

“Armored Saint: Sword to the Wise”

Ephesians 6:17, Psalm 119:9-16, Et al.

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All Scripture quoted from ESV unless otherwise noted

Believing the Bible because of what the Bible is *an argument based on circular logic*. Proving that the Bible is God’s Word to someone who doesn’t already believe in its authority, means using sources other than the Bible.

NON-BIBLICAL PROOFS FOR THE BIBLE

Manuscript evidence

- We have copies of manuscripts for portions of the Bible throughout the centuries that continue to convey the same message and meaning

*Archaeological evidence***[1]**

- Archaeological proof for the Bible includes: The Dead Sea Scrolls – Ketef Hinnom Scrolls – Moabite Stone – Assyrian obelisk referring to Jehu – inscription bearing the name “Pilate” – the home of the apostle Peter – ossuary containing bones of Caiaphas – Tel Dan Inscription – remains of Gomorrah – Pool of Siloam – Herod’s Temple – P⁵² manuscript – and many more

Literary evidence

- The Bible is a collection of 66 books written over the course of 1500 years by perhaps 35-40 authors as diverse as kings and shepherds, priests and fishermen, prophets and advisors to kings, not to mention a tax collector, a scribe, a tentmaker, a military commander, and even a physician. Yet despite the broad range of authorship, worldview, location, and date of authorship, the books of the Bible contain one message that is coherent and consistent, & free from contradictions

*Prophetic evidence***[2]**

- With a track record of 100% accuracy, the Bible leads the objective witness to conclude that God’s Word is not merely the words of man, but is in fact, divinely inspired and does in fact contain the very words, thoughts, and intentions of the one true God.

Pastor Smeal’s tips on reading the Bible

1. *Prepare your heart and mind to receive from God’s Word*
2. *Read God’s Word regularly*
3. *Read in bite-sized chunks*

4. *Read across several good translations (ESV, NASB, NKJV, NIV – in that order.)*
5. *Take notes – questions, observations, related thought*
6. *Talk about what you've read – don't be afraid*

The Bible is *meant to be a weapon you can use against the enemy of your soul* in the ongoing spiritual battle for your heart, mind, and soul. Don't turn your swords on each other!

- *The Bible is meant to be studied*
- *The Bible is meant to be carried*
- *The Bible is meant to be understood*
- *The Bible is meant to be useful*

Trust the Word because you trust the Author

- *“To disbelieve or disobey any word of Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God”
(Wayne Grudem)*

We are embroiled in an intense and raging spiritual war

- Do not be discouraged when it appears the enemy is winning. *You are victorious already!* You are a warrior! – do not grow weary in well doing. Prepare your heart and mind for battle by putting on the full armor of God

[1] <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/how-do-we-know-the-bible-is-true-2/>

[2] <https://answersingenesis.org/is-the-bible-true/3-evidences-confirm-bible-not-made-up/>

DIG IN!

Here are some farm-fresh questions that will help you to personalize and apply this morning's message.

1. ***What was most surprising, unexpected, or helpful from today's passage/message? Why?***
2. ***What is one of your favorite Bible verses/passages? What makes it so meaningful to you?***
3. ***Which of the four major proofs for the authenticity of the Bible given in this message (Manuscript, Archaeological, Literary, and Prophetic) is the most convincing to you? Which one was the most surprising or informative? Why?***

4. *Pastor Smeal gave 6 tips for reading the Bible. Which one of these 6 seems to be the easiest or most natural for you? Which one is the most challenging? What will you do to help overcome this challenge?*
5. *What characteristics would reliable translations of the Bible have in common? How can you make sure the translation(s) you choose to study has these characteristics?*
6. *What are some of the contradictions that you have heard people say are in the Bible?*
7. *Why do you suppose some people refuse to change when the Bible challenges their way of thinking or their way of life? In what way has the Bible challenged you to change your behavior or thinking recently? How have you responded to that challenge?*
8. *Today's references regarding the authority and authenticity of the Bible include: 2 Timothy 3:14-17, 2 Peter 1:19-21, Genesis 19:24-28, Deuteronomy 18:22, Ephesians 6:17, 2 Timothy 2:15, Psalm 119:11, and Hebrews 4:12*
9. *What have you learned through your personal time of Bible reading this week?*