened criminals reformed by it, sinners rebuked by it, and hate turned to love by it. The Bible does possess a dynamic and transforming power that is only possible because it is truly God's Word.

There are also external evidences that indicate the Bible is truly the Word of God. One is the historicity of the Bible. Because the Bible details historical events, its truthfulness and accuracy are subject to verification like any other historical document. Through both archaeological evidences and other writings, the historical accounts of the Bible have been proven time and time again to be accurate and true. In fact, all the archaeological and manuscript evidence supporting the Bible makes it the best-documented book from the ancient world. The fact that the Bible accurately and truthfully records historically verifiable events is a great indication of its truthfulness when dealing with religious subjects and doctrines and helps substantiate its claim to be the very Word of God.

Another external evidence that the Bible is truly God's Word is the integrity of its human authors. As mentioned earlier, God used men from many walks of life to record His words. In studying the lives of these men, we find them to be honest and sincere. The fact that they were willing to die often excruciating deaths for what they believed testifies that these ordinary yet honest men truly believed God had spoken to them. The men who wrote the New Testament and many hundreds of other believers ([1 Corinthians 15:6](#)) knew the truth of their message because they had seen and spent time with Jesus Christ after He had risen from the dead. Seeing the risen Christ had a tremendous impact on them. They went from hiding in fear to being willing to die for the message God had revealed to them. Their lives and deaths testify to the fact that the Bible truly is God's Word.

A final external evidence that the Bible is truly God's Word is the indestructibility of the Bible. Because of its importance and its claim to be the very Word of God, the Bible has suffered more vicious attacks and attempts to destroy it than any other book in history. From early Roman Emperors like Diocletian, through communist dictators and on to modern-day atheists and agnostics, the Bible has withstood and outlasted all of its attackers and is still today the most widely published book in the world.

Throughout time, skeptics have regarded the Bible as mythological, but archeology has confirmed it as historical. Opponents have attacked its teaching as primitive and outdated, but its moral and legal concepts and teachings have had a positive influence on societies

and cultures throughout the world. It continues to be attacked by pseudo-science, psychology, and political movements, yet it remains just as true and relevant today as it was when it was first written. It is a book that has transformed countless lives and cultures throughout the last 2000 years. No matter how its opponents try to attack, destroy, or discredit it, the Bible remains; its veracity and impact on lives is unmistakable. The accuracy which has been preserved despite every attempt to corrupt, attack, or destroy it is clear testimony to the fact that the Bible is truly God's Word and is supernaturally protected by Him. It should not surprise us that, no matter how the Bible is attacked, it always comes out unchanged and unscathed. After all, Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away" ([Mark 13:31](#)). After looking at the evidence, one can say without a doubt that, yes, the Bible is truly God's Word.

Recommended Resource: [Making Sense of Bible Difficulties: Clear and Concise Answers from Genesis to Revelation by Geisler & Howe.](#)

Question: "Has the Bible been corrupted, altered, edited, revised, or tampered with?"

Answer from GotQuestions.org: The books of the Old Testament were written from approximately 1400 B.C. to 400 B.C. The books of the New Testament were written from approximately A.D. 40 to A.D. 90. So, anywhere between 3400 to 1900 years have passed since a book of the Bible was written. In this time, the original manuscripts have been lost. They very likely no longer exist. Also during this time, the books of the Bible have been copied again and again. Copies of copies of copies have been made. In view of this, can we still trust the Bible?

When God originally inspired men to write His Word, it was God-breathed and inerrant ([2 Timothy 3:16-17](#); [John 17:17](#)). The Bible nowhere applies this to copies of the original manuscripts. As meticulous as scribes were with the replication of the Scriptures, no one is perfect. As a result, minor differences arose in the various copies of the Scriptures. Of all of the thousands of Greek and Hebrew manuscripts that are in existence, no two were identical until the printing press was invented in the A.D. 1500s.

However, any unbiased document scholar will agree that the Bible has been remarkably well-preserved over the centuries. Copies of the Bible dating to the 14th century A.D. are nearly identical in content to copies from the 3rd century A.D. When the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, scholars were shocked to see how similar they were to other ancient copies of the Old Testament, even though the Dead Sea Scrolls were hundreds of years older than anything previously discovered. Even many hardened skeptics and critics of the Bible admit that the Bible has been transmitted over the centuries far more accurately than any other ancient document.

There is absolutely no evidence that the Bible has been revised, edited, or tampered with in any systematic manner. The sheer volume of biblical manuscripts makes it simple to recognize any attempts to distort God's Word. There is no major doctrine of the Bible

that is put in doubt as a result of the minor differences that exist between manuscripts.

Again, the question, can we trust the Bible? Absolutely! God has preserved His Word despite the unintentional failings and intentional attacks of human beings. We can have utmost confidence that the Bible we have today is the same Bible that was originally written. The Bible is God's Word, and we can trust it (2 Timothy 3:16; Matthew 5:18).

Recommended Resource: The Big Book of Bible Difficulties by Geisler & Howe.

Question: "How do we know that the Bible is the Word of God, and not the Apocrypha, the Qur'an, the Book of Mormon, etc.?"

Answer from GotQuestions.org: The question of which (if any) religious text is the true word of God is of utmost importance. To avoid circular reasoning, the first question we must ask is: how would we know if God communicated in the first place? Well, God would have to communicate in a manner that people could understand, but that also means that people could make up their own messages and simply claim that they came from God. So, it seems reasonable to think that if God wanted to authenticate His communication He would have to verify it in a manner that could not be duplicated by mere humans - in other words, by miracles. This narrows the field considerably.

Beyond the evidence for the Bible's correctness (manuscript evidence) and its historicity (archeological evidence), the most important evidence is that of its inspiration. The real determination of the Bible's claim to absolute inspired truth is in its supernatural evidence, including prophecy. God used prophets to speak and write down His Word and God uses miracles like fulfilled prophecy to authenticate His messengers. For example, in Genesis 12:7, God promises that the land of Israel was to be for Abraham and his descendants. In 1948 Israel was returned back to the Jewish people for the second time in history. This may not seem so astonishing until you realize that no nation in the history of the world has been scattered from its homeland and returned! Israel has done it twice. The book of Daniel predicts with accuracy the coming of the four great kingdoms from Babylon, to Medo-Persia, to Greece, to Rome centuries before some of those kingdoms came on the scene (a time span of over 1,000 years!) with details concerning how they would rule and be broken. This includes the reigns of Alexander the Great and Antiochus Epiphanies.

In Ezekiel 26 we can see in astonishing detail how the city of Tyre was to be destroyed, how it would be torn down, and how its debris would be thrown into the sea. When Alexander the Great marched on that area, he encountered a group of people holed up in a tower on an island off the coast near there. He could not cross the sea, so he could not fight those in the tower. Rather than wait them out, the proud conqueror had his army throw stones into the sea to build a land bridge to the tower. It worked. His army crossed the sea and overthrew the occupants of the stronghold. But where did he get so much stone? The rocks that were used for the land bridge were the leftover rubble from the city of Tyre . . . its stones cast into the sea!

There are so many prophecies concerning Christ (over 270!) that it would take more than a few screens worth of space to list them all. Further, Jesus would have had no control over many of them such as His birthplace or time of birth. Second, the odds of one man accidentally fulfilling even 16 of these are 1 in 10^{45} . How many is that? For comparison, there are less than 10^{82} atoms in the entire universe! And Jesus, who affirmed the Bible as the Word of God, proved His reliability and deity by His resurrection (an historical fact not easily ignored).

Now consider the Quran - its author, Muhammad, performed no miracles to back up his message (even when he was asked to by his followers - Sura 17:91-95; 29:47-51). Only in much later tradition (the Hadith) do any alleged miracles even show up and these are all quite fanciful (like Muhammad cutting the moon in half) and have zero reliable testimony to back them up. Further, the Quran makes clear historical errors. Muslims believe the Bible is inspired but with some errors from editing (Sura 2:136 as well as Suras 13, 16, 17, 20, 21, 23, 25). The question they cannot adequately answer is: "When was the Bible corrupted?" If they say before 600 A.D. then how can the Quran admonish believers to read it? If they claim it was after 600 A.D., then they have jumped out of the frying pan and into the fire, for we have absolutely no doubt as to the accuracy of biblical manuscripts from at least the 3rd century forward. Even if Christianity were false, the Quran still has an insurmountable problem because it makes judgments against Christians for believing things that they do not (nor have they ever) believed. For example, the Quran teaches that Christians believe the Trinity is the Father, the Mother (Mary), and the Son (Sura 5:73-75, 116), and the Quran also teaches that Christians believe that God had sex with Mary to have a son (Suras 2:116; 6:100-101; 10:68; 16:57; 19:35; 23:91; 37:149-151; 43:16-19). If the Quran is really from God, then it should at least be able to accurately report what Christians believe.

Joseph Smith, the author of the Book of Mormon, tried to do some miracles such as prophecy (a test for a true prophet in Deuteronomy 18:21-22) but failed several times. He foretold of Christ's second coming in History of the Church (HC) 2:382. Joseph Smith preached that the coming of the Lord would be in 56 years (about 1891). The second coming did not occur in 1891, and the Mormon Church does not claim that it did. Nor has it occurred since. He also prophesied that several cities would be destroyed in Doctrine and Covenants (D&C) 84:114-115. New York, Albany and Boston were to be destroyed if they rejected the gospel according to Smith. Joseph Smith himself went to New York, Albany, and Boston and preached there. These cities did not accept his gospel, yet they have not been destroyed. Another famous false prophecy of Joseph Smith was his "END OF ALL NATIONS" in D&C 87 concerning the rebellion of South Carolina in the war between the states. The South was supposed to call on Great Britain for aid, and as a result war would be poured out upon all nations; slaves would revolt; the inhabitants of the earth would mourn; famine, plague, earthquake, thunder, lightning, and a full end of all nations would result. The South finally did revolt in 1861, but the slaves did not rise up, war was not poured out upon all nations, there was no worldwide famine, plague, earthquake, etc., and there was no resulting "end of all nations."

The collection of writings that Protestants call the Apocrypha (hidden writings), Roman

Catholics call the deuterocanonical (later or second canon) books. These books were written between 300 B.C. and 100 A.D., the Intertestamental Period between the inspired writings of God's Prophets in the Old Testament and those of the Apostles and their contemporaries in the New Testament. These were "infallibly" accepted into the Bible by the Roman Catholic Church in 1546 at the Council of Trent. Now the Apocrypha would be covered under the evidence for the Bible if these writings were truly inspired - but evidence seems to indicate that they are not. In the Bible we find prophets of God whose messages are ratified by miracles or prophecy that comes true, and whose message is immediately accepted by the people (Deut 31:26; Josh. 24:26; 1 Samuel 10:25; Daniel 9:2; Col. 4:16; 2 Peter 3:15-16). What we find in the apocrypha is just the opposite - no apocryphal book was written by a prophet. None of these books were included in the Hebrew Scriptures. There is no ratification of the authors of any apocryphal book. No apocryphal book is cited as authoritative by later Biblical writers. There is no fulfilled prophecy in any apocryphal book. Finally, Jesus, who quoted from every section of Old Testament Scripture, never once quoted from the apocrypha. Neither did any of His disciples.

The Bible so far outshines every competing source for being God's revelation that if it is not God's Word, it would seem impossible to choose among the leftovers. If the Bible is not God's Word, then we have been left with no clear criteria by which to know what might be.

Recommended Resource: Inspiration and Authority of the Bible By Benjamin Warfield.