

GOD'S
INFALLIBLE
WORD

David K. Bernard

God's Infallible Word

by David K. Bernard

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1

The Bible Is GOD'S WORD

If we believe in God, we should also believe in the Word of God. Since God was interested enough to create us, and since He created us as rational beings, surely He is interested enough to communicate with us and thereby fulfill His purpose for creation. All intelligent beings seek to communicate, and the Supreme Intelligence is no exception.

Since God is the Father of the human race, surely He wishes to have a relationship with His children. Since He loves us enough to impart life to us and sustain us, surely He desires to communicate His love to us and help us. From our belief in an intelligent, loving Creator, we should expect to find the Word of God among us.

We would expect God to record His message in writing, the historic medium best suited for precision, preservation, and propagation. J. I. Packer explained why God has revealed Himself to us and specifically why He has done so in recorded words:

How does God reveal what has to be revealed in order that we may know Him? By verbal communication from Himself. Without this, revelation in the full

and saving sense cannot take place at all. . . . Why does God reveal Himself to us? Because . . . He who made us rational beings wants, in His love, to have us as His friends; and He addresses His words to us . . . as a means of sharing His thoughts with us, and so of making that personal self-disclosure which friendship presupposes, and without which it cannot exist.¹

How can we know what is God's Word? We would expect God's Word to identify itself, to tell the truth about the human condition, to contain content worthy of its Author, and to address our deepest spiritual needs. When we examine the world's literature, it is evident that the Bible is the unique written Word of God to humanity.

The Bible bids us to investigate and prove the truth for ourselves. "Test all things; hold fast what is good" (I Thessalonians 5:21). It also admonishes us to be prepared to explain the basis of our faith to others (I Peter 3:15). Therefore, let us discuss twenty points of evidence under six major headings which demonstrate convincingly that the Bible is the Word of God.²

The Bible's Own Testimony

Claims of the Bible. We would certainly expect the Word of God to identify itself as such, and the Bible does indeed claim to be the inspired, infallible Word of God (II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:21). Of all the books of the world's great religions, only one other book claims equal authority—the Qur'an of the Muslims—and it concedes that the Bible is the Word of God. If we find the Bible to

be trustworthy (as the following discussion will demonstrate), then we should accept its own testimony about itself .

Self-vindicating authority. The Bible speaks with such authority and power that its inspiration is self-evident. Those who heard Jesus teach recognized that He spoke with unique authority, unlike anyone else (Mark 1:22; John 7:46). Likewise, we recognize the Bible's unique authority when we read it. It actually needs no defense; it speaks for itself.

Testimony of the prophets and apostles. The prophets and apostles who wrote the Scriptures testified that they spoke not of themselves but by the Spirit of God. The people of God in every age accepted earlier biblical books as divinely inspired. For example, Israel's kings and prophets accepted the books of Moses as the Word of God, and the New Testament writers accepted the Old Testament as Scripture.

Integrity of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ accepted the entire Old Testament as God's Word (Luke 24:44-45). He commissioned the writers of the New Testament to proclaim His gospel to the world and promised that God's Spirit would lead them into all truth (Matthew 28:19-20; John 16:13). He said that His words, preserved in the New Testament, are spirit and life (John 6:63). He also said His words would not pass away but would remain eternally (Matthew 24:35). These claims are equivalent to asserting that His words are the Word of God. To reject the Bible, then, is to reject the authority of Jesus Christ.

A person cannot accept Jesus as a man of integrity and yet reject the authority of the Scriptures. Either the Bible is the Word of God as Jesus claimed, or else Jesus