

The Bible As The Final Authority

Introduction

Let's talk about the Bible. I use it as my main source to validate all that I say. But most people, including Christians, do not read the Bible with any regularity and therefore do not know the God of the Bible. They know only what their pastor or others tell them. Here's a brief history lesson.

The history of the Bible starts with a phenomenal account, the creation of all things. It's not one book like many think -- It's an ancient collection of writings, comprised of 66 separate books, written over approximately 1,600 years, by at least 40 distinct authors. The Old Testament contains 39 books written from approximately 1500 BC to 400 BC, and the New Testament contains 27 books written from approximately 40 to 90 AD. The Jewish Bible (*Tanakh*) is the same as the Christian Old Testament, except for its book arrangement. The original Old Testament was written mainly in Hebrew, with some Aramaic, while the original New Testament was written in common Greek.

Starting in about 40 AD, and continuing to about 90 AD, the eye-witnesses to the life of Jesus, including Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, James, Peter and Jude, wrote the Gospels which were letters and books that eventually became the Bible's New Testament. These authors quote from 31 books of the Old Testament. They widely circulated their material so that by about 150 AD, early Christians were referring to the entire set of writings as the "New Covenant." During the 200s AD, the original writings were translated from Greek into Latin, Coptic (Egypt) and Syriac (Syria), and widely disseminated as "Inspired Scripture" throughout the Roman Empire and beyond. In 397 AD, in an effort to protect the scriptures from various heresies and offshoot religious movements, the current 27 books of the New Testament were formally and finally confirmed and "canonized" in the Synod of Carthage.

What I hope you will see from this snapshot of the Bible in history is that God took great pains to validate His Word to man over many years, keeping it clear, and indisputable as the only true source of His revelation. These eyewitness accounts and prophetic revelations all connect to make a complete proof of God's existence, character, power, love, salvation, judgment, compassion, mercy and forgiveness. His entire plan of salvation and the ages to come is all written down so we could benefit from them.

Time and time again I have asked the Lord questions and found the answers in the Bible. I can remember one in particular. I was attending a small Christian fellowship that met in a barn. The leadership was teaching that God's judgment upon America was to come soon and that they could escape it by leaving the states and going to a remote desert-like place in another country. Several families had already moved to this undisclosed destination. I was a very young believer and not as knowledgeable as I am now in the scriptures...so I turned to Jesus and asked Him if these people were correct and if I should go with them. Here's what I read during my prayer and Bible reading.

Mathew 24:26, wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.

This is just one example of many that God has communicated to me through the Bible. Try it...when you are troubled, confused or worried about life or just need an answer to life's never ending questions, pray and ask Jesus to show you in His Word, the Bible.

The Bible was written under "Inspiration" from the Holy Spirit. The word, "inspire" means "To breathe upon or into something". God revealed Himself through individuals who penned the written word.

As a young Christian, I often witnessed to un-believers, using the Bible as my source. Some of those I talked to told me that the Bible was not a source they would accept. I went to my pastor and asked him what I should do because folks were not open to hear what the Bible had to say. He led me to Hebrews 4:12 and said. "Use It Anyway," for the reasons stated in chapter four. Listen to what it says. "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12) I did just that and began to see the words of the Bible break down barriers and soften hearts.

I know that anyone who is really seeking God and wants to know about Jesus will find everything in the Bible. Words will leap off the page, bringing fresh revelation, historical facts, wisdom, divine counsel and victory over life's every trial. All you have to do is spend some time every day in prayer and Bible reading.

Until Next Time

Rev. John Marinelli

info@ministryandmarketingservices.com