

BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW APOLOGETICS – Lesson 1

IS THE BIBLE TRUE? ... IS CHRISTIANITY TRUE? ... "OBJECTIVELY," AS OPPOSED TO "SUBJECTIVELY"?

John 21:24-25 - This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true. Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.

Acts 2:22-24 - "Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him."

2 Timothy 3:16-17 - All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

*******QUESTION: Is Christianity "true"?** What is meant by claiming it is "true"? What is the difference between an objective claim versus a subjective claim? What does the Bible claim to be?

ANSWER: The Bible comes to us as "objective truth." And if "objective," then it either IS or it IS NOT!

Objective vs Subjective ... A belief that the Bible is God's Word is not based upon a Christian's feelings, personal desires, wishes, hopes or dreams. The Bible is true whether or not certain individuals believe it. The Bible is true even if a professing Christian decides to walk away from their faith. The Bible is true even if 99% of atheistic scientists and historians say it's false. The Bible is true no matter how many so-called ministers say it's false.

-- An historical account that is actually a myth doesn't comport with **Numbers 23:19** "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?"

-- **The Bible doesn't make any sense if approached this way.** If the historicity and verity of Genesis cannot be relied upon then many New Testament passages, such as the following ones are not just brought into question, they become completely unintelligible. Note the following points, for example:

- Christ's death, burial, and resurrection are presented by the Apostle Paul as the remedy for the problem of a human sinful condition originating in the person of Adam. (Rom 5:14; 1Cor 15:22,45)
- The serpent's deception of Eve in the garden is

referenced as an example of the same kind of spiritual warfare faced by all believers. (2Cor 11:3)

- The institution of marriage has its beginnings in the historical relationship of Adam and Eve, (1Tim 2:13-14) which also serves as a type of Christ's relationship to His church. (Ephesians 5:23)
- Jesus was born a human being with traceable Jewish genealogical lineage extending back to Adam. (Luke 3:23-38)
- Cain and Abel are Adam's literal offspring, with Cain depicted as killing his brother Abel. (Matt 23:35; Luke 11:51; Heb 11:4; Jude 11)
- The faith of Noah is set apart by his obedience to God in preparing an ark to save his family from a literal flood. (Heb 11:7; 1Pet 3:20; 2 Pet 2:5)
- The destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah are cited as factual examples of God's wrath against sin. (Jude 7; Matt 11:23 -24; Luke 17:29; Mark 6:11; Luke 10:12; 2Pet 2:6)
- Enoch is recorded to be a prophet in the seventh generation from Adam. (Jude 14)
- Christians are identified as heirs of Abraham's covenant with God because believers in Christ are considered to be Abraham's spiritual offspring. (Romans 9; Gal 3:29)

-- **Can we truly "know" (objectively) with 100% certainty if the Bible is "true"?** Even many professing evangelicals say "no." (**Quotes: Josh McDowell & Lee Strobel**)

-- Does the above comport with what the Bible says about us having an assurance that the Christian scriptures are true? (See these scriptures: John 10:27-30, Romans 8: 38-39, 1 John 5:10-13)

John 10:27-30 - My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all^[a]; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. ³⁰I and the Father are one."

Romans 8: 38-39 - For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,^[a] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 John 5:10-13 - Whoever believes in the Son of God accepts this testimony. Whoever does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because they have not believed the testimony God

has given about his Son. ¹¹ And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

*****Christianity contains BOTH elements of individual, subjective, personal belief AND objective truth ... a joining of both PERSONAL FAITH and LOGICAL JUSTIFICATION for such belief. Most Christians focus on just the personal, subjective side, without also including rational justification in their personal witness for Christ. (In other words, they never try and explain to non-Christians why Christianity is true. They never attempt to link FAITH WITH REASON.) This is the reason for this Sunday School class.**

GOD'S BEING IS BOTH NECESSARY & SELF-EVIDENT, & GOD SPEAKS IN HIS INSCRIPTURATED WORD

(Schaeffer: "He is there and is not silent")

Genesis 1:1 - In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

John 1:1 - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Exodus 3:14 - God said to Moses, "I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I am has sent me to you.'"

Exodus 20:2 - "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery."

John 5:26 - For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself.

*****-- Christianity rests upon the primary, basic assumption, that the God of the Bible exists.

The Bible simply presents God as existing; it NEVER tries to "prove" God exists. God, the most high, Triune God of scripture is simply taken for granted - assumed to exist - and to doubt this reality is "foolishness". **Psalm 14:1** - The "fool" says there is no God.

*****-- Christianity also rests upon the assumption that God has spoken to mankind and a portion of His spoken Word has been inscripturated in the ancient texts that have been compiled in the Bible.

-- Over and over in scripture we read phrases like, "God said ... the angel of the Lord spoke saying ... the word of the Lord came unto the prophet so and so saying ... Jesus said, You've heard it said, but verily verily (truthfully truthfully) I say unto you..."

-- The Bible (coming to us as Scripture - the inscripturated Word of God) comes to us then as "God's revelation to man" ... it comes to us professing to be a TRUE revelation both from God and about God, to us / mankind.

-- The Biblical Scripture professes to be true in its revelation. (Numbers 23:19) It makes this claim in and of itself. The bible is "SELF-ATTESTING" ... it claims, in itself, to be "truth.

-- In other words, Christian scripture, coming to us as God's Word, attests to its own truthfulness, as being God's revelation to mankind.

-- The Biblical Scripture then, is either true, or it is not. The Bible is either God's Word, or it is not. (Numbers 23:19)

***Many non-Christians would say we Christians cannot assume, or presuppose, God's existence as revealed in the Bible ... that doing so is somehow invalid. That is fallacious reasoning. Why do non-Christians think it's alright for them to presuppose the non-existence of God, but somehow, it's wrong for Christians to presuppose God's existence according to the Bible? That is simply a double standard. This is an example of how they often play by different rules.

GOD IS AN "INFINITE KNOWER", THIS INFINITE KNOWER HAS SPOKEN

-- God is either speaking in the Bible, or is not. If God is speaking, then God is speaking as an "infinite knower" ... an infinite knower is qualified to reveal true things to His special creatures (human beings) that humans would not be capable of knowing in and of themselves. -- Thus, what the Bible declares about Reality (including God, humankind and the cosmos) is assumed to be true because God (the infinite knower of exhaustive truth) is doing the revealing thru those He chose to pen the scriptures

-- The Bible, as God's Word, also claims to be **"True truth ... not exhaustive truth" (Schaeffer) (John 21:25)** ... the Bible claims to reveal true things about reality, although not exhaustively

-- So, if all of this is the case, how do we as Christians try and answer the question, "Is the Bible true?" "And is Christianity true, which is based upon the Bible?"

-- Notice, the above question ASSUMES the existence of "Truth" ... it assumes that there is a genuine reality called "Truth" and that it exists

-- Man's FINITE-ness makes sure knowledge impossible UNLESS we have a basis for sure knowledge. Do Christians possess such a basis? Yes, the Word of God. God's Word is sure because it is God (an INFINITE KNOWER) revealing truth to His finite creature (man).

WHAT WOULD MAKE ANY TEXT THAT SOMEONE BELIEVES TO BE "SCRIPTURE" - A SACRED WORD FROM GOD - ACTUALLY BE "GOD'S WORD"?

2 Timothy 3:16-17 - All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God[a] may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

*******QUESTION: "Is the Bible God's Word?" ... "IF WE ASSUME, for the sake of discussion, that the Bible really is God's Word, then WHAT makes biblical scripture God's Word"?**

-- First, "God tells us in scripture that the recorded scripture is His Word" (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

-- If the Bible is God's Word, then it is so based upon its own truth-claims ... based upon what it says about itself ... based upon its own authority

-- As Christians, we take / embrace / assume that the Bible is what it claims to be (God's Word) on the basis of **ITS OWN SELF-ATTESTING AUTHORITY**

-- This fact, by itself, doesn't prove the Bible is God's Word ... we are only saying that IF the Bible is God's Word then it is so based upon its own authority (what it says about itself) and

NOT what any person says about it, be they Christian, pagan, theologian, historian, scientist, etc.

-- Ask yourself, "Why would anyone (upon WHAT BASIS) would anyone take what is regarded to be "scripture," meaning, the Bible, or ANY other writings, if those writings themselves didn't claim to be a Word from God?

-- There are many revered "holy books" in various world religions that never claim to be divinely inspired or special.

-- Second, as God's Word, it would be HIGHEST AUTHORITY. And being highest authority, it must then offer evidence WITHIN ITSELF that it is God's Word

-- In other words, there must be evidence within the scriptural text itself that demonstrates the assumed truths taught in the text are God's Word.

-- Thus, for the Biblical text to be considered scripture it MUST BE SELF-EVIDENCING. By Self-Evidencing, we mean that the "objective proof" that the Bible is God's Word is contained within itself.

-- SELF-EVIDENCING means that the ultimate proof that it is what it claims to be (God's Word) can also only come from WITHIN itself because there is no higher authority than itself. It must be its own ultimate proof. (We are going to discuss this a LOT more, at length).

***** (SUMMARY OF THE ABOVE):

If the Bible is in fact, God's Word, then what exactly makes the Bible "God's Word"?

ANSWER:

#1 - Scripture attests, in itself, that it is the in-scriptured Word of God (Self-Attesting)

And how can we prove (with 100% certainty) that the Bible is what it claims to be (God's Word)?

ANSWER:

#2 - Scripture provides the evidence within itself that it is what it claims to be - i.e., God's Word (Self-Evidencing)

IS IT INVALID (i.e., illogical) IF WE CLAIM THE BIBLE IS GOD'S WORD, UPON ITS OWN TESTIMONY BECAUSE IT'S "CIRCULAR REASONING"?

-- Is referencing the Bible's Self-Attesting authority illogical because of "circular reasoning"? (No. Detailed explanation ... our argument isn't that we believe the Bible simply because it claims to be God's Word ... Christians take it to be God's Word because IT ALONE PROVIDES A FOUNDATION FOR HUMAN KNOWLEDGE, which is the objective [transcendental] proof that it is true ... MUCH MORE ON THIS TO COME)

-- There is a theological problem with using any other standard to question God's Word. God is presented as the truthful, infinite knower who speaks/has spoken to mankind. God declares the Scripture is His Word and He calls all people to recognize and embrace He and His Word as absolute authority. To put it another way, the Word of God must be taken upon its own authority, by virtue of the fact that God cannot swear by anyone higher than Himself.

Hebrews 6:13-15 - When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself, ¹⁴ saying, "I will surely bless you and give you many descendants."¹⁵ And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised.

-- **There is a moral problem with putting God's Word to the test using anything else other than God's Word itself.** God tells finite human beings that we must NEVER put His word to the test. We (humans) are tested by His Word, but God is never in any position that His Word can be tested by finite, sinful creatures.

Deuteronomy 6:16 - Do not put the Lord your God to the test as you did at Massah.

Psalms 78:56 - But they put God to the test and rebelled against the Most High; they did not keep his statutes.

Matthew 4:7 - Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

-- Does God allow us (or anyone) to put His Word to the test? NO! God's Word is the standard of truth. We are to take it and then use it to test all views.

-- **To put God's Word to any sort of "test" is to think / act sinfully.** Is there any possibility that God isn't trustworthy or truthful in His Being?

-- **There is a logical problem with trying to use lesser standards to put God's Word to the test, which is the declared "highest standard" of authority.** To put God's Word to any test (other than itself) is illogical because it assumes there is some higher authority or standard than God's Word. If there were a so-called higher authority than God's Word, then what exactly would it be?

-- **Quote from Christian Philosopher Michael Butler:**

"Whether one's theory of knowledge is grounded in demonstrative reasoning, common sense, or something else, this, and not scripture becomes the ultimate authority of the one who adheres to it. It becomes more sure than the sure Word of God. The scripture teaches us that scripture itself is to be our authority (2 Pet 1:19,21; 2 Tim 3:16,17; 1 John 5:9; 1 Thess 2:13). If scripture is the final authority, and if one proves the authority of scripture on the basis of something else other than scripture, then one proves the scripture is not the final authority. In other words, to prove the authority of scripture on something other than scripture is to disprove scripture."