

VOC July 3, 2016

The Word of God

Hello Dear Listeners;

I have a book in my hands. It is a very special book really. In fact it is *The Book*, the Bible. That word, bible really means “book” for that word, “*bible*” comes to us from the Latin, *biblia* and the Greek, *biblios*.

Far from being an ordinary book, the Christian church confesses that it is the Word of God. The bible itself testifies that “ *The Word of God did not come by the will of man, but that men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.* “ The apostle Peter says this in what is known as 2 Peter 1:21.

For the next five weeks on this program we want to examine some of the riches of this revelation of God known as the bible. The source of our knowledge must be the bible itself for I hope you also do, and will, believe what the apostle Paul writes concerning the validity of the bible when he says, (in 2 Timothy 3: 16, “*All or, every ,Scripture is God-breathed ...*”

Now it is so that there are not a few who are more than a little sceptical about trusting the bible is God’s own word. In fact there are a lot of people, some of whom are very intelligent, who will deny outright that the bible is God’s infallible Word.

So what should make us so sure it really and truly is God’s Word? Is it because archeological confirmations of the biblical record have been almost without number for the last century? Certainly these confirmations of biblical history have caused a scholar like Dr. Nelson Glueck, considered by some to be the greatest modern authority on Israeli archaeology to say,

No archeological discovery has ever contradicted a Biblical reference. Scores of archeological findings have been made which confirm, often in exact detail ,historical statements in the Bible. And, by the same token, proper evaluation of Biblical descriptions has often led to amazing discoveries. ¹

Another thing worth considering is the fact that many of the principles of modern science were recorded as facts of nature in the Bible long before scientists confirmed them experimentally. A sampling of these would include:

The fact the Earth is round (Isaiah 40:22)

The almost infinite extent of the star-studded universe

The Law of conservation of mass and energy (II Peter 3:7)

Hydrologic cycle (Ecclesiastes 1:7)

Paramount importance of blood in life processes (Leviticus 17:11)

Gravitational field (Job 26:7)

Perhaps the remarkable evidence of fulfilled prophecy in the bible should open our eyes as to the trustworthiness of the Word of God. Many, very many, biblical prophecies have been fulfilled, specifically, and exactly, long after the prophetic writer had passed away.

Here's but one example:

For example, Daniel the prophet predicted in about 538 BC (Daniel 9:24-27) that Christ would come as Israel's promised Savior and Prince 483 years after the Persian emperor would give

¹ Dr. Glueck quoted in an article on the net. See www.christiananswers.net

the Jews authority to rebuild Jerusalem, which was then in ruins. This was clearly and definitely fulfilled, hundreds of years later. ²

It has been estimated that more than three hundred prophecies concerning Jesus Christ were fulfilled by Christ during His first coming.

The remarkable structure of the Bible should also be stressed. Although it is a collection of 66 books, written by 40 or more different men over a period of 2,000 years, it is clearly one Book, with perfect unity and consistency throughout.

The one consistent theme of the Bible, developing in grandeur from Genesis to Revelation, is God's great work in the creation and renewal of all things, through His only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. That "renewal" or, "redemption" involves his renewing the whole earth one day, when He has first cleansed, it even with fire!

Now it is so that believers are not dependent on the testimony of history or of archeology nor even the dependability of fulfilled prophecy to prove that the bible is true. For this 'proof' if we may call it that is really a work of God the Holy Spirit who works faith in the hearts of people.

"Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." Hebrews 11:1. (NIV) We may say that faith is "unquestioning belief that does not require proof or evidence"; unquestioning belief in the Triune God and in God's Word. Such

² Also quoted from there article (above)

faith is God's amazing gift to all He is pleased to give it. To all those set apart for Himself in His wondrous love.

Those who have such faith do not dismiss these other so-called 'proofs' . They simply stand in awe of the beauty and sufficiency of the bible, as well as its *authority* and *dependability*. They sing and rejoice in that “ *All I have needed Thy hand has provided.... Great is Thy faithfulness, LORD, unto me*” .

When the bible testifies about itself that “ *All Scripture is God-breathed*”, (2 Tim. 3:16) you and I should truly stand in awe of what this God has done! “*The bible originated in God's mind, not in human minds.*”³ Yet He made it available to us, you and me, with our finite minds, so often dull and unresponsive. God bent down as it were, often times putting glorious, divine concepts into human language, that our lives might be filled and we might know the truth.

Christians believe that “ *God so superintended the writers of Scripture that they wrote what he wanted them to write, disclosing the exact truth He wanted conveyed.*”⁴ No, the holy Spirit who breathed out His Word into those writers did not change them into robots. He did not deprive the writers of their individuality but left their individuality, their personality and backgrounds intact. That adds to the wonder of the bible and we see those personalities shining through in what they wrote. Think of the musician David's 'poetic bent' in the many Psalms he wrote. Consider Luke “ the

³ Little, Paul E. Know What You Believe, p.20

⁴ Ibid, p. 20

physician's" detailed attention to the Jesus' medical miracles and the concise, we might almost say, "hurried" Gospel of that young man Mark. (Is it not like many young men to be in a hurry?

Must we speak about the inspired Scriptures? We use that term as well as this one, "*inerrant*", of the text as *originally produced by the writers*. Although some minor errors may have crept into the text over the many, many years the bible was copied, most often by hand, yet the church confesses that it was because of God's "*Special care for us and our salvation*"(that) "*He commanded his servants , the prophets and apostles to commit His revealed Word to writing*" ⁵

Sure, languages change, and we shouldn't forget the Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew and the New in Greek. Yet when scholars opened what was the Isaiah scroll of what is known as the Dead Sea, or Qumran scrolls they found there were no essential changes in this Isaiah text . This while close to one thousand years separated it from what at that time had been considered the earliest known copy in existence of Isaiah's book.

We need to cherish this "special care" of God for believers today. For that care actually extends to the whole of His creation. It still is " Our Father's world" . This earth is not some nondescript piece of dirt and rock floating in a vast 'soup-of-a-universe/. What does the bible itself say?

⁵ The Belgic Confession, art 3

For God so loved the world that He sent His One and Only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have external life.

John 3:16

Let us stand amazed at this grace and mercy of the LORD God. We did not, and do not deserve the bible! He could have left us to wander in the darkness of our unbelief and superstitions.

But He spoke, He promised, and He acted on His promises. He revealed, uncovered and disclosed His will for our lives. He tells us of His mighty acts in history. That hearing His Word we might believe and believing, have life in His Name. Well then, let us take this Word in hand that by faith it might enter our hearts. For He is faithful still. Amen.

Till next time may God be with you.