

We Can Believe

Part 3

Text – II Timothy 3 : 13 - 17

Intro. – “Consider **Bill**, who was just a young man at the time. He had tried preaching but didn’t always feel the power of God or see any results. One of his contemporaries, **Charles Templeton**, got into academia and started to believe Scripture was flawed and outdated.

Bill wondered about all of this. A friend of his, **Henrietta Mears**, invited him to speak at a Christian retreat center called **Forest Home**. The night before, he went off alone into the nearby woods, put his Bible on a stump, and had an honest talk with God. He prayed, “O God! There are many things in this book I do not understand. There are many problems with it for which I have no solution. There are many seeming contradictions. There are some areas in it that do not seem to correlate with modern science. I can’t answer some of the philosophical and psychological questions Chuck and others are raising.”

And then he fell to his knees and the Holy Spirit moved in him as he said, “Father, I am going to accept this as Thy Word—by faith! I’m going to allow faith to go beyond my intellectual questions and doubts, and I will believe this to be Your inspired Word!”

He later wrote that, as he stood up, his eyes stung with tears, but he felt the power and presence of God in a way he hadn’t in months. “A major bridge had been crossed,” he said. The next day he preached with a new vitality. **Mears** noted, he “preached with authority” that she hadn’t seen before. And some 400 people made a commitment to Christ that day.

A few weeks later he would preach the historic Los Angeles Crusade. It was planned to go three weeks but ended up going eight. And the career of an upstart evangelist took off. **The world found Billy Graham, as Billy found the Word of God.**”

We are looking at apologetics. We have taken a brief look at the existence of God, seen through the lens of Scripture and Reason.

Today we begin our look at the **Word of God**. Can we trust and believe that the Word of God is true and reliable? We will consider the following...

I. Why It Matters –

- We just read that “All Scripture is inspired by God,” but what does that mean and why does it matter?
- Let’s quickly consider the **“Three ‘I’s of Scripture.”**

1. “Inspired” –

- What does the concept of inspiration mean? It means that God “breathed out” His Word as He moved upon the 40 human authors, writing in 3 different languages over a period of some 1600 years so that they wrote exactly what God wanted to have written while retaining their own individual personalities.

2. “Inerrant” -

- What do we mean when we say the Bible is inerrant?
- It means that **it is without error.**
 - There are many who claim the Bible contains errors or inconsistencies.
 - Honestly, I’ve never had anyone show me an error.
 - There are no errors. We must study to understand apparent errors that are understandable with good study.

3. “Infallible” –

- When we say the Bible is infallible, what do we mean?
 - We mean that “God’s Word is incapable of error. Because God is perfect, so is His revelation of himself. God’s Word will accomplish exactly what God wants it to.”

- So, why does it matter if the Bible can be trusted? From an **Answers in Genesis** article by Brian Edwards, let me share with you **5 Reasons why trust in the Bible matters.**

1. **Inerrancy Governs Our Confidence in the Truth of the Gospel.**

- If the Scripture is unreliable, can we offer the world a reliable Gospel?
- How can we be sure of truth on any issue if we are suspicious of errors anywhere in the Bible? If the history, psychology, or science contained in the Bible is wrong, how can we be sure the doctrine or moral teaching is correct?

2. Inerrancy Governs Our Faith in the Value of Christ.

- We cannot have a reliable Savior without a reliable Scripture.
 - If, as many suggest, the stories in the Gospels are not historically true and the recorded words of Christ are only occasionally His, how do we know what we can trust about Christ?
 - Must we rely upon the conflicting interpretations of a host of critical scholars before we know what Christ was like or what He taught? If the Gospel stories are merely the result of the wishful thinking of the Church in the second or third centuries, or even the personal views of the Gospel writers, then our faith no longer rests upon Jesus but upon the opinions of men.
 - Who would trust an unreliable Savior for their eternal salvation?

3. Inerrancy Governs Our Response to the Conclusions of Science.

- If we believe the Bible contains errors, then we will be quick to accept scientific theories that appear to prove the Bible wrong. In other words, we will allow the conclusions of science to dictate the accuracy of the Word of God.

- When we doubt the Bible's inerrancy, we have to invent new principles for interpreting Scripture that for convenience turn history into poetry and facts into myths.
- This means people must ask how reliable a given passage is when they turn to it. Only then will they be able to decide what to make of it.
- On the other hand, if we believe in inerrancy, we will test by Scripture the hasty theories that often come to us in the name of science.

4. Inerrancy Governs Our Attitude in the Preaching of Scripture.

- A denial of Biblical inerrancy always leads to a loss of confidence in Scripture both in the pulpit and in the pew.
- It was not the growth of education and science that emptied churches. Instead, it was the cold deadness of theological liberalism.
- ILLUSTRATION – I ran across an NPR article written by Rachel Martin. The title of the article was “The Search for a Church that isn't a Church.” Part of this article consists of an interview Ms. Martin had with a Black journalist named Perry Bacon. Bacon grew up in a Black Charismatic church in Louisville, KY. He is no longer a part of a church but if he was, this is the type of church he would like to belong to: “So if I could find a church, and this may already exist, where the Sunday school is very low on the beliefs of Jesus and very high on the community part, that's what I'm looking for.”

I'm guessing if I went to 30 churches in Louisville, I could probably find a Sunday school like that, that's focused less on Jesus rising from the dead and more about being compassionate, caring people. Since my piece (article) ran, I've been emailed by about 15 churches in Louisville who said, ‘We're perfect for you.’”

- If the Bible's history is doubtful and its words are open to dispute, then people understandably lose confidence in it. People want authority. They want to know what God has said.

5. Inerrancy Governs Our Belief in the Trustworthy Character of God.

- Almost all theologians agree Scripture is in some measure God's revelation to the human race.
- But to allow that it contains error implies God has mishandled inspiration and has allowed His people to be deceived for centuries until modern scholars untangled the confusion.
- **In short, the Maker muddled the instructions.**
- As Paul reminds us, "All Scripture is inspired by God..."

INVITATION — A priest and a rabbi from local parishes were standing by the side of the road holding up signs. The rabbi's read, "**The End is Near!**" The priest, on the other side of the road, held up a sign which read, "**Turn before it's too late!**" They planned to hold up their signs to each passing car.

"Get a job." The first driver yelled. The second driver yelled, "**Leave us alone, you religious freaks!**"

Shortly, from around the curve, they heard screeching tires and a splash followed by more screeching tires and another splash.

The rabbi looked over at his companion and said, "Do you think we should try a different sign"? The other man responded, "**Perhaps, 'Bridge Out' might be better.**"

Beloved, if you don't trust the Bible to be God's Word, your bridge is out!