

Elemental Teaching 3 - Word

Introduction

Taking the approach that we are in a cafe having coffee and you ask my why I trust the Bible above all else.

The first thing God did with mankind in the garden was tell them His will for them. God wants to reveal His way, His truth, His life, and His love for us.

- This book assumes God exists. Never argues for that. This book also assumes to both contain the words of God and be the very words of God.
- Based on these two assumptions, that there is a God and He wants to communicate and have relationship with us, let's talk about this book from both a natural and a supernatural perspective.

Natural Perspective

From a natural perspective, people reject that there is a God and/or that this is His book for many reasons/excuses.

- Some say it's one of many cultural mythologies created by primitive people and that it was transmitted by oral tradition which can't be trusted. There is no evidence of this. It's based in a view that doesn't let the material speak for itself and instead assumes to know more about it than what it says about itself.
- Some say it may have come from God originally but it's been copied and translated so many times that it can't be trusted. There is no evidence of this. In fact, quite the opposite. This view is based in ignorance, either willful or just not knowing any better.
- Some say that there are so many different ways to interpret what is said that we can't really know what the original writers meant, therefore we can't trust it. This is also largely based on ignorance of the facts that exist.
- Some say that it all just sounds dumb and don't want to accept it. Perhaps the most dangerous and arrogant reasoning of all.

What is the deal with this book anyway? What are we talking about? Where did it come from? How did we get it?

- **[2]** 66 books divided into two major sections, written over thousands of years, by 40ish people, from three continents (Africa, Asia, Europe), in three languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, Koine Greek).
 - Yet it is one book. More on that when we talk about the supernatural aspects.
 - This is important because it refutes the idea that you can't use the Bible to prove the Bible. Like saying you can't use one book in the library to prove another book in the library.
- Old Testament/Covenant. Not so much old needed replacing. More like 1st part of larger covenant. No originals. More later.
 - Torah/Pentateuch/Books of Moses/Law.
 - Slight sidetrack.
 - Who wrote Genesis? Moses inspired by God, or Moses editor of existing resources? I could go either way but lean toward the second.
 - Some argue Moses couldn't have even written books attributed to him because writing supposedly hadn't been invented. Hogwash. Interesting how intelligent and developed culture just appeared all over

impacts interpretation. Has it already happened, or not? Internal and external evidence strongly indicates written in 90sAD and events have not yet taken place.

- What do we have?
 - [11] 14K copies of the Greek NT ranging from scraps to whole books. So what? How does that number compare?
 - 650 of Homer's Iliad. 350 Euripides Tragedies. Fewer than 10 each of Plato, Sophocles, and Caesar Augustus.
 - AND, the oldest copies of these we have date from 1K years AFTER the fact.
 - For the NT, less than 100 years after the fact, some before 66AD. Original pieces?
 - Is there any kind of campaign to call into question the reliability of these writings?
 - [12] 86K quotations from early church fathers and early church service books (lectionaries). Can reproduce all but 11 verses of the NT from church father quotes alone.
 - Again, looking at the body of manuscripts, some 150K variations exist, less than 1% in no significant way.
 - The NT is the most reliable ancient document, from a textual perspective, that we have today.
- [13] Talking about transmission. Based on the evidence we have on hand today, that can be examined and tested, the OT and NT have been faithfully transmitted and preserved. Perfect transmission? Can't know that because we don't have originals to compare. Even though they aren't originals, we can assume that we have faithful copies of what was originally written. No reason, on a natural level, to doubt that. Like not having originals of Mozart's work, no reason to doubt what we have isn't accurate.
- [14] Translation - briefly, one common objection is that the Bible has been translated and retranslated, can't trust it. Simply untrue.
 - The Bible you hold in your hand was translated from Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. It didn't leapfrog through any other languages.
 - Interpretation and method of interpretation are beyond the scope of today. Basically, people make it harder than it needs to be only when they want it to say what they want it to say, instead of what it actually says.

Supernatural Perspective

Inspiration, inerrancy/infallibility.

Inspiration

- Meaning "breathed into" God breathed the words into the human beings who recorded them. Product of God through the personality, style, and culture of the person.
- Technical term - verbal plenary inspiration. Verbal - the very words. Plenary - every part. Inspiration - God breathed. Important distinctions. God is concerned with crosses on t's and dots on i's.
- Can this be demonstrated? Prophecy in terms of predictions and patterns.
 - Predictions - Daniel 9 and 70 weeks. 8 of the 300 concerning Jesus' coming and the statistical probability.
 - Patterns - Abraham and Isaac. Joseph. Numbers 21.
 - OT is NT concealed. NT is OT revealed.
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Includes NT writings, pasagraphe.

Inerrancy/Infallibility

- Concept primarily applies to the autographs (originals).
- Because God is perfect, without error, and doesn't lie, His word would have to be likewise. Having said that, people are errant and fallible which means we need to be very careful and very respectful.
- There are no errors of fact nor are there internal contradictions.
 - Archeology has never disproven anything in the Bible. Quite the contrary, and amazingly so! That's just in the area of history.
 - What is a contradiction? "Peter's house was blue." "Peter's house was red." Contradiction. "Blue with white trim." Not contradiction.
 - Careful study shows every apparent contradiction to be lack of understanding of the whole. Research and discovery continue to demonstrate the reliability of the Bible.

One way to sum these things up. MAPS.

- Manuscript evidence
- Archeological evidence
- Prophecy
- Statistics

"I don't want to believe it. That sounds dumb." Not a reason to not believe it.

If God is real and supernatural, show me a sign!" Lazarus and rich man. God has given enough revelation in the word and the world.

Don't not believe it because you think it sounds dumb or because you haven't seen a miracle.

Don't believe it because someone makes a persuasive case. Don't believe it because it all checks out. You will believe it when God does that God thing in your spirit. Spiritual material only understood by spiritual being.

We can trust this book/collection. We can trust it on a natural level and a supernatural. We can trust it with the past, the present, and the future. Belief (or not) in a thing doesn't effect its truthfulness. It only effects your relationship to it. Jesus is the truth. Jesus is the central theme to the whole of the Bible; God's answer to our sin problem. Have you addressed that problem? Where do you stand?