

# Tough Questions about the Bible

## How we got the NT con't:

While several centuries went by before the New Testament was formally ratified, the Holy Spirit had ratified it in people's hearts & lives long before. Ponder the following points:

1. Communication & transportation was very poor in those days. Acceptance of anything took time, especially over large distances like the whole Roman Empire.
2. The Church was being discriminated against & persecuted. This wasn't as much of a priority.
3. There wasn't any widespread need to do this until heretics challenged it.

After Christianity had become "tolerated" by the Roman Emperor Constantine in the early 300's AD, some heresies became much more prominent. Then, it was dealt with. It didn't take long at all to ratify what the Holy Spirit had already been doing in the churches. Our present Bible was ratified at the church council of Hippo (393 AD) and again at the church council of Carthage (397 AD). *It is important to point out that the 4<sup>th</sup> century believers or Constantine did not choose what got into the Bible, they didn't create the Bible. They merely ratified what the Holy Spirit had already done. The Church merely "discovered" or "recognized" what the Holy Spirit had already done.*

## How do we know the Bible is accurate?

1. **Bibliographical test**....how do we know its been translated accurately over the years?
  - A. Compare Bible manuscripts from 200 AD & 1600 AD..virtually identical. This can be said of no other book of antiquity. See the 2 graphs.
2. **Internal test**....*did what's written about really happen?*
  - A. Despite the popular rumor, there are no mistakes in the Bible.
  - B. Disciples couldn't afford to risk inaccuracies which would at once be exposed by people only to glad to do so, specifically, the Jews.
  - C. Disciples appealed to common events that the average person knew of..ex: Matt 3—desert of Judea & John the Baptist.
3. **External test**....**does other historical material agree or disagree with the Bible?**
  - A. Archaeology confirms the Bible. The late, renowned archaeologist, Nelson Glueck, said that no archaeological discovery has ever disagreed with the Bible. Some archaeologists have used the Bible to uncover whole nations & people groups. Many times the Bible has filled in historical gaps that have added immeasurably to our knowledge of historical backgrounds. This can be said of no other book of antiquity.
  - B. Josephus - 1<sup>st</sup> century historian confirms many things in the Bible.
  - C. Many of the early church fathers were excellent historians. Eusebius....also Luke 1:1-4



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4. **Fulfilled prophecies**....unlike any other book, the Bible has made thousand of clear predictions about both the near & distant future that have come true in the smallest of details. No prediction has been wrong up to this point.

A. There have been over 300 prophecies of the coming Messiah that came completely true. Just taking 48 of those prophecies, the chances of this happening by chance is 1 in 10 (157) power.

B. Peter Stoner, a college astronomy instructor, had his statistics class figure out the chance of just 11 OT prophecies coming true by chance. They arrived at 1 chance in 10 (59<sup>th</sup>) power.

C. Imagine what the chances would be if all of the prophecies were added up.

D. Scientists have defined impossibility as being no greater than 1 chance in 10 (53<sup>rd</sup>) power. Ten times impossible is 1 in 10 (54<sup>th</sup>) power...100 times impossible is 1 in 10 (55<sup>th</sup>)

power.

E. These above statistics can be applied to no other book in all of history, ancient or present.

F. Modern day psychics are wrong more often than they're right. In fact, their chance of being right is a little better than the chance of guessing. This includes people like Nostradamus, Jeanne Dixon, Edgar Cayce, Miss Cleo, etc.

G. For more on prophecies, see [http://truthforsaints.com/science\\_speaks/science\\_speaks.html](http://truthforsaints.com/science_speaks/science_speaks.html)  
Scroll down to Chapter 2: Prophetic Accuracy & Chapter 3: the Christ of Prophecy

5. **Sociological effects**....what effect has Christianity had on individual lives and on civilization?

A. Transformed lives of the disciples

B. Transformed lives of 2000 years of history....people like scientists (James Clerk Maxwell-discoverer of the laws of electro-magnetism) to prostitutes to military leaders (Mitsuo Fuchida-leader of the attack on Pearl Harbor) to criminal to gang leaders (Nicky Cruz) to sports players to cartoonists (Charles Schulz-Peanuts, Johnny Hart-B.C.) To authors (C.S. Lewis, JRR Tolkien) to businessmen to doctors (several here in Jackson) to political leaders to skeptics (Lew Wallace-author of Ben-Hur)....the list goes on and on. Wherever Christianity has spread, it has produced transformed lives like the above. No other religion has claimed this. Even today in 3<sup>rd</sup> world countries, Christians are dying because they will not renounce their belief in Jesus.

C. Sociological effects....

1. The Christian church....for whatever its negative effects, its positive effects far outweigh the negative ones. Never has an institution done so much good for so many people all over the world for so many years. Most of the hospitals, orphanages, soup kitchens, etc in the world were started by Christians or Christian organizations. Missionaries have brought health (physical & psychological), education and advancement to remote tribes that the world has not cared about. Today, many churches have "care" ministries such as marriage counseling, small group care, child care, parenting help, substance abuse help, etc. Name one private group (atheist, agnostic, buddhist, hindu, etc) that does all of these things. Until modern times, even governments didn't do this, but the Christian church has been doing these things for 2,000 years.

2. *Because of Christianity, freedom has dramatically increased around the world.*

3. *Women have been elevated to an equality with men due to Christianity.*

4. *Education for the common person is a result of Christianity.*

5. *Health care for the common man is a result of Christianity.*