

# The Bible: Can We Trust it?

- Week 1. The Bible is God's Word
- Week 2: Origin of the Old Testament
- Week 3: Origin of the New Testament
- Week 4: Inspiration of the Bible
- Week 5: Inerrancy of the Bible
- Week 6: Biblical Languages and Translations
- Week 7: Interpretation of the Bible

# Week 1: The Bible is God's Word

## Learning Objectives:

- What is the Bible and what books compose the Bible (overview)?
- Reasons why the Bible is the Word of God

# 1a. “Bible” and “Scriptures”

“Bible” means books (Gk. *Biblia*)

- *1<sup>st</sup> use: 2 Clement 14:2 (AD 150): “the books and the apostles declare that the church has existed from the beginning.”*
- *Synonymous with “scriptures” (hai graphai) used to denote OT writings. E.g. Matt 21:42*
- *2 Peter 3:16: Paul’s writings are included in “other scripture”*
- Bible as a “covenant” : Old and New Testament. 2 Co. 3:14-15; Jer 31:31.

# 1b. Composition of the Bible

- Which books make up canon?
- No complete agreement on the list.
- Relative to “Protestant Bible”:

## **Old Testament**

- (1) Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches add Apocryphal writings.
- (2) Ethiopian church adds 1 Enoch and book of Jubilees

## **New Testament**

- (1) Syrian Orthodox church omits 2 Peter; 2+3 John; Jude; Revelation.

# The Authority of the Bible

We live in a culture of “authority crisis”.

Questions are being asked, including:

- Is the Bible the Word of God? Or words of men? Or a combination of the two?
- What evidence do we have that the Bible is the Word of God?
- Are we free to interpret Bible as we wish (week 7)?

# Seven Reasons why the Bible is the Word of God

## 1) Teachings of Jesus.

He is the son of God! He quoted scriptures, e.g., Jesus' temptation Matt 4; Sadducee's denial of resurrection Luke 20:37

**He saw himself as fulfillment of scriptures.**

E.g. Is. 61/Luke 4:18 “the Spirit of the Lord is upon me”; John 5:45-47—you believe Moses, believe in Jesus; Emmaus—Luke 24:25-27

# Why the Bible is the Word of God (continued)

## 2) Bible's teachings about itself.

“Thus says the Lord”—over 2000 times in OT.

“Words taught by the Spirit” 1Co.2:13.

3) **Unity of the Bible.** Different authors, but same spirit. Key verses: 2 Ti. 3:15-16  
(inspiration)

# Why the Bible is the Word of God (continued)

- 4) **No discrepancies.** Bible is very accurate and orderly (Luke 1).
- 5) **Prophecies fulfilled** concerning future of Israel, gentile nations and especially, Jesus' coming, death, return (Is. 7, 9, 53; Micah 5:2; Dan 9:25-27; Jer 23:5-6; Ps. 16:8-11)

# **Why the Bible is the Word of God** (continued)

- 6) The Bible's Preservation.** Many manuscripts (efforts by Romans to eliminate texts). Matt 24:35.
- 7) Transformation of People today.**  
“Reviving the soul”: read Ps. 19:7-9.

# Discussion Questions

**How do you defend the Bible as the Word of God in the face of the following criticisms:**

- There is no agreement on what books make up the Bible (“Catholics and Protestants differ”).
- The Bible is simply a collection of books written by different men at different times—it is not unified.
- The Bible is unclear on prophecy; Christians cannot agree between themselves as to the role of Israel and future events (e.g., return of Christ).
- The oldest manuscripts were written many years after Jesus; they are inconsistent; we cannot rely on available texts.
- People’s lives can be transformed by many books, not just the Bible.