

## **The Bible: "It is full of Errors"**

*By: Mike Porter  
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### God's Infallible Word

Have you ever heard these statements of doubt about the Bible from some people who grew up in religious backgrounds?

1. Man wrote the Bible, thus it has errors, even though it was God-inspired.
2. The Bible's original meaning was lost in the many translations and re-copies that were made of the original text. We don't know for certain what Jesus, the Apostles and the Prophets really said.
3. There are so many translations of the Bible, thus demonstrating that we don't have a reliable text. Whenever something is translated from one language to another, the meaning is lost- it's no longer accurate.
4. There are so many different interpretations of the Bible- why do you think your interpretation about God, Jesus, sin and salvation is correct?
5. The Bible is not to be taken literally
6. One evidence that the Bible was written by man is that God is much different in the Old and New Testaments.
7. Books were added and subtracted from the Bible by men- thus we don't know whether what we have is an accurate representation of Jesus and the Apostles. The Bible we have was simply compiled by "the victors"- those who had the power to make it what they wanted it to be.
8. Because of these things, I can safely say that all religions are basically the same; after all, what matters is "the golden rule" which is taught in one form or another in all religions.

The end result of this way of thinking: Jesus isn't the only Savior, the only way to God- there are many ways. The end result is that the death and resurrection of Jesus loses its' significance if it is believed at all. Sin becomes an outdated concept- what was sin back then is no longer sin. Situational ethics is what counts. Each person needs to pursue his/her own truth- the important thing is to be sincere.

If you believe in some of the eight points above, do you realize that you are calling Jesus Christ, His Apostles and the Lord's prophets liars?

Did the Writers of the Bible Believe They Were Writing God's Word?

Paul wrote, under God's inspiration,

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete." (2 Tim 3:16-17, cf. Heb 1:1)

The phrase "inspiration of God" in the Greek literally means, "Breathed out by God" or "God-breathed". These words indicate that Paul viewed God's Word as absolutely true,

accurate and sufficient (*cf. Psalm 119:97-105*) - the sum of all that we need for doctrine and truth regarding God and His relationship with man. At the time he wrote this, all of the Old Testament and portions of the New Testament had been written and were being circulated among the churches. Paul warned a few sentences later about the dangers of holding another view about God's word,

“The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.” (*2 Tim 4:3-4*)

My friend, if you agree with any of the eight points above, I encourage you to consider the possibility that you've been led astray by what you've heard from teachers who have reduced God's word to man's word. Some of my friends grew up in churches where God's word was thus relegated. In my life prior to believing the Bible, I was an atheist who believed the Bible was man's word as well. Paul said that other teachers would come that would distort the sound teaching of the Bible. The reason people listen to them is because either ignorance or because of their “desires”- they have sinful desires and motives for rejecting the plain teaching of the Bible and instead come up with alternative teachings that suit their own lifestyle and life choices, what their itching ears want to hear, that their consciences may be relieved regarding sin and Judgment Day. Paul said that instead of embracing the firmness of the truth of the Bible, they would embrace man's fables and myths, such as evolution, false religion and liberal theology.

If Paul was right about scripture being “God breathed”, then we should be able to see the Bible as a book of absolute truth with no errors in doctrine, historical details, contradictions, etc. Let's think about this for a minute- if God created the universe, and man is the crown of His creation, and He desires to give man understanding into who God is and who man is and how man can come to God, would He not have the power and wisdom to find a way to make sure that His words, written through man's personalities and experiences, accurately and adequately reflects His truth? Wouldn't He give us a way to see whether that truth was unique from all other lies? Peter wrote, after Paul had died and had already written all his epistles,

“Our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the *rest of the Scriptures*.” (*2 Peter 3:15-16*)

Notice Peter identified Paul's writing as scripture, the Word of God. Paul wrote to the Thessalonian church,

“We thank God without ceasing, because you received the *word of God* which you heard *from us*, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the *word of God*.” (*2 Thess 2:13*)

The Apostles had no confusion about their role when writing God's word. It is not as some liberals would suggest, that they wrote some things down, and later others distorted these and then claimed them to be God's Word. No- when they wrote God's word, they knew by the Holy Spirit that it was God writing through them, through their personality and life experiences, the perfect word of God. God said to the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah,

“Behold, I have put My words in your mouth.” (*Jer 1:9*)

Over 3800 times throughout the Old and New Testaments we get this firm declaration from God and the writers He chose that we may know His claim that His Word is really His word and not man's word. The scriptures are called “the oracles of God” (*Rom 3:2, 1 Pet 4:11*). When the scriptures speak, it is understood that God is speaking (*Gal 3:8, Rom 9:17*). We don't have to second guess the scriptures, wondering what we can extract from them what is truth and what isn't- it's all truth, and it is all God's revelation, not man's revelation.

### **Eyewitness Testimony**

One of the reasons we can accept what the 39-40 writers of the Bible say as God's Word is that what they say is intimately tied to history, prophesy, archaeology and eyewitness testimony.

Peter, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote this bold statement shortly before being martyred for his faith,

“We did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were *eyewitnesses* of His majesty...we have the *prophetic word confirmed*, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place...knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any *private interpretation*, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were *moved by the Holy Spirit*.” (*2 Peter 1:16-21*)

Peter contradicted many of the eight points of skeptics today by these verses. Firstly, he challenged that he was an eyewitness- the things he wrote, and the words he passed on to his trusted friend Mark who wrote the gospel bearing his name were eyewitness accounts. They are as valid as an eyewitness today in a court of law.

Peter also boldly stated that the things he saw were the “prophetic word confirmed”- the Greek literally says, “And we have more sure the prophetic word.” God's word is sure, man's word is unsure. God's Word is our ultimate authority of truth, not man's word about God. Scripture is the highest authority of God's truth; no other authority equals it.

If the Bible is true, then it should bear that truth by being filled with prophecy that came true literally, just as Peter claimed. There are over 9400 verses of prophecy in the Bible- every one has come true, or will come true in the future. There are over 300 prophecies

about Jesus Christ's first coming. His birthplace, His virgin birth, His lineage, where He would minister, the healings He would perform, the prophetic and teaching ministry He would have, His rejection by His own people, His trial, His beatings, His crucifixion, His resurrection, His ascension and the establishment of a New Covenant (from which we get the words "New Testament") between God and man, and the powerful anointing of the Spirit on the church He formed as His message spread throughout the world are all prophesied about in the Old Testament scriptures 500-1500 years before Christ was born of the virgin Mary.

Peter also reminded us of something we would do well to heed today: "no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation." Scripture interprets itself, through the Holy Spirit that is given to each believer. Scripture never contradicts scripture. We can't twist it to say what we want it to say. It has one meaning, one truth that cannot be altered by our opinions. God is more than capable of assuring that His truth through scripture is knowable and accessible to those who will humbly receive it. In the book of Numbers, we read,

"God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?" (*Num 23:19*)

God and His Word never change. You don't approach God's word with a presupposition of what you desire it to say. You come to God's Word with the guidance of the Spirit of God, seeking to understand the Author's intent within the context of the passage and the book and in context of the entire Bible, and then you submit yourself to that truth, seeking to apply it to your daily life as the Spirit of God directs you. Think of it rationally- God has only one interpretation of scripture! He doesn't author confusion. Scripture has many applications to our daily lives, but only one correct interpretation!

John also wrote about the accuracy of God's Word,

"Truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name...This is the disciple [John] who testifies of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true." (*John 20:30-31, 21:24-25*)

Luke wrote,

"Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, just as those who from the beginning were *eyewitnesses* and ministers of the word delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having had *perfect understanding* of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most

excellent Theophilus, that you may know the *certainty* of those things in which you were instructed.” (Luke 1:1-4)

These eyewitnesses were virtually all martyred (including 10 of the 11 disciples). None were willing to recant their faith in the face of execution and torture that they saw Jesus die and rise again and that they had born true eyewitness accounts of His life. This is history- you can't put a spin on it.

### **God's Testimony About His Word**

If the God of the Bible is God, we should expect that He would accurately lay out a summary of the history of mankind beforehand in enough detail that we would be awed to trust Him. That's just what He did. He said,

“Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.” (Amos 3:7)

The Bible gives us adequate explanation to the origins of the universe, mankind's creation and fall into sin and the consequences and the step by step plan, beginning 6000 years ago that unveiled a Messiah to come, Jesus Christ, who would reverse the curse of sin through His sacrifice in our place for our sin.

The book of Daniel prophesied secular history- from Babylon in Daniel's time, to Persia, to Greece to Rome (during which time the Messiah, Jesus Christ would be cut off, just as prophesied (Dan 9:24-27), to Rome splitting apart into fragments (instead of being conquered), to a future reunited Rome gathering together in the last days (as we can see happening in Europe these days as Europe is quickly becoming one currency and one political entity).

Throughout the Old Testament the fate of the Jews and their neighbors was prophesied and all the prophecies came true. It was prophesied that Israel would split in two, that the Northern 10 tribes would perish at the hands of Assyria, then Judah would be exiled at the hands of Babylon, would later return from exile under a man named Cyrus from Persia (the name given in the prophecy over 150 years in advance), but that the Jews would reject their Messiah and be scattered over all the earth- and Jesus prophesied details about how this would happen in His generation, and Jerusalem and the temple would be destroyed. The prophets also predicted the regathering of the Jews from all the nations that they would be scattered from in the last days, and in the end times a world war would rage against Israel, the nations would be defeated, and the Lord would set up His kingdom on earth through His Messiah Jesus Christ.

The Lord offers a challenge to all other prophets who aren't His prophets,

“Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together...tell and bring forth your case; yes, let them take counsel together. Who has declared this from ancient time? Who has told it from ancient time? Have not I, the Lord?

And there is no other God besides Me, a just God and a Savior; there is none besides Me. Look to Me, and be saved, all you ends of the earth!”  
(*Isa 45:20-22, cf. 41:22-26, 43:8-11, 44:7*)

This same Lord in creation stretched out the heavens (*Isa 42:5*) from a single point in space and time, created the earth as a sphere (*Isa 40:22*) suspended on nothing (*Job 26:7*). He prophesied a covenant (*Jer 31:31-34*) that could save all mankind who was unable to keep His laws. Through this covenant would be forgiveness of sins. The Messiah, Jesus Christ, would be that covenant (*Isa 43:6*) who would bring light to people’s darkness and open blind eyes- like my blind eyes that were in spiritual darkness in sin. Indeed,

“New things I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them.”  
(*Isa 42:9*)

The Messiah would come the first time in gentleness (*Isa 42:2*), filled with God’s Spirit (*Isa 42:1*), bringing light to the Gentiles, preaching the good news of salvation (*Isa 61:1-2*) and bringing healing to the blind, the deaf and the mute (*Isa 35:4-6*).  
The Lord begs mankind 700 years in advance not to reject His Son Jesus Christ,

“Behold, My Servant...Who has believed our report?” (*Isa 52:13-53:1*)

He then goes through the plan of salvation through Jesus Christ, all in prophesy:

“He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him...He was pierced for our transgressions; He was wounded for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so He did not open His mouth...He poured out His life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For He bore the sin of many...” (*Isa 53:1-12, cf. Psalm 22*)

This is a small taste of the prophecies that the Lord has laid before us in the Old Testament, so we may know that He is the One true Lord and that Jesus is the Lord and Savior of the world.

## God's Hidden Nature to the Proud

Why is it that there are so many interpretations of God's word on even fundamental doctrines? It is because of man's unbelief and sinful desires, as Peter said earlier. God says that His *wrath*

“Is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who *suppress the truth* in unrighteousness, because what may be known about God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.”  
(*Romans 1:18-19*)

He's revealed to all mankind His character: His power, His omniscience, His Omnipresence, His divinity and His righteousness. Each man's conscience bears the witness to God's law written on their hearts- they have knowledge of their own sinfulness and of a righteous standard they've failed to meet (*Romans 1:20-24, 2:14-15*), even if they choose to suppress this knowledge. They have knowledge of their own death sentence- this is enough to drive any seeking man to look for a solution from God for salvation, recognizing his own depravity and unworthiness before God's righteousness. God is more than capable of meeting that searching heart with the gospel of salvation, as illustrated by Abraham, who had faith in the Messiah to come (*Genesis 12:1-7, 15:6, Romans 4:1-25*).

Jesus explained to His disciples why He spoke in parables,

“I speak...in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: ‘Hearing you will not hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive; for the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them.’ But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.” (*Matthew 13:13-17*)

Notice that there is a hiddenness about God- He reveals Himself to the humble, broken, meek, seeking heart, and closes Himself off from the proud, self-sufficient, arrogant heart that doesn't recognize his/her need. Jesus promised,

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.” (*Matt 7:8-9*)

God is no respecter of persons- He doesn't offer the more intelligent person greater opportunity or access to spiritual truth. In fact, intelligence can become a matter of pride that causes a stumbling block to coming to God. Is your pride hindering you in your search for truth? It did in my own life when I was an atheist. God says,

“The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: ‘I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.’ Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.” (*1 Cor 1:18-21*)

In pride the other religions of the world (*including false interpretations of the Bible - cf. Eph 2:8-9*) tell man that of his own merit he can be good enough to inherit a better afterlife. The religious philosophies of atheism, materialism, humanism and agnosticism are tied in to Epicureanism, “eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow you die.” They are a form of anti-religious pride that suppresses the truth about God's justice and judgment- in actuality, they are similar in the religious pride of those who think their good works will earn them a promising afterlife. In either case, such people suppress the truth about God's holiness, justice and judgment.

### **Are You Good Enough to Inherit Eternal Life?**

The Bible offers a sobering reality check about man's utter depravity- even our best and most righteous deeds are filthy rags before a holy God (*Isa 64:6*), none of us are righteous- we have no understanding and have all turned aside from God's truth, becoming utterly useless, whose mouths are full of poison and whose ways are full of ruin and misery (*Romans 3:9-18*).

Do you see yourself, apart from God's goodness in your life, as fitting that description? Are you offended that God would say such evil things about you? God had to humble me as a teenager who went from pleasure seeking atheist to come to realize my utter depravity before a holy God, repent and cry out for forgiveness that is provided only through Jesus Christ. Jesus said,

“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.” (*John 5:24*)

Maybe you're thinking your good works will outweigh your evil deeds on Judgment Day? Let's look at a summary of God's law- Jesus summarized all of God's commandments into two commandments: to love the Lord with all your heart, mind, soul and strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself. Have you always obeyed that? Have you even perfectly obeyed those two for even one day of your life- in heart, word and deed? Take an honest look at the 10 Commandments: Have you ever desired something

that wasn't yours? Have you ever told a lie? Have you ever stolen anything, even of the smallest value? Have you ever lusted after another person (Jesus said that was adultery in the heart), have you ever dishonored your mother and father? Have you used the Lord's name in vain? Have you ever been angry at someone without just cause or called a person a fool or worse (Jesus said that was murder of the heart or of the lips)? If you've violated any of the commandments, the Bible says we're guilty of violating them all (*James 2:10*).

God's death sentence is upon all of us for sin,

“The soul that sins shall die.” (*Ezek 18:20, cf. Rom 6:23*)

As you march through life, the invisible force of time is marching you towards a day of execution- the day you die, a day brought about due to your sin. Jesus abolished sin and death, paying the price in your place- taking upon Himself your penalty. It was as if you were in a courtroom, ready to be sentenced by a judge to imprisonment or a \$500,000 fine, and you didn't have the means to pay. In walked a stranger who paid the fine for you. You are free and justice has been served- the fine was paid. That is what Jesus did for you. There is only one Savior who paid the fine in your place- Jesus Christ. There is no other. No other religion or philosophy has the answer to your sin problem. God speaks the reality of our situation prior to giving our lives in repentance and faith to Jesus Christ,

“For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration (being born again) and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” (*Titus 3:3-7*)

Have you been born again through God's Spirit? Have you repented of all sin and placed your faith alone in the Savior, Jesus Christ? Today could be the day you experience salvation from sin, death and hell. Jesus is coming back to judge the world. Are you ready? You're not guaranteed a tomorrow. Peter warned,

“Scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, ‘Where is the promise of His coming? ...Beloved...the Lord is not slack concerning His promise...but is longsuffering [patient], not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.’” (*2 Peter 3:3-9*)

Trust in His Word- it is as reliable today as it was back then. Jesus said,

“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.” (*Matt 5:17-18*)

God’s word hasn’t changed or failed. Today it accurately tells you your need and provides the only solution. Jesus said,

“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.” (*Rev 3:20*).

From cover to cover the Bible is a love story of the call of God to a rebellious people to wake up to their lost state and seek the only answer available. In the last words of the Bible we read this invitation from Jesus Christ,

“I, Jesus...am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.’ And the Spirit and the bride [the church] say, ‘Come!’ And let him who hears say, ‘Come!’ And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water freely.’” (*Rev 22:16-17*).

The invitation is available to you, but that isn’t the final word of the Bible- no, God ends His Word with a warning about how to properly handle His Word,

“For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book [and by extension, the entire Bible]: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He who testifies to these things says, ‘Surely I am coming quickly.’”

Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!  
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”  
(*Rev 22:18-21*)

In Christ’s Love,  
Mike Porter