VALIDITY OF GOD’S WORD
The Trustworthiness of the Bible

Each section contains one type of evidence that testifies to the trustworthiness of the Bible. The sections are intended to complement each other, and verify the Bible from different views.

- Amazing Prophecy

“It has been computed that over one fourth of scripture is taken up with prophecy, and if any of the prophecies can be proven false, the claims of the Bible as a divine revelation are seriously impaired.”¹ To date no Bible prophecy can be proven false.

  o These prophecies concern events in the life of Jesus Christ; specifically, prophecies which He Himself could not cause to be fulfilled by being aware of them. In all cases, the first scripture quoted is the prophecy and the second is the fulfillment.²

    ▪ Place of birth
      - Micah 5:2 – “But you, Bethlehem…out of you will come one who will be ruler…”
      - Matthew 2:1 – “After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea…”
    ▪ Born of a Virgin
      - Isaiah 7:14 – “…the Lord Himself will give you a sign; the virgin will be with child.”
      - Matthew 1:18 – “Before they came together, she was found to be with child.”
    ▪ Crucified with Sinners
      - Isaiah 53:12 – “…because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors…”
      - Mark 15:27 – “They crucified two robbers with him…”
    ▪ Hands and Feet Pierced
      - Psalm 22:16 – “…they have pierced my hands and my feet.”
      - Luke 23:33 – “When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him…”
    ▪ Mocked and Insulted
      - Psalm 22:7 – “All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads…”
      - Matthew 27:39 – “Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads…”
    ▪ His Side Pierced
      - Zechariah 12:10 – “They will look to me, the one they have pierced…”
• John 19:34 – “…one of the soldiers pierced Jesus’ side with a spear…”

  ▪ Soldiers Cast Lots for His Clothes
  • Psalm 22:18 – “They divide my garments among them, and cast lots for my clothing.”
  • John 19:24 – “Let’s not tear it,’ they said…’Let’s decide by lot who will get it.”

  ▪ No Bones Broken
  • Psalm 34:20 – “He protects all his bones, not one of them will be broken.”
  • John 19:33 – “But when they came to Jesus…he was already dead, [so] they did not break his legs.”

  ▪ Jesus is Resurrected
  • Psalm 16:10 – “Because you will not abandon me to the grave, or will you let your Holy One see decay.”
  • Matthew 28:5-6 – “The angel said…’He is not here; he has risen just as he said.’”

• Historical Evidence

This section employs literary criticisms, namely time span, number of manuscript copies, and agreement between the copies.

The time span is an important consideration because textual corruption could have occurred in the period. A shorter time span leaves more room for a reliable text.

The number of ancient copies available for comparison greatly increases our ability to determine a text’s reliability. The more manuscripts available, the more we can detect textual reliability.

Furthermore, a large agreement between manuscripts increases our belief in a reliable text.

• Time span of composition to earliest copy

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<th>Author</th>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Written</th>
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<th>Time Span</th>
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<td>384-322 BC</td>
<td>1100 AD</td>
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<td>427-437 BC</td>
<td>900 AD</td>
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<td>Cesar</td>
<td>Gallic Wars</td>
<td>100-44 BC</td>
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<td>900 BC</td>
<td>400 BC</td>
<td>500 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Various</td>
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<td>40-80 AD</td>
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- Number of manuscripts available

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<th>Work</th>
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- Norman Geisler and William Nix, in their book *A General Introduction to the Bible*[^4], computed the agreement of the New Testament manuscripts. Disregarding differences in spelling and style, they found the agreement to be 98.33%.

- Conclusion: These statistics demonstrate why the New Testament is regarded as the most accurate work of antiquity in existence.

- Questions in Philosophy
  
  - Is the Christian concept of the Trinity contradictory?

  The term 'contradiction' describes situations that can not be mutually coexistent. If one defines an object as a book *and* not a book, a contradiction exists. Christians maintain that God is one in essence and three in person. This is a paradox – a seeming contradiction. If the Christian claimed that God is one in essence *and* three in essence, a contradiction would exist. The concept of the Trinity is not contradictory, it is simply a mystery.

  - How can miracles happen?

  A miracle is an event that seems to occur contrary to known scientific ‘laws’. However, one must recall that a ‘scientific law’ is a generalization of observed natural tendencies; it does not dictate or explain what can, or does, actually happen. A miracle (according to the Christian) is a spontaneous act of God, so it can not be studied. So the fact of an event’s occurrence does not rest with the question of explaining it, but on supporting its occurrence through evidence (historical *and* witnessed).

  - How do you know God exists?

    The question of the existence of a personal God has divided people since the beginning of philosophy. How can we be sure that God does, or, for that matter, does not, exist? The answer? We can’t! There is probably no way to philosophically prove the existence of a personal God for the simple reason that we *can not know everything*. So we must turn to other means of ‘proving the existence’ of God. The most logical place to turn is the historical evidence. But can history support the existence of a personal God? Let’s see:
The Christian believes that God exists because He has revealed Himself to the world through the Bible. The evidence for the historicity of the Bible is more than adequate in demonstrating its historical accuracy. If the Bible (regarded as the most accurate historical work of antiquity) testifies to the existence of a personal God (through miracles, prophecy, etc.), then there is more than enough evidence to deal with a person’s doubts. We know God exists because history overwhelmingly indicates God exists.

Notes

1 Dr. Herbert Locklyer, All the Doctrines of the Bible, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan, 1964, p. 279


3 Josh McDowell, Evidence That Demands a Verdict, San Bernardino, California; Here’s Life Publishers, Inc., 1986


Suggested Reading

The Bible:

John 3:16; 1:12; 14; 6; 5:24
Romans 10:9-10; 6:23
Ephesians 2:8-9
1 John 5:11-12

Josh McDowell:

Answers to Tough Questions
Reasons Skeptics Should Consider Christianity
Evidence That Demands a Verdict

Billy Graham:

Answers to Life’s Problems
The Secret of Happiness
The Christian Worker’s Handbook