

CAN WE TRUST THE BIBLE?

How Do We Know
that the Bible Is Really
Inspired by God?

INSPIRATION (PART 2)



SERIES OVERVIEW

- **INSPIRATION: PART 1. What Does the Bible Mean When It Says It Is Inspired by God? PART 2. How Do We Know that the Bible Is Really Inspired by God?**
- **CANONIZATION: PART 1. What Books Belong in the Bible, and Who Decides? PART 2. How Do We Know that the Books in the Bible Are the Right Ones?**
- **TRANSMISSION: PART 1. If the Original Writings Are Gone, Do We Really Have the Bible? PART 2. What Is Textual Criticism, and Why Does It Matter?**

BIBLICAL CLAIMS

- **SCRIPTURE:** The Bible affirms its own full inspiration, that all/every Scripture is God-breathed—even its very words (2 Tim 3:16; 1 Cor 2:13; cf. 2 Pet 1:20–21).
- **OLD TESTAMENT:** The Old Testament—books, sections, and whole—(directly or indirectly) claims to be inspired (Jer 1:9; cf. John 10:34–36; 2 Tim 3:14–17; 2 Pet 1:19–21).
- **NEW TESTAMENT:** The New Testament—books, sections, and whole—(directly or indirectly) claims to be inspired (2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 3:16; 1 Tim 5:18 | 2 Pet 1:20–21; Eph 3:3–5).

ONLY A MATTER OF FAITH?

- **MISUNDERSTANDING:** Some people wrongly assume that belief in the inspiration of the Bible is a matter of “faith” and not verifiable/defensible (e.g., “Russell’s Teapot”).

Many orthodox people speak as though it were the business of sceptics to disprove received dogmas rather than of dogmatists to prove them. This is, of course, a mistake. If I were to suggest that between the Earth and Mars there is a china teapot revolving about the sun in an elliptical orbit, nobody would be able to disprove my assertion provided I were careful to add that the teapot is too small to be revealed even by our most powerful telescopes. But if I were to go on to say that, since my assertion cannot be disproved, it is intolerable presumption on the part of human reason to doubt it, I should rightly be thought to be talking nonsense. If, however, the existence of such a teapot were affirmed in ancient books, taught as the sacred truth every Sunday, and instilled into the minds of children at school, hesitation to believe in its existence would become a mark of eccentricity and entitle the doubter to the attentions of the psychiatrist in an enlightened age or of the Inquisitor in an earlier time.

Bertrand Russell, 1872–1970

ONLY A MATTER OF FAITH?

- **MISUNDERSTANDING:** Some people wrongly assume that belief in the inspiration of the Bible is a matter of “faith” and not verifiable/defensible (e.g., “Russell’s Teapot”).
- **FALSIFIABILITY:** The Bible, however, makes several testable (falsifiable) claims (e.g., history, science, logic) and invites honest inquiry (John 10:37–38; cf. vv. 24–26; 1 Cor 15:3–8).
- **CROSS-EXAMINATION:** The claims of Scripture do not permit dismissal or (willful) ignorance but require that we attempt to understand and uphold them (Acts 17:11; 1 Thess 5:21).

EVIDENCE

- **INTERNAL EVIDENCE:** The following characteristics of the Bible suggests that it is inspired: authority, ability, and unity (John 7:46 | Heb 4:12; 1 Pet 2:2 | 1 Cor 14:33; Ps 19:7).
- **EXTERNAL EVIDENCE:** The following proofs outside Scripture confirm its claims: Jesus Christ, eyewitnesses (character/miracles), history/archeology/ prophecy, and influence/ indestructibility (John 10:35 | 2 Pet 1:16–21 | 1 Pet 1:24–25).
- **CONCLUSION:** The cumulative evidence shows beyond a reasonable doubt that the Bible is inspired (Jas 1:21).