


Questions & Answers

Part 1: You Can Trust the Bible

TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS



A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

2018.9.2



Questions for Reflection

- Two people encounter the **same** opportunity—bungee jumping, viewing a cobra up-close, etc.—and **evaluate** and **respond** to it in vastly different ways due to the **assumptions** that each holds. Discuss how your assumptions shape something you feel strongly about (positively or negatively).

- Review "Strength in Numbers" (in the Sermon Summary). **Why** do you think that people who doubt the Bible often have no problem accepting other ancient documents, which have much less support?

Tell about any changes in confidence in Scripture you've experienced over the years.

Discuss Ravi Zacharias' quote (Sermon Summary). [And view his YouTube interview by John Ankerberg.]

Why do you think the New Testament documents don't get the respect they deserve?

- Henry Morris (see quote in Sermon Summary), was Professor and Department Chair of Civil Engineering at Virginia Tech and **a world leader in the field of hydraulics**. His ground-breaking book, **The Genesis Flood**, which Virginia Tech deemed "too controversial", precipitated his departure!

Typically experts **refrain from making** sweeping, broad statements. They qualify their comments. In contrast, notice Morris' quote. Given Morris' credentials, what should we make of such a sweeping, absolute pronouncement?

How do you need to rethink your level of confidence in Scripture?

Got questions about what's really true?
For free hope and help write to:
counseling@tcc.org

Application-Challenge

- Using the attached "cheat card", review the arguments for a trustworthy Bible. Become familiar discussing worldview by engaging a believing friend or family member in a discussion.
- Throughout the week, "Dig Deeper" into the trustworthiness of the Bible (see the inside spread of today's *Talking Points, Walking Points*).
- Examine yourself: Do you sit **beneath**, **beside**, or **above** the authority of the Bible?
- For further study, read the very accessible **Know Why You Believe** by Paul Little, or consult the exhasutive and thorough **New Evidence That Demands a Verdict** by Josh McDowell.

Sermon Summary

Your worldview is the lens through which you interpret everything around you. Two people can receive the exact same information and arrive at totally different conclusions, decisions, or actions based on the lens through which they view the information. Some people spend a great deal of time examining and challenging their worldview, while others can't necessarily articulate how they arrived at their particular worldview. But there's no relationship between how much time you have spent examining your worldview and how influential it is in your life. Let's begin by establishing two "guardrails" for this exploration of worldview: Every question we'll be asking in this series is so foundational and has so many implications that it's not possible for us to completely cover it in 30 minutes. Please speak to one of the pastors if there's something we don't cover. While the biblical worldview might leave us with some unanswered questions (after all, we're not God), it is not reasonable to reject a worldview just because it doesn't offer an explanation for every detail of the universe or society. It is reasonable, however, to reject a worldview that offers explanations that have been proven wrong.

The most foundational question that must be answered before we can get to any other questions is the question of truth: "Can we trust the Bible?" If we can't trust the bible itself, why would we allow it to influence our morals, values, and decisions? Now, we could spend years evaluating the validity of scripture, so instead of presenting a comprehensive argument, I want to look at three specific arguments that make trusting the bible a rational, intelligent position. Then, I want to talk about what impact a trustworthy Bible should have on our worldview. We will explore some evidence for the validity of scripture, but first it is important to note that the Bible categorically claims to be the direct word of God (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21). Just like in a courtroom, first-person testimony might not be the only evidence to consider, but it's monumentally important. Jesus himself never placed his words (the "red letters") above the writings of the Old Testament, yet today it's often claimed that unless Jesus spoke directly about something, we don't really need to pay much attention. Let's talk briefly about **three compelling arguments for the trustworthiness of scripture.**

[1] Strength in Numbers The New Testament has no rival when it comes to the number of surviving manuscripts. There are 643 surviving copies of Homer's Iliad work—the runner up. The oldest copy dates from 1800 years after Homer. There is significant historical evidence for the text of the Iliad. In comparison, there are over 5,600 surviving manuscripts of the New Testament, appearing within 300 years of original authorship (partial manuscripts from 20 years after Jesus' crucifixion even exist). *Ravi Zacharias notes: "The New Testament is easily the best attested ancient writing in terms of the sheer number of documents, the time span between the events and the document, and the variety of documents available to sustain or contradict it. There is nothing in ancient manuscript evidence to match such textual availability and integrity."* There's not a single piece of ancient writing that is remotely as trustworthy as the New Testament. So, can you trust the New Testament? The evidence says you'd be crazy not to. **[2] Digging for Truth** Archaeology continues to explore the ancient setting of the Old Testament, it continues to find support rather than opposition. Consider the following quick facts: [a] The ancient sites of Sodom and Gomorrah have been discovered and archaeological evidence points to some kind of intense heat event occurred that molded together the top layers of sedimentary rock. [b] The excavations of the ancient city of Jericho revealed that the walls of the city fell outward in some kind of catastrophic event. Typically, the walls of besieged cities fall inward. [c] Inscriptions have been found attesting to David, Israel's great king. *Henry Morris concludes: "There exists today not one unquestionable find of archaeology that proves the Bible to be in error at any point."* **[3] The Sum of the Parts** The Bible is one consistent narrative of a knowable, unchanging God and his relationship with mankind, yet the Bible was written over the course of around 1500 years, by more than forty vastly different authors (kings, warriors, prisoners, historians, prophets). It was written on three continents, in three different languages. How could these people from vastly different circumstances, from halfway across the world, separated by centuries or even a millenium communicate the story of the same God if it isn't true?

Even so, many Christians have a man-made, not a biblical, worldview. They pick and choose which parts of the Bible they'll accept and reject. Many parents worry about the next generation, and we blame media or culture for luring our kids into a climate of relativism. But instead of upholding the authority of scripture, many of us have compromised, cobbling together our own worldviews. But only an authoritative Bible provides concrete answers to life's most difficult questions.

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

"Five Question Bible Study" (see page below) *is a simple way to study any passage.*
We can use it to explore the superior truthfulness of Scripture...

Monday— Deuteronomy 8:3 & Matthew 4:4

Tuesday— Psalm 19:7-10

Wednesday— Colossians 2:22 & 1 Timothy 4:1

Thursday— James 3:13-18

Friday— 1 Peter 2:1-3

Saturday— ***In preparation for worshipping your risen Lord tomorrow with your church family,*** read 1 Samuel 5:1—6:18.

Need blank copies for doing more
"Five Question Bible Study"?
e-mail: Dan.Clement.TCC@gmail.com

Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) is it found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



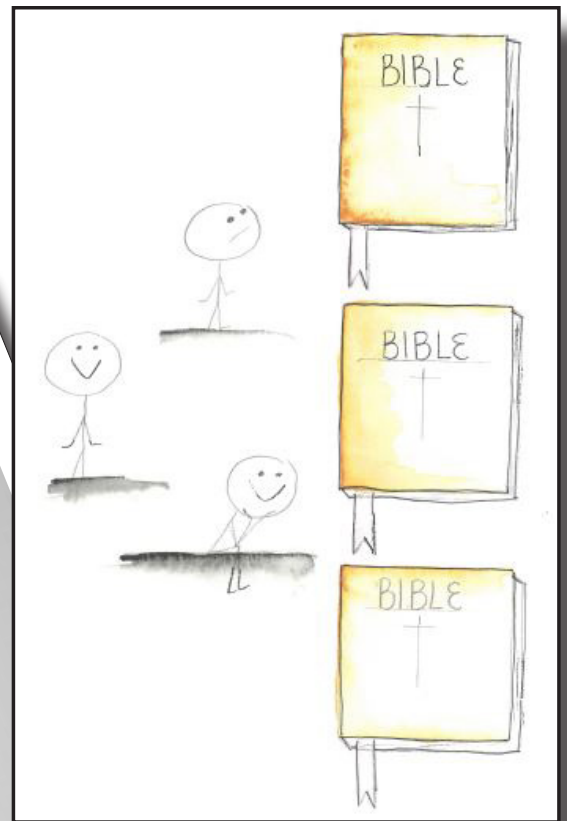
What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text?



Trusting the Bible “*Cheat Card*”



- The New Testament is the single most historically attested document from the ancient world. There are over 5,600 manuscripts compared to 643 for the runner up.
- Modern archaeological digs have discovered Sodom and Gomorrah and ancient Jericho and support the biblical accounts of the cities.
- The Bible was written over 1,500 years across three continents, in three languages by 40+ authors and yet there are no meaningful contradictions.