



Reinforcing Your Faith

Zoom Bible Study
led by Mary Lowman

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Reinforcing Your Faith – Session 4 Is the Bible Trustworthy?

Introduction

Everything you and I believe hinges on whether or not the Bible is God's inspired word to us. Since it was written so many centuries ago by so many different people, what is our assurance that we have the original documents? How do we answer the doubting people who say we have no way to be certain this is God's Word? How do we respond when people say the Bible is a book written about God but not inspired by God? This is what we will cover in this session.

Why have you believed in God's Word and never doubted it, if that is true?

In years past, it was assumed that if you called yourself a Christian, you believed in biblical authority. But now as progressive Christianity infiltrates and infects the true church, we all must decide: How much authority does this book hold in our lives? To inform our view of the Bible, we can choose to follow the whims of a godless culture or we can choose to follow Jesus. I choose Jesus (Childers pg. 176).

What is natural revelation?

Romans 1:18 – 20:

The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness,¹⁹ since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

What is special revelation?

It gives the specifics of who God is and his plan of salvation. This is found in the Bible.

Why is it that eyewitnesses to the same event can have different stories of what they heard and saw?

What would be the reason for an eyewitness to be wrong on one detail but be true on all others?

How do you determine what is true even though you have no access to the original writers and eyewitnesses?

Alisa pointed out that other religions can tell their stories of the experiences they've had, and that they believe what they believe because they've had some e"xperience." We need to be able to articulate why we have placed our faith in God's Word, in the truth that Jesus is the Son of God, who died for our sins, and rose again from the grave to purchase our redemption.

Christianity is the only belief that can be investigated; you can tell if it is true or not. The Bible is full of true events, when they happened, where they happened, who were eyewitnesses as well as historical and geographical facts that can be and have been corroborated.

We are people of the book—as Christ-followers we base our belief and our eternal destiny on the truth of God’s Word. Yet, a survey from 2021 found that only 11 percent of Americans read the Bible daily.

We all have biases that affect the way we look at evidence. *What is my personal history? What do I want this evidence to show? What do I want to be true? What is my experience with Christians?* So, when you hear someone who doesn’t believe the Bible, remember it’s not just about the facts, it’s about what they infer from facts based on their biases.

What was your earliest experience with the Bible? How would you characterize your current experience with or attitude toward God’s Word?

If progressive Christianity starts with dismantling the Bible, we need to know if the Scriptures we hold in our hands are truly reliable. How can we know this is God’s Word?

“The New Testament has more copies and earlier copies than any work of ancient classical literature” (Childers pg. 128).

What is textual criticism?

Textual criticism means thinking critically about manuscripts and variations in the biblical texts found in those manuscripts, in order to identify the original reading of the Bible.

Why do you need to know this? So that you can intelligently respond to someone who doubts the Bible and claims that there are many contradictions in the Bible. Alisa’s suggested answer was:

I believe the Bible is true because the science of textual criticism gives us confidence that we have an accurate copy of what was originally written, and from that accurate copy we know that Jesus believed the Old Testament was the Word of God and he predicted and commissioned the New Testament (Childers, video session four).

Progressive theology implies that the Bible represents Christianity in its infancy and that because we know more now than the early Christians did, we can and should look back at what was written, analyze what they believed, and adjust or even disagree with what they taught. What is wrong in this line of reasoning?

If the gospel was fabricated by a bunch of first-century Jewish men, their tendency would be to simplify, unify, clarify and beautify Jesus’ sayings—to make Christianity. Much broader, easier, and more pleasant. But they didn’t because it’s not broad, easy, or pleasant. It’s incredibly difficult. It’s described as a narrow road that few people actually find (Childers pg. 144 – 145).

2 Timothy 3:14 – 17:

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

What is the purpose of God’s Word in our lives?

How has Scripture done these things in your life? Give specific examples of how God has done his work in and through you as you’ve read and studied the Bible?

Childers, Alisa; *Another Gospel? A Lifelong Christian Seeks Truth in Response to Progressive Christianity*, Tyndale, 2020.