



“Understanding the Bible”

Section 4: Why Can We Trust the Bible?

Unit 4.6: Witnessing the Worldwide Impact of God’s Word



I) Standing the Test of Time

- An endless number of religions, philosophies, and ideologies have all come and gone since the Fall of Man, but the Word of God revealed in Holy Scripture has stood the test of time. It started as the **spoken** Word, then became the **written** Word, then finally became the **printed** Word. And, at each stage of it being spoken, written, and printed, it has been under constant attack. However, the Bible continues to transcend in the unrivaled impact it has made on our world. As **Isaiah 40:8** proclaims, “*8 The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.*” Below are several historical markers that highlight where the Bible has been more influential than any other book ever read.

II) Finding Scripture’s Fingerprint on Society

- Human society is one of the first places we can easily find the fingerprint of Holy Scripture. There have been countless social and ethical movements throughout the history of civilization that were sparked because of the Bible including the following:
 - a) **Value of Human Life** – Being made in God’s image bestows equal value on every single person
 - b) **Dignity of Women** – Women’s true worth is recognized in society after centuries of marginalization
 - c) **Modern Healthcare** – Christian denominations create a blueprint for modern hospitals
 - d) **Education** – The Gutenberg Printing Press was created to get biblical truth in people’s hands
 - e) **Labor Rights** – Christians worldwide establish child labor laws still being implemented today
 - f) **Liberal Arts** – Famous Christians including composer Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) and artist Michelangelo (1475-1564) create beautiful music and art inspired by biblical narratives
 - g) **Sciences** – Scientific research is based on observing the natural order of an intelligent designer
 - h) **Literature & Philosophy** – Great books of the western world point to the biblical story of creation, fall, promise, redemption, and restoration
 - i) **Civil Rights** – Equal rights are argued for and established based on the biblical affirmation of value that God places on every tribe, tongue, and nation

III) The Purpose Behind the Pioneers

- When we also take a closer look at many of modern civilization’s pioneer organizations and their trail blazing founders, we quickly find their Christian faith based on biblical principles has often been the guiding purpose behind their work and mission:

Institutions

- a) **Salvation Army** – William Booth wanted to share the gospel with the poor and attack poverty
- b) **YMCA** – George Williams started a Bible study for young men to escape life on the streets
- c) **The Red Cross** – Henry Dunant was a Christian banker who wanted to care for wounded soldiers
- d) **Ivy League Schools** – Brilliant scholars founded Harvard, Yale, and Princeton to teach the Bible

Individuals

- a) **Galileo** – Italian astronomer and physicist who first used a telescope to explore God’s universe
- b) **Isaac Newton** – English scientist who discovered the law of gravity to prove God’s existence
- c) **William Wilberforce** – British politician and philanthropist who abolished the slave trade in England
- d) **Martin Luther King** – Baptist minister who led the civil rights movement in America

IV) From Harsh Critics to Humble Converts

- One of the most powerful displays of the Bible's influence on the world is to see how many people who tried to disprove Scripture only to become a believer of Jesus Christ in the process:
 - a) **Chuck Colson** – Richard Nixon's hatchet man who was converted while in prison for Watergate
 - b) **Josh McDowell** – An angry agnostic who later became a best-selling Christian author and apologist
 - c) **Lee Strobel** – An atheist writer from the Chicago Tribune whose investigation led him to faith
 - d) **Rosaria Butterfield** – A radical left-wing lesbian professor experienced a radical conversion to Christ
- As **Napoleon Bonaparte**, the great conqueror once said, *"The Bible is no mere book, but a living power that conquers all that oppose it."*

V) Writing His Word on Human Hearts

- A unique spiritual element that makes the Bible transcendent is that its words are written on hearts of readers before they ever read it. As the Lord proclaimed through the prophet Jeremiah concerning the New Covenant in **Jeremiah 31:33**: *"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people."* The Apostle Paul also affirmed this spiritual penmanship of God's words on men's hearts in **Romans 2:14-15** when he stated that Gentiles "...show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness."
- Scientific research also supports this divine claim of spiritual truth inscribed inside human beings. Chuck Colson recorded in his book, *The Faith*, that one Harvard scholar has actually found scientific evidence that God's law is written on man's heart. This scholar concluded after a long study that morality is grounded in our biology, because *"the brain incorporates a universal moral grammar, a tool kit for building specific moral systems."* This scholar was an agnostic, but the results of this research proves that the morally of God is written in our very DNA in bold letters deep within each of us.

VI) Swinging a Two-Edged Sword

- Another distinguishing feature of Scripture is that its words are *alive* and not *dead*. **Hebrews 4:12-13** declares, *"¹² For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. As Christian author Erwin Lutzer explains concerning the Bible as a two-edged sword, "The Roman sword has two edges; it cut both ways. God does not use this sword to destroy His people; He uses it to wound them that He might heal them. Here we have the Word of God at work."*

VII) O, Give Me That Book

- One famous theologian who was *wounded* and then *healed* by the words of Scripture was **John Wesley**. As the inspiration behind the Methodist movement, Wesley reported during his conversion after hearing God's Word preached, *"I felt my heart strangely warmed."* As he later became a minister of the Word, Wesley proclaimed, *"I am a creature of a day, passing through life as an arrow through the air...a few months hence, I am no more seen, I drop into an unchangeable eternity! I want to know one thing: the way to heaven. God Himself has condescended to teach the way; He has written it down in a book. O, give me that book – at any price give me that book!"*

VIII) Taste and See the Lord is Good

- This section includes many valid arguments about the truthfulness of God's Word. We have started with what the Bible has to say about itself, because that is the very foundation of all authority. We then showed how there is also evidence from *logic, history, science, prophecy, and Christology* that the Bible is absolute truth. But finally, after we examine all the experiential impact Scripture has had on the world, we also need to also cherish the impact it has had on us. As King David challenges us in **Psalms 34:8**, *"Taste and see the Lord is good."* Once we have tasted and seen God through His Holy Word, no one will ever be able to steal that taste away from your taste buds, or that truth from our hearts.