



# ENGAGE

An Invitation To Delighting In God's Word  
Part 3 — God Speaks the Truth

# REVIEW FROM LESSON 1

- The self-existent one God spoke, the Bible contains His Words, and He intersects in human history.
- The desire of God is to intersect in your life.
- “All scripture is given by inspiration of God.” (2 Timothy 3:16a)

# REVIEW FROM LESSON 2

- What God spoke is knowable.
- No one has an excuse to delegate the reading of God's Word to others on the basis that they cannot comprehend it.
- The Bible has clarity for those who come to it in faith.
- God provided us the resources we need through His written Word, the illumination of the Spirit, and good teachers, to learn His Word and grow.

- **KEY PRINCIPLE:** WE NEED TO SEEK TO KNOW GOD'S WORD BETTER THAN WE KNOW ANYTHING ELSE
- Jesus said we must live “by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of God.” (Matthew 4:4)
- God invites us to engage the Bible as a routine life practice.

# GOD SPEAKS THE TRUTH

- God's Word is knowable, but is it true?
- “Belief in an infallible, authoritative, reliable Scripture has always been a part of the faith of the Church. Faith, by biblical definition, requires a sure Word of God. The very reality of faith as a sure knowledge and hearty confidence depends upon a Scripture whose truth is certain and unfailing.” —  
The New International Standard Bible  
Encyclopedia

# GOD SPEAKS THE TRUTH

- Many people say the Bible is infallible or inerrant but only use those words to mean that portions of the Bible are true.
- I believe that the Bible is true in every detail and that it contains no errors in the original texts.
- This follows from several lines of internal and external evidence.

# GOD SPEAKS THE TRUTH

- This evidence includes (1) what the Bible says about itself, (2) the reliability of our copies of the books of the Bible showing they have not been corrupted over time, (3) the internal consistency of the Biblical writings, (4) that the Biblical writings meet the criteria of being reliable historical evidence, (5) the historical reliability of the Bible as confirmed from extra-biblical sources, (6) confirmed prophecies, (7) scientific evidence, and (8) changed lives.

# WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT ITSELF

- The *Babylon Bee* — almost all of it is not true and it does not claim to be true
- The Bible's testimony is not that it is merely “the good book” or the writings of wise sages — it is truth inspired by the God of truth.
- The Bible repeatedly emphasizes the “truth” nature of its revelation.
- The apostle Paul wrote, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God.” (2 Timothy 3:16a)



# RELIABLE COPIES

- One common assumption skeptics make is that the manuscripts we have today of the 66 books of the Bible are so thoroughly corrupted that we really do not know what the original manuscripts (or autographs) said.
- We have a relative abundance of old New Testament fragments and manuscripts.
- We have a strong witness to the Old Testament manuscripts, that was especially buttressed by the discovery of the Qumran scrolls in the 1940s

# INTERNAL CONSISTENCY

- The Bible consists of 66 separate books written by approximately 40 authors over several centuries, and yet the more we engage in a serious study of the Bible, the more we see that it is internally consistent.
- Notwithstanding, there are many who claim the Bible is full of contradictions.
- Nearly all such claims are easily refuted by interpreting the purported inconsistent verses in context.

# VALID AS HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

- Too often the historical witness of the Bible itself is rejected or doubted from the outset.
- But the historian's task to the extent possible is to consider all the evidence.
- The books of the Bible have numerous indicia of reliability so that they should be considered in any historical inquiry of the events and persons covered therein.

# VALID AS HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

- These indicia of historical reliability include: (1) the chronological proximity of the writings to the events recorded, (2) many writings authored by eyewitnesses to the events or someone who collected information from eyewitnesses (e.g., Luke's Gospel and the Acts), (3) the historical writings often paint the heroes in a bad light evidencing a commitment to accurate reporting rather than propaganda, (4) the writings make culturally controversial statements indicating the veracity of what is recorded even when it may push some readers away (e.g., Jesus speaking to the Samaritan in John 4, female disciples being the first to discover Jesus' resurrection), (5) the writings have none of the obvious embellishment that characterizes later pseudepigraphic works like the *Gospel of Peter*, and (6) the writings make statements that when written could be readily confirmed

# EXTRA-BIBLICAL CONFIRMATION

- Some people even deny Jesus existed.
- Many extra-Biblical writings affirm Jesus as a historical person.
- The Jewish historian Josephus, writing near the end of the first century, recorded: “Now, there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works—a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles.”

# CONFIRMED PROPHECIES

- Approximately 25% of the Bible is prophetic.
- Various writers have identified as many as 300 different Old Testament prophecies fulfilled by Jesus (e.g., his being born in Bethlehem in Micah 5:2).
- Consider examples Zechariah 9:9, 12:10, 13:7;  
Daniel 9:24-27
- Jesus recited from Psalm 22 on the cross.

# CHANGED LIVES

- The Bible is a book that makes claims about a personal God that seeks personal relationships with us, and that such relationships should transform us.
- “For eighty-six years I have served [Christ], and he has done me no wrong. How can I blaspheme my king who saved me?” — Polycarp
- The single most powerful proof you can provide anyone for the Christian faith is your changed life.

# THE EVIDENCE AND THE BUILT-IN BIAS

- At some level, one must come to the Bible in faith, but it is a reasoned faith and the many wonderful resources available today reference substantial evidence that should be considered.
- It is not just a question of the evidence, but our presuppositions and biases.
- First, our society presumes scientism.



# THE EVIDENCE AND THE BUILT-IN BIAS

- People repeatedly play the “science” card as if the mere use of the word “science” is itself an unassailable argument for which evidentiary scrutiny is unacceptable.
- But not only is science the rule of truth, but it is assumed to be the only avenue to truth.
- For centuries, people recognized that philosophy and theology were avenues to discovering truth and that needs to be rediscovered.

# THE EVIDENCE AND THE BUILT-IN BIAS

- Our society and even many Christians view faith as a “blind faith.”
- Many suppose that being a Christian and accepting the Bible as a source of absolute truth means ignoring all of the evidence.
- We do not engage in a faith that defies the evidence.
- Christians and those that reject the Bible are looking at the same evidence but interpreting it differently.

# THE EVIDENCE AND THE BUILT-IN BIAS

- Scientists are fallible human beings who at their best still make mistakes, and who have their own set of biases that may lead them to ignore or intentionally spin lines of evidence.
- While good science is the Bible's friend, discerning Christians recognize that we are literally inundated with deceptive information and we have to learn that not all that glitters is gold and not all that that is called science really is.

# GOD SPEAKS THE TRUTH

- Pontius Pilate asked the question, “What is truth?”
- The Bible claims to be true, and that is supported by lines of internal and external evidence.
- This theological word for this is infallibility or inerrancy.
- Because the Bible is true, we have good reason to make a diligent study of the Bible a routine practice in our lives.