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Book You Can Trust



Part 1 (960512AM)

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1 Thessalonians 2:13

If you'd open in your Bibles with me please, we're going to [1 Thessalonians 2:13](#) again, as we continue through this magnificent epistle penned by the apostle Paul for the glory of Christ.

Last Sunday morning we were having our morning worship service outside the great amphitheater in Ephesus sitting actually in the entry on the stones of the foundation of that huge, huge theater. And as we sat there, we read Christ's letter to the Ephesians in Revelation chapter two. What a rich time. And then we walked down that main street and looked at just a tiny slice of the ruins. Ephesus of course was the largest of all the cities of the ancient Roman Empire. It's the largest of all the ruins of any biblical city, and they've only done a slice of it, it's so massive, so many square miles. But as we sat there, I thought how the apostle Paul would come to a city and he would just stand in the marketplace and he would be a total nobody that no one knew. He'd be an unknown commodity. And he'd walk in and he would start at the top of his voice proclaiming something they'd never heard before, and those people would listen to that and their lives would be utterly transformed.

Have you ever thought of it in that sense? I mean, next time you go to the mall and some wacko is out there, you know, promoting something or somebody is standing on the street corner screaming and raving, that's what Paul looked like. And yet what he was speaking was the very word of God.

Look at verse 13 of chapter two and I want to show you what I mean. "For this reason," [1 Thessalonians 2:13](#), "we also thank God ceaselessly because when you received the word of God which you heard from us," when he was speaking he was giving God's word, "you welcomed it not as the word of men but as it is in truth, the word of God."

Now I want you to do something with me. We'll be a little unusual. Take your Bible and hold it. I want to talk to you about what you're holding. You all are holding something that is unlike anything else that in 5,000 recorded years of human history has ever been produced on this planet. Everything else on this planet is just something from the planet that's been either, painted or built or sculptured or carved or something. This is not from this planet. This is the very breath of God breathed out. This is the very voice of the infinite, endless of days, eternal, all-powerful creator of the universe who has communicated to us and has intercepted, intersected, and invaded time and space and spoken to us. This book is unlike any book. It's unlike any other piece of any part of this civilization of humanity that ever existed. This is not normal. This is not like Mary Baker Glover Patterson Eddy Fry's book of Christian Science. This is not like the Koran or the writings collected of Joseph Smith. This is not of this planet. This is the very breath of God. I hope you realize when you hold this book it's different. It's special. I hope you don't just flip it aside.

It really grieves me when I see people just toss their Bible down. They use it as a book weight. They use it as something that they put their coffee cup on. I can't do that. When I was a little boy, I was taught that the Bible was always the top book. I couldn't even pile it underneath everything, and you didn't put anything above it because this is God's word.

But what you hold in your hand this morning totally transformed the lives of the Thessalonians. It says it effectively worked in you who believe. And you know this morning that book that you were just holding has the power to utterly, totally, radically transform your life and mine.

We have in our progression into this book come to one of the more crucial portions of 1 Thessalonians because we're coming to the portion that extols the word of God. And I can't think of a better time in our history as a church than this to set aside a time to really meditate on this book and what it means and what it is and it's power.

There are seven reasons why I believe that the Bible is true. And I'd like to share them with you this morning. And I would like to share with you why this book is like no other book and why when you hear people attacking it or when you attack it by neglect, which you realize what you're missing when you don't make a place in your life for the word of God. I want to impress upon your hearts that this book that we hold in our hands is unlike any other in the universe. And with that truth deeply upon our hearts in the days ahead shouldn't we treat this book differently? Shouldn't we read it more diligently? Shouldn't we wait before it expectantly and from this book learn to live triumphantly?

I noticed in the paper this week on some airplane, some airport, somewhere, that the great gene and genetic DNA mapping that they did... You know they spent more money mapping out the human DNA chain than they did unleashing the atom. Our government has put more billions into that and they finished it recently. And now it's coming out in the papers constantly. Did you read this week, they found out that people that murder and are violent have defective genes? Did you know that? It's not a sin. It's a sickness. It's a disease. They found out a few months ago that all homosexual people have a little variation in their genes so that's the way they are and it's not wrong, according to man's wisdom.

This book which comes to us untainted from the very presence of God, breathed out through 40 different men over 60 generations, 1,600 years, on three different continents, this book comes to us as the very word of God. And you know what God says? Murder is not a sickness. It's a sin. Homosexuality is not a choice, it's not a lifestyle, it's an aberration from the image of God and it's utter sinfulness. And drunkenness is not a disease. It's a damnable, eternally punishable sin.

You say, that's wrong. But that's what God says.

There are seven reasons why I believe that the Bible is absolutely true. It's absolutely true in all 3,566,480 letters. All 810,697 words, all 31,173 verses, they're all the very word of God. Eleven-hundred and 89 chapters and 66 books written by the most unusual group of kings and peasants, philosophers and fishermen, poets, statesmen and scholars, written from the wilderness, from the dungeon, on a rocky hillside, from inside of a prison, from a boat, from an island and from the rigors of military conquest, the book of books, the word of God comes to us.

And I like what one author said, "I find my Lord in the book wherever I chance to look. He's the theme of the Bible, the center and heart of the book. He's the Rose of Sharon, He's the lily fair. Wherever I open my Bible, the Lord of the book is there. He's at the book's beginning to give the earth its form, He's the ark of shelter bearing the brunt of the storm, He's the burning bush in the desert, the budding of Aaron's rod. Wherever I look in the Bible, I can see the son of God. He's the ram upon Mount Moriah???, He's the ladder from earth to sky, He's the scarlet cord in the window, He's the serpent lifted high. He's the smitten rock of the desert, He's the shepherd with the staff and crook. The face of my Lord I discover wherever I open this book. He's the seed of the woman, He's the savior, virgin-born, He's the son of David whom men rejected with scorn, whose garments of grace and beauty, the stately Aaron's death, yet He's a priest forever, He is our Melchizedek. Lord of eternal glory whom John the apostle saw, light of the golden city, lamb without spot or flaw. Bridegroom coming at midnight, for whom all us virgins look, whenever I open my Bible, I find the Lord of the book."

Seven Reasons Why I Can Trust the Bible

Why is this book like no other book? Why can you trust the Bible? Seven reasons.

1. Jesus Christ Believed the Bible Was True

The first reason why I believe the Bible is utterly true can be distilled down to one or two words. Jesus (and the second word is) Christ. Jesus Christ utterly was convinced that the book you hold in your hand was the word of God. Now that does it for me. I don't need anybody else's opinion, but I'll give you six more reasons. Jesus believed this book, and over and over we find the Lord Jesus asking everyone who questioned Him, He'd say to them, "Haven't you read? The Scriptures say..." That's how He answered those who came to Him.

In fact, just this morning as I was reading God's word and just savoring it, I noticed that at Christ's birth [Micah 5:2](#) is mentioned in [Matthew two](#) in verse six. As the infants were massacred in chapter two verse 18, [Jeremiah 31](#) is quoted. Jesus was said to come from Egypt from [Numbers 24:8](#). The prophet John the Baptist mentioned [Isaiah 40](#) in verse three and that's just before Christ came on the scene.

And after Jesus started His ministry, what's the first thing He did when He faced Satan? He quotes [Deuteronomy eight](#), and [Deuteronomy six](#). Jesus believed and used and trusted and prayed from and lived out the Scriptures. You know what's interesting? Everything Jesus said was Scripture. And so He didn't need to use it. He could have just talked. But instead, He always hearkened back to the Bible. He hearkened back to the Scriptures. And when He was pressed with a question, He said the Scriptures say... And when He was faced with the adversary, He said the Scriptures say... As He knelt in prayer, He prayed the Scriptures. As He spoke by the seaside He spoke from the Scriptures. As He went as a sheep before shearers is dumb, He quoted the Scriptures. And when He hung on the cross, with his dying words He gasped words from the Scriptures. Jesus Christ believed that every word of this book was inspired by God. In His private life He used it. As His sword against Satan, in His public ministry He uses the Word to teach multitudes, in His personal

world with His disciples and those near Him, He uses the Bible to explain the future. Jesus believed that the Bible was true. He believed it was verbally true, every word. He believed it was inerrant. That means in its totality there's no flaw. It's inspired, every word. It's the very Word of God. Jesus Christ believed in the historical reliability of Adam and Eve. And even if some Christians, so-called today, don't believe in that, Jesus did. And He based His teaching of the family and marriage on the fact that there was a literal first man on this planet and his name was Adam. And he was not a humanoid, and he didn't grunt and groan and hide in caves and look like a monkey. He was in the image of God, created from the very dust of the ground and breathed into by the very breath of God. Jesus believed in Adam and Eve. He believed in Abel. He believed in Noah and He believed in the flood, even though a great number of our Christian colleges don't even teach there was a literal flood anymore. Jesus believed in it. And Jesus taught it. And He said just as much as God flooded the earth with water, He said, I will burn the earth with fire. He believed in Noah and the ark and the flood. And He said He knew Abraham and Moses and the burning bush, and He said I believe in David and Elijah and Daniel and Jonah. Jesus believed the Bible you hold. He read the Bible that you read. He prayed the words of the Word of God that you and I have today.

2. The Apostles and Prophets Believed the Bible Was True

The second reason why I believe the Bible is true is not only Jesus Christ, but secondly the apostles and the prophets. The second reason why I believe that the Bible is true is that all the apostles and all the prophets, thousands and thousands of times, over and over repeated that the words that they were saying were not their own. You know what they said? What we just read this morning. What the apostle Paul said, "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing because when you receive the Word of God, which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men but what it is in truth." It's the word of God. That's an apostle speaking. The prophets said the same thing. In the Old Testament 8,000 times they say 'the Lord', 'the Lord said.'

Did you know that the apostles and prophets believed that this book came from God? And if Jesus Christ believed it, that settles it for me. But Jesus and all those who were closest to Him, all those who knew God face-to-face, those who were His emissaries, say that the book that you hold in your hand is not from the Hill Cumorah written on golden tablets that were hidden in the dirt that Moroni came and told Joseph Smith were written in some funny language that weighed more than any human could ever carry like the book of Mormon was. That's stuff for cartoons. They said this is the breath of God. And the apostles and the prophets said thousands of times that they were totally convinced that they were sharing the words that were not originating with them. As Peter said, "holy men of old spake as they were feromenoi borne along like a sail of a ship being blown in the wind. They were borne along by the spirit of God." As the apostle Paul said that every word of God is the breath of God breathing through them. The apostles and prophets secondly are the second reason why I believe the word of God.

3. The Word of God Has Endured Through the Ages

The third reason why I believe the Bible is the Word of God is survival. There is no other reason that you can explain why this Book exists. There has never been any book ever more targeted for destruction than this book on this planet. This Book has endured through the ages despite being the target of empires and emperors, despite armies being sent and dispatched to utterly destroy it and to rid the earth from it. Infidels have waged their war against this Book.

But, the Bible stands like a rock undaunted through the raging storms of time. Its pages burn with the truth eternal and they glow with the light divine. The Bible stands though the earth may crumble. It will firmly stand though the hills may tumble. I will take my stand on this firm foundation for the Bible stands.

This book has endured. It's endured through the ages. It's endured through every single attack against it and we're going to see how God preserved this book. And when we look at the endurance of the Bible, we're going to look at how there is more reason to believe the Bible than there is to believe that George Washington or Julius Caesar ever existed 'cause there's more verifiable factual information for Christ than there is for Caesar or a whole lot of other historical people you've heard of. And yet people fail to believe in Him to their eternal ignominious shame, yet you and I have the very word of God which endures.

4. The Bible Has Absolute Unity

The first reason I believe the Bible is true is Jesus Christ believed. The second reason I believe the Bible is true is all the apostles and all the prophets believed it. The third reason I believe it is because it has endured, because it has remained in spite of all of the attacks against it, it's survived. But number four is absolute unity. You say what do you mean by that?

Well what I think is neat, and I remember in literary criticism, Shakespeare. It almost killed me going through Elizabethan English. I know it's great stuff, but it didn't ring my bell at all. But I remember that we used to study all the metaphors and all the uses of Shakespeare.

If you look at the Bible, there is an incredible unity demonstrated in the fact that as I mentioned before, 40 different men, most of whom who never saw each other... Did you ever think about that? Those people that wrote the Bible didn't even know each other. They were living in three different continents. They were writing over 60 generations of time, 1,600 years. Most of them never saw what the other one wrote. And yet, this book has an absolute unity. It fits together better than the most machined parts. It totally unites. And when you look at this book, you find that there's an unmistakable fabric that was woven from prison to palace from desert to dungeons, from hillsides to holy places and there's one common

denominator. There's one shared theme. There's one united message. There's only one system of doctrine. One system of ethics. And there's only one plan of salvation. There is a supernatural, unearthly unity to this book.

I pick up the Sunday paper and I find such dissonance. You'd think that with all those people getting paid all that money that they could at least get one common theme throughout the paper. Did you know that a whole bunch of editors can't even make the paper work, but God, breathing out this book over a 1,600 year period of time, made it fit flawlessly together as one woven fabric with the backdrop being redemption and the blood of Christ.

5. The Bible Has Prophetic Accuracy

Number five is that there is prophetic accuracy. And we're going to have a fun time with this one. We're going to spend a whole service looking at the absolute accuracy of the prophecies of the Word of God where God told exactly what was going to happen right down to the nth degree, and every single thing God said happened.

Now next time you go to the Enquirer and look at Jeanne Dixon's accuracy, I mean, if she hits one out of two, I mean, people are clamoring. And they're so vague. A great earthquake is coming in next 10 years. I mean that's really a prophecy. I could say that and you could call me Nostradamus or something. But God targets the place, the people, the event, the timing with utter accuracy. Prophetic accuracy is number five.

6. The Bible is Scientifically Accurate

Number six. Scientific accuracy. Did you know that every time God speaks of a scientific issue in the Bible it is utterly accurate? Utterly. Did you know just in the last decade they've come up with the reality of the Bible where it says God separated the light from the darkness, and they found out that over 97% of our universe is made of dark matter. They just found that out, and God said "I separate the light from the darkness." And darkness and dark matter; they don't even know what it is. And God created it all and he separated it, and we are living in the part of the universe that God has described for us and it's exactly, scientifically the way God said. The Bible addresses such things as isostasy, and geodesy. It talks about the hydrological site. We're going to go through all of that. And the Bible is 100% scientifically accurate. And usually it's about a light year ahead of science. Because God tells the truth. And this book, you can trust.

7. The Bible is Historically Accurate

Finally, not only did Jesus Christ believe it, and the apostles and prophets believe it, it survived, it's absolutely united, it's prophetically accurate, it's scientifically accurate. You know what the last thing is? It's historically accurate. There has never been proven one historical error in this book.

In fact, when we were on this tour, I was thinking about the fact that Ramsey went out to prove that the Bible was true. Ramsey was a great historian and also an archaeologist, and the seven churches of the Bible were not ever known in history. They couldn't find them anywhere as well as the Hittites, and a lot of other things. And so he decided he'd go out with his spade and he started reading the book of Acts as Paul landed and walked the whole day. And then he took, he walked a whole day Ramsey did, and then he took his spade and he started digging and guess what? He found Pisidia Antioch just where the Bible said it was. So then it says Paul walked a couple more days and then he put his spade down and started digging. Why, there was Colosse. Just like the Bible said. And Aropolis and Laodicea. And he found... and every single historical reference in the Bible that has ever been pressed has found to have been 100% true.

Well, what does that mean? It means that the book that you hold in your hand this morning, you can trust. And if you can trust this book, then you ought to read it every day. In fact as it says in Psalms 132 you shouldn't find a place for your head to lay at night if you haven't found a place for God in your life.

How do you let God in? How do you let God into your life? Well, I'll just tell you a little secret. This is the voice of God, the breath of God. This is the spirit of God, distilled down onto paper and if you want to let God into your life, you ought to open this thing up every day. And if you open up the morning paper or if you watch Good Morning America or if you have to start your day with Rush instead of with God, then that's a mistake. And if you end your day with the sleazy, slutty, wickedness of the night shows instead of with the glories of the eternal, infinite God, shame on you. Shame on me.

What Should I Do With the Bible?

- **Read it to be wise.**
- **Believe it to be safe.**
- **Practice it to be holy.**

This book contains light to direct you, fruit to sustain you, comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff. It's the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, it's the Christian's chart. Here paradise is restored, heaven is open, the gates of hell are disclosed. Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. The Bible. The book you can trust. Let's bow for a word of prayer.

We thank you for your word, Oh God, forever settled in heaven. Turn our hearts by way of your word to the cross of Christ. Where we first met Christ was in your word. Where we grow with Him is in your word. And the Christ of the word is the only one we're ever going to know because your word is forever settled in heaven.

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