ISSUE # 3 - THE BIBLE: JUST ANOTHER BOOK?

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Category: The Main Issue

THE BIBLE: JUST ANOTHER BOOK?



Your problem has a remedy. That remedy is found in the Bible, the book that changes lives and sets people free.

This edition of *The Main Issue* deals with the Bible. The Christian community claims the Bible to be God's Word to man. Indeed, within its own pages are some very bold statements regarding its own

worth. The Bible does, in fact, claim to be inspired by God, a very bold assertion.

The Bible says, "*He who despises the word will be destroyed.*" And the Bible records the teaching of Jesus, that any person who lives according to any other word will suffer calamity.

There are so many other teachings and sayings and philosophies and traditions on which men build. And each of these has its books. But there is no book to compare with the Bible. None comes remotely close.

Surely it makes good sense to determine for oneself the actual caliber of this most intriguing book. In this edition of *The Main Issue* you will learn things you have never known, information that will astound you, challenge you, and give you a new respect for this holy literature.

The Bible has always had its enemies, striving to belittle your confidence in its pages. The Bible: just another book? challenges those enemies.

Is the Bible just another book? Or is it truly inspired of God and able to meet your problems? You are the judge. *The Main Issue* presents the evidence. You have a verdict to make.

Christians believe the Bible is inspired by God, and is therefore divine and infallible. Scattered throughout this paper is evidence for your consideration – information that will hopefully secure for all time your trust in this great literature. *The Bible: just another book*? You are the judge. *The Main Issue* presents the evidence. What is your verdict?

Have you ever asked yourself ....

WHY ARE THERE SO MANY DIFFERENT TRANSLATIONS OF THE BIBLE?

Although there are many translations they, generally, say the same thing. Yes, the translators may use different words or synonyms to best convey what they believe the original text to say, but the overall message is the same. This does not mean, however, that one translation is not better than another; it is often a matter of opinion. When trying to understand a particular verse, it can be helpful to examine a number of translations, to see the verse through the eyes of many translators. Also, there are a few 'bandit' translations which are in part deliberate mistranslations, one of which was mentioned in the last edition of *The Main Issue – The New World Translation* by the Watchtower Society (Jehovah's Witnesses). The chances of coming across any other is slim.

WHO SAID THAT?

"*Pile them, if you will, on the left side of your study table; but place your own holy Bible on the right side*

all by itself, all alone with a wide gap between them. For..... there is a gulf between it and the so-called sacred books of the East which severs the one from the others utterly, hopelessly, and forever..... a veritable gulf which cannot be bridged over by any science of religious thoughts.'

Professor M. Montiero-Williams (spent 42 years studying Eastern books)

"*The Bible should be on the top shelf all by itself. The Bible is 'unique'! That's it! The ideas I grappled with to describe the Bible are summed up by the word 'unique'*!"

Josh McDowell, author, lecturer

"*If this book had not been the book of God, men would have destroyed it long ago. Emperors and popes, kings and priests, princes and rulers had tried their hand in it; they die and the book stills lives*.'

H.L. Hastings



THE UNIQUENESS OF THE BIBLE

The Bible is the most unusual book ever written. It is in a class of its own. No other writing compares. Check these facts:

1.) The Bible took 1500 years to complete and 40 authors to write it. Mostly, these authors were from different backgrounds, one a fisherman, one a doctor, another a prime minister, another a military general, etc.

2.) Though most of the authors were from various lands and times, the theme and content harmonize from Genesis (the first book of the Bible) to Revelation (the last book). The message from

beginning to end is consistent – the redemption of man through the promised messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

3.) The Bible is by far the most read book, and the most cherished. There are people from every nation of the world who are reading the Bible at this very moment, preaching from it, studying it, memorizing its verses, singing its psalms. And the Bible continues to be the bestseller.

4.) More than any other writing, the Bible has affected other literature. It has been quoted to such a degree that should all the Bibles be completely destroyed, it could easily be reconstructed from other writings that quote from it.

5.) More translators have worked at the translation of the Bible than any other book of antiquity.

6.) manuscript is a copy of the original writing, or a copy of a previous copy. There are more manuscripts of the Bible than any other classical writing. As a matter of fact, there are more manuscripts of the Bible than any other ten books combined.

7.) Over the centuries meticulous care was taken for the preservation and purity of Biblical manuscripts.

8.) No other book has been assaulted as much or as often as the Bible, in every corner of the world, in every age.

9.) The Bible is proven to be historically accurate, and as an historical source of information stands in a caliber of its own.

10.) No other book has the same power to transform lives. Millions worldwide attest to having found a new and superior life simply by reading and responding to the Scriptures.

Many of the above statements do not prove the Bible to be divine. But surely it must be concluded that anyone seeking truth would not ignore this book. What other can compare? To what other would you go to seek truth? *The Bible: Just another book*? You are the Judge. What is your verdict?



" You have a verdict to make"





"the promised messiah,
the Lord Jesus Christ"

" What is your verdict?"



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear sir,

Your first edition of *The Main Issue*, while distributed door-to-door in the Rutland area of Kelowna, does not appear to have been similarly distributed up here on the hill. I got my copy from a friend in Rutland who was every bit as amused as myself to learn that the dark ages of ignorance and

retrogression are alive and well in Kelowna. Nevertheless I would very much like to have delivered to me the remaining nine issues of the series. If you don't wish to oblige me, not to worry, I can always obtain them the same way I obtained the first one.

I have sent the aforementioned first edition (along with a copy of this letter) on to *American Atheist*, Inc., of which organization I am a proud member. Perhaps it will also afford them a few laughs. But then again, it may instead just make them cry, to see what depth of ignorance and stupidity a supposedly literate person in the closing years of the twentieth century can sink. At the very least it will demonstrate to their editor, who had heretofore held a view to the contrary, that rank-and-file Canadians are every bit as stupid as their American counterparts.

You start your first paragraph on page 1 with an outright lie when you state that, "*Charles Robert Darwin scratched the itch of nineteenth century liberalism for an alternative to creationism*." He did nothing of the sort! His views were forced upon him by the evidence he gathered during his voyage on the Beagle. It is only you creation crackpots who start with the assumption that your viewpoint is correct, and then try to find evidence, or strain the available evidence to support it. Furthermore, both Darwin and Wallace, half a world apart, both arrived independently at the same conclusions, and had it not been that Darwin happened to be the first to publish, what much of the world presently refers to as "Darwinism" might very well be known today as "Wallaceism." The very fact that the theory is being constantly modified as more and more facts become known, attests (at least to thinking people) to the superiority and impartiality of science over religion. Very ignorant people believe very solidly in god. Very educated people seldom believe.

While trying to decide what might be your reasons for bursting into print with this trash, I have been able to come to only two conclusions, as follows:

I. You are deliberately and consciously evil, and have only a pecuniary motive.
2. You are:
a) densely ignorant,
b) extremely stupid,
c) heavily bigoted,
d) thoroughly brainwashed.

If you are in the first category my impulse would be to regard you only with scorn, contempt, and loathing, but if you are in the second category I then regard you instead with pity. As Professor Fulks says in his CHRISTIANITY, A CONTINUING CALAMITY (p.7): "*Clearly, our quarrel is not with the worshipers. The blame then, lies squarely upon those cunning parasitical groups who, not believing a word of it themselves, nevertheless use it as an instrument of social contro*l."

In the April 1990 issue of the *American Atheist Magazine*, is an article by Professor Frank R. Zindler, a former professor of biology and geology, now a science writer and a member of the *American Association for the Advancement of Science*, the *American Chemical Society*, and the *American*

Schools of Oriental Research, wherein he lists (p.40) the Tenets of Scientific Creationism as reprinted from pages 12 and 13 of the 1985-1987 *Graduate School Catalogue: Institute for Creation Research*. Tenet number 6 states that, "*Processes today operate primarily on fixed natural laws and relatively uniform process rates but, since these were themselves originally created and are daily maintained by their Creator, their is always the possibility of miraculous intervention in these laws or processes by their Creator*."

On page 40 Mr. Zindler states as follows: "*Just such a clear and adequate reason arose not long ago in the midst of a debate I was having with Duane Gish the ICR's superstar debater, on a radio station in Columbus, Ohio. Since Gish held that the universe is only a few thousand years old, a caller pointed out that we can see stars and galaxies a million light years away – meaning that the light we see has been traveling for millions of years. About to have his aces trumped by a fact of science, Gish simply replied that God could easily have created the light already on route, and that the light we see never actually comes from a star!*

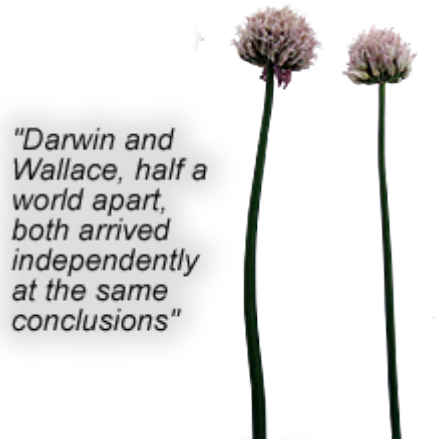
"Gish scored no points on this occasion, however, because I pointed out that the ability to resort to miracles whenever needed to save one's 'theory' makes creationism a game played without rules. Real scientists are required to play by the rules WITHOUT EXCEPTION. Creationists follow the rules of science so long as it is expedient. Then they resort to miracles. But resorting to miracles is not offering an explanation: it is asserting that no real explanation exists. Whenever creationists resort to miracles, they are admitting that their system cannot account for the facts of nature: it cannot explain the world."

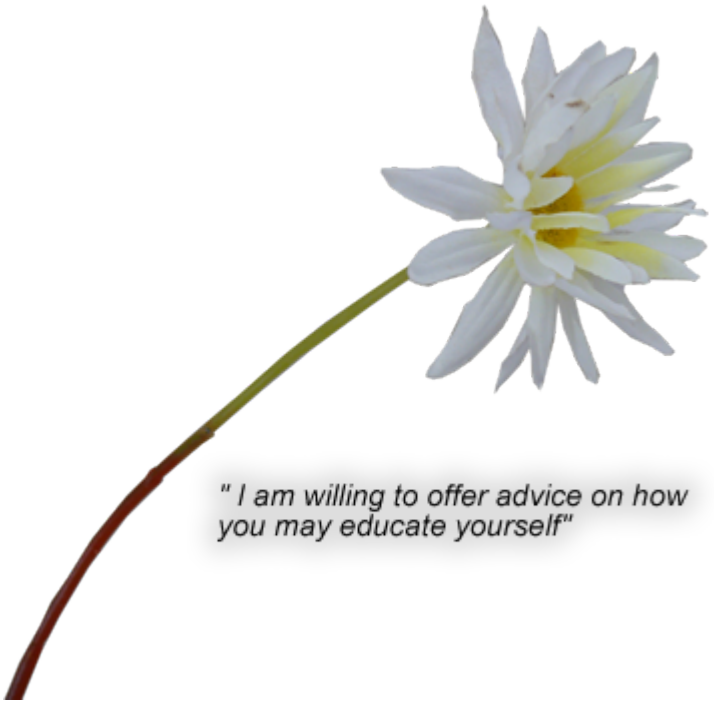
I suspect that Duane Gish will think twice before taking on Frank Zindler again. But then again, maybe not. After all, one sufficiently steeped in superstition might never be reached by facts, reason, and logic.

Nevertheless, I am willing to offer you advice on how you may educate yourself out of your ignorance. You may read the American Atheist monthly magazine. Also I am enclosing herewith an application form for you to become a member of American Atheists. Instead of the lies, fallacies, myths, distortions and other fiction with which you have been inundated all your life, you will then have access to REAL science, REAL history, REAL astronomy, REAL philosophy, etc., and who knows, perhaps your mind will be freed at last.

Yours truly,
Name Withheld


"American Athiest, Inc., of which organization I am a proud member."


"Darwin and Wallace, half a world apart, both arrived independently at the same conclusions"



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Sir:

I thank you for your letter. I assume you received issue number two at your door, if you have not I will mail you a copy upon request.

It is obvious you spent some time formulating your letter, and again I thank you. Since I am withholding your name and address, I conclude that it does not transgress fairness to print your letter (in its entirety, except for addresses). I believe others may benefit from what I have to say to you.

Please do not look for anything retaliatory. I believe with all my heart that God loves you as much as any person, that you are very precious in His sight, and I therefore dare not spite you in any way. Because I believe there is a heaven to gain and a hell to shun, I sincerely ask you to please try to hear me.

First, when I wrote, “Darwin scratched the itch of nineteenth century liberalism for an alternative to creationism,” I did not mean to imply that his motives were corrupt or he intentionally tried to satisfy that era’s hunger for an alternative to creationism, or even that he realized he was so doing, but merely that his theory did in fact accomplish that very thing. That is why it was so eagerly embraced.

From your perspective, creationists are religious and evolutionists are scientific. I hope to convince you that the opposite is true – that, in fact, it is evolution that is based upon religious sentiment, and

creation is based on true science.

Evolution vs Creation, the first edition of The Main Issue, was based on scientific facts. A computer is a scientific tool, and I pointed out that the computer proves the impossibility of evolution. By scientific observation, we can see that even the highest mountains are covered with sedimentary rock, and by the process of elimination we can safely conclude the only natural cause is a worldwide flood, which in turn can be used to validate the book of Genesis. The age of the earth can be scientifically determined by studying the decreasing strength of the earth's magnetic field, the increasing salt content of the oceans and the depth of the meteoric dust on the moon's surface. I pointed out the scientific evidence of fossils disproves the theory of evolution, and most scientists, both evolutionists and creationists, concur. I quoted a certain Bible scholar as saying, "Since reproduction is a condition of evolution, it cannot be a product of it." Is that not a scientifically sound conclusion?

You state that "The very fact that the theory is being constantly modified as more and more facts become known, attests to the superiority and impartiality of science over religion." Sir, I respectfully challenge you, is that a scientifically sound statement? A modified theory proves that science is superior to religion? I agree science is superior to religion (I am not a religionist), but that opinion is neither sustained nor reduced by the fact that the theory of evolution is constantly being changed. The only thing a modified theory proves is the original theory was inferior. Surely you can see that.

And what new facts were discovered? There never was even one scientific fact on which the theory of evolution was founded. In my study I had never come across one. If you know of one, please inform me. What scientific fact explains design without a designer? Evolutionists can only say, "It must have happened that way because there is no other explanation." Sir, that is not science. It is not mathematics. It is religion.

Evolution is founded on the BELIEF there is no God, no creator, no superior being. That God does not exist cannot be scientifically proven. How does one prove that something or Someone does not exist? It is an assumption that can only be accepted by FAITH. Again, that is not science, but religion.

Sir, you speak of miracles. What is more miraculous and astounding and difficult to believe – life that is placed in a universe by Someone more superior to that life and that universe, or life placed in a universe by chance happenings? Chance happenings fail most people. That is why only a very few win the lottery. How could chance happenings be credited with bringing people into existence and provide them with food and water and oxygen? It is the evolutionist who uses the astounding (miraculous?) to explain the existence of life.

Your letter states, "Real scientists are required to play by the rules WITHOUT EXCEPTION." Again, on what rules is evolution built? Where is the 2 + 2 = 4 kind of science that proves design without a designer? What scientific rules were followed when the evolutionists accepted Nebraska Man which was concocted from a tooth, a pig's tooth, as the missing link?

In your letter you offered no factual rebuttal to refute creationism and this must be because you don't have any. True, you offered evidence the universe could be older than 10,000 years, but that is not evidence it was not created.

And that's the amazing reality. There is no evidence, no facts, no mathematical calculations! Yes, you present names with impressive titles. Lots of rhetoric. Passion. Anger. Insults. But no evidence! No facts! No science!

The miraculous to man is the commonplace to God. Jesus said, "With God all things are possible." It was no big deal for God to part the Red Sea, to multiply the loaves and fishes, to open blind eyes, to raise the dead. It was no big deal for God to create the universe and all that inhabit it. It was just as easy for Him to create the stars with their light already reaching the earth, as not. But why not let man see the light of the stars? It was probably for us they were created. No, you and I cannot understand how anyone can do it, and that is simply because the Designer (God), of necessity, is so much greater than the design (us). In order for the design to understand the Designer, the design must be equal to (as smart as) the Designer, but that trespasses the laws of science and common sense.

This edition of The Main Issue gives much factual evidence that the Bible is truly a supernatural book, that is, a book far beyond the ability of man to produce. The proof of the Bible's worth is in your hands. And it is the Bible that attests to creation.

There is more at stake here than winning an argument. For this Bible also states you will live forever, and your eternal future depends on what you do with Christ, God's plan of redemption for you. Christ, to the evolutionist, is a product of chance. But the Bible tells us that He is God's gift to man. Sir, if you are wrong and the Bible is right, you will pay eternally and dearly for your mistake.
You are not an atheist because it has been scientifically proved to you that God does not exist; you are an atheist because of religious or emotional motives. Perhaps you have been deeply hurt, or you are angry at God, or you are bitter against those who let you down, or you have been rejected by loved ones. I know for a fact your vehemence against those who disagree with you does not stem from a scientific conclusion.

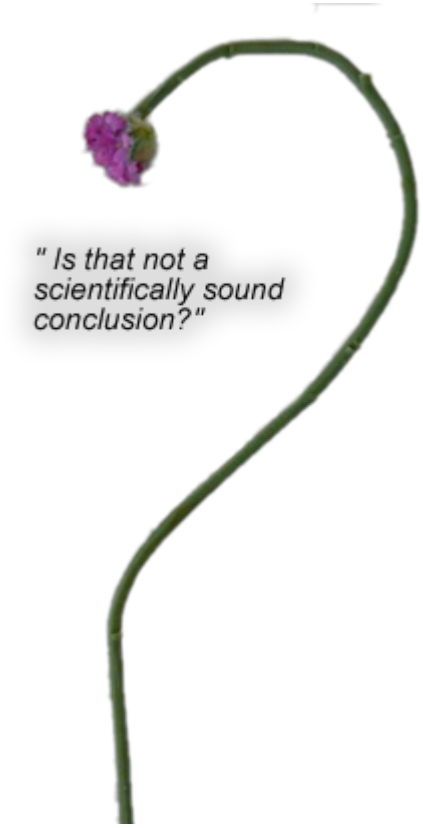
Please consider the possibility my motive is not "pecuniary," that there really is a new and better life for you, that you are the object of God's love and concern, that He very much wants to embrace you into His kingdom, His family.

I have and I will pray for you. I ask EVERY Christian who reads this to likewise pray for you. I ask you to write me another letter if and when you have a change of heart, and give me permission to print it with your name attached. I am certain if Christians pray with perseverance your eyes will be open to your need of Jesus. May God make Himself real to you.
Sir, I thank you.

Most sincerely,

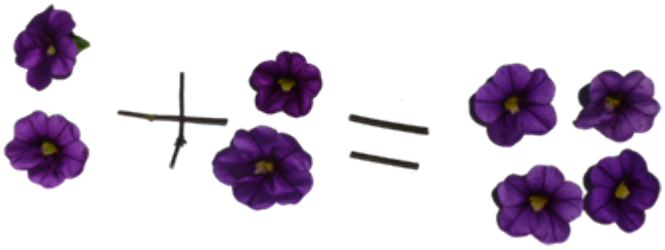
The editor




" Is that not a scientifically sound conclusion?"


" What scientific fact explains design without a designer?"

"Where is the 2+2=4 kind of science that proves design without a deisgner?"





"Jesus said, with God all thing are possible"



MY NAME IS LARRY JONES

My name is Larry Jones, and I am the editor-publisher of The Main Issue.

Since the delivery of the first issue, Evolution vs Creation, we have answered more than three hundred phone calls. Some of these calls ranged from extremely angry (“Don’t you dare put that dribble in my mailbox again!”) to highly encouraging. Picture a child who has been summoned to the principal's office, not knowing if he is to be scolded or commended, and you will have an idea what it's like to answer the phone.

Often people just want to know who produces The Main Issue. The conversation goes something like this:

“What group or church do you belong to?”

“I belong to Jesus Christ.”

“But what denomination are you?”

“I am not a denominational person.”

“Well then, what religion are you?”

“I am not of any religion.”

“But you must belong to something.”

“No, I do not belong to something but to Someone. I belong to Jesus. He purchased me with His blood. I am His property.”

“You mean you do not belong to a church?”

“No, I do not belong to a church.”

“But who puts this paper out?”

“Well, basically, I do – with some help from others.”

“But who are you?”

“I am a Christian”

“But what kind of Christian?”

“A real Christian.”

“What do you mean a ‘real’ Christian?”

“A real Christian is a follower of Christ. A real Christian is one who has a relationship with Christ, in the same way that you have a relationship with a friend.”

It seems like many cannot relax until they can categorize me; only then can I be either dismissed or considered ‘safe.’ I think its time to introduce myself so the reader will know where I am coming from and what The Main Issue is all about.

I am a local businessman, a husband, father and grandfather, a forty year resident of Kelowna, B.C. Canada. Spiritually, I identify with none other than the Lord Jesus Christ and with all others who have made that same decision. I live for Him and Him alone. I am not a denominational or religious person – simply because God has never made me one. (Actually. He has never made anyone a denominational or religious person. Anyone who is so has either made himself one or allowed others to make one of him.)

I am a Christian. I am a disciple of Christ.

I did not become a Christian by adhering to Christian principles, or by becoming a good guy, or by joining a church, or by performing a certain ritual, or by being baptized in water (I was later baptized in obedience to Christ’s command). God made me a Christian.

God made me a Christian when I submitted my life to Christ. That was in February, 1972. It was an experience, a spiritual happening. I was a different person from that day on. Something happened to me that day. God gave me a new life. Jesus explained it this way: “That which is born of the flesh is

flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." I was born of the Spirit of God when I submitted my life to Christ and received Him as Lord and Savior. I didn't know about being "born again": all I knew was that something very sensational and positive happened to me. If my life was worth a nickel, it was now worth a hundred dollars. I was "born again" of the Spirit of God, something I could never do for myself, something God will do for anyone who comes to Christ on Christ's terms. Ever since I have had a burden to reach others for Christ.

Religionists (I define a religionist as one who trusts in his religion for salvation or to improve his life, or one who uses his religion to try to impress God) find it difficult to understand God's simple plan of salvation. Or they are blinded by their love for their religion. Or their religious leaders prevent them from entering in. Religion holds a certain credibility with man, but not with God. When Jesus (who was called 'Immanuel' meaning God-with-us, who was actually God in the flesh) carried out His three years of ministry, He was continually confronting the religious leaders, who were called Pharisees. They and Jesus did not get along at all. While He spoke with compassion to the harlot, Jesus publicly decried the Pharisees, exposing their hypocrisy: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you are like whitened sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." The people knew positively that Jesus did not identify with the religious, that He was saying, in effect, "I have nothing in common with them".

Jesus was angered because these religious leaders prevented others from entering the kingdom of God ("you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for you neither go in yourselves, neither allow them that are entering to go in"). They used their unearned influence to keep the people from accepting God's plan of salvation (Jesus), offering instead a counterfeit salvation that leads to eternal destruction.

Things are no different today. Millions are trusting in their religion to save them. They have been persuaded to do so by the Pharisees of our time. In spite of the tragedy of it all, I can't help but see some comedy in the reaction of many. Yes, they can see so clearly the shallowness, the absurdity, of every other man's religion but are blinded to that of their own. It's okay to publicly expose the Jehovah's Witnesses, but Why did you have to touch 'my' religion? - just as absurd, perhaps more so.

Jesus still has nothing in common with them, the religionists. During His earthly ministry, Jesus did not perform absurd rituals or wear funny clothes or play the professional. The religionists, though they may think of themselves as Christians, did not learn those things from Him. Jesus was real, authentic, unassuming, meek, approachable. He had a servant's heart. And He spoke the truth, with authority and without apology. He ate with tax collectors. Many of his disciples were fishermen. He noticed a widow. He mingled with commoners.

The religious leaders of today use the same tactics as the Pharisees to impress. They do not have

the real thing – truth, authority, anointing – so they must use methods and things to impress the uninformed: professionalism, imposing titles, ecclesiastical hierarchies, religious prayers, differentiating clothing, religious sayings, impressive rituals, majestic buildings. They, like the Pharisees before them, use these things to control. They scoff at the simple gospel of salvation through faith in Christ and impose conditions and burdens. They add to and take away from God's word. They will not enter into God's kingdom and hinder others from doing so.

The intent of The Main Issue is to preach the gospel of Christ, and to expose alternatives as false and ruinous. The gospel I preach is the same gospel that Christ preached, the same that Paul and the other apostles preached, the same as the early church, the same as Billy Graham and most every other born-again believer. The gospel of which I write is the gospel that transformed my life, and the lives of millions.

Some ask me what right I have to push my opinions on others. I reply that I do not have opinions, that I merely repeat what Jesus has said.

If a person discovered a cure for cancer, would it not be his duty to tell others, even at the risk of being ridiculed and ostracized? Judge for yourself; but I must speak out.

Also, Jesus commissioned His people to preach His gospel to the lost (that's you). Every Christian has been given "the ministry of reconciliation," the responsibility of telling others the good news of Jesus Christ. The Main Issue is but one means of so doing.

And He warned us, "The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." In other words, anyone preaching Christ can expect to be treated in the same way He was. In the past few months, I have been called a bigot, a monster, stupid, narrow minded, ignorant, intolerant, evil, brainwashed, and some other things that should not be printed. We feel waves of oppression sweep over our home after each publication. But it's worth it, it really is. It is a privilege to preach the gospel of Christ, "the power of God unto salvation."

Truth is. In other words, truth exists. Whether you have found it or not, it is a reality. Some have claimed to have found it and have not. Others don't want it. Others dispute its existence. But there is truth. The Main Issue points to that truth.

Truth is not a philosophy or a religion or a creed. Truth is a person. That person is Jesus Christ. I have discovered that person; I have discovered truth. I challenge you to give The Main Issue fair appraisal, to determine for yourself whether it is logical, accurate and true.

The Bible: just another book? is the third of ten editions of The Main Issue. On this issue every other edition stands or falls. Why? Because The Main Issue is based entirely on the Bible. Find a weakness in the reasoning presented and you find a defect in the very foundation on which The Main Issue is built.

But adversely, if you are persuaded as to the supernatural qualities of the Bible, if you cannot find a

flaw in the logic presented, if you are convinced that the Bible's author is none other than God Himself, that the Bible is not man's word but God's word, then you would be wise to give this publication very serious consideration.

Happy reading!




" I am a disciple of Christ"


"Didn't hear that in history class did you?"





Have you ever asked yourself....

WHY IS THE BIBLE SO HARD TO UNDERSTAND?

It is not difficult to understand what you need to know in the Bible once you resign yourself to truth. (Right now you need to know about salvation.) Sometimes we are blinded by our own sin. A thief might read, "You shall not steal" and say to himself, "I wonder what that means?" Or we may be blinded by traditional teachings. Many years ago, whenever I heard Billy Graham on T.V. preaching the salvation message, I would conclude if a person is not a Catholic he must get saved.

Basically, the Bible tells of the fall of man, man's need of salvation, and God's plan of salvation, the Lord Jesus Christ. That message is splattered throughout the Bible. What could be simpler than these words of Jesus? - "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no one comes to the Father except

through Me."

WHO SAID THAT?

"*One thing to keep in mind is that the church did not create the canon or books included in what we call Scripture. Instead, the church recognized the books that were inspired from their inception. They were inspired by God when written*."

Josh McDowell, author, lecturer

"*When at last a church council – The Synod of Hippo in A.D. 393 – listed the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, it did not confer on them any authority which they did not already possess, but simply recorded their previously established canonicity*."

F.F. Bruce, author

"*Athanasius of Alexander (A.D. 367) gives us the earliest list of New Testament books which is exactly like our New Testament. This list was a festal letter to the churches*."

Josh McDowell, author, lecturer

Have you ever asked yourself....

How can I be sure the Bible is true?

There is much evidence, as this publication points out, of the trustworthiness of the Bible. Surely it has been established, at the least, that the book is above the caliber of man. If one is satisfied that it is indeed inspired by God, as it itself claims to be, then it is the integrity of God that is at question. Would God, produce a book that was true, partly true, or false? Each individual must decide.

Is the Bible God's true Word? Ask Him. And then listen – with your mind and your heart.

Luke 11:28: Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.

Jesus spoke these words; they are His promise to you.

To be blessed means to be fortunate, happy, envied. If you heed God's Word you will be blessed indeed.

You will be saved from the penalty of your sins; you will not be destroyed.

You will be a winner.

Simply because you have placed your confidence in the Word of God.

Jesus said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away."

God's promise to you will come to pass: you will surely be blessed if you keep His Words.



THE RELIABILITY OF THE BIBLE

The reliability of the Bible is established, more than any other book of antiquity. The Bible has kept its accuracy over the centuries. What you read in the Bible is the same content as that of the original writing.

Note: An original writing is called an autograph. Autographs fade in time and copies are therefore made to preserve the original work. These handwritten copies, as already mentioned, are called manuscripts. Historians readily accept manuscripts as proof of the original writing, especially if there are a number of manuscripts to compare with each other.

The New Testament

There are more than 24,000 New Testament manuscript copies, more than any other writing. The writing that comes in second place is Homer's Iliad with 643 manuscript copies.

The Iliad was written by Homer in 900 B.C. The earliest known copy was written in 400 B.C. The interval between the original writing and the oldest known copy is therefore 500 years, and historians accept the validity of the Iliad. However, the interval of time between the New Testament writings and the oldest manuscript is only 23 years.

The textual corruption (impurities that occurred through the ages) of Homer's Iliad is 5 percent, whereas the New Testament is only a half of 1 percent. Most of these impurities are inconsequential and do not alter the meaning of text. These few impurities can be rectified by comparing manuscripts.

Scholars accept as authentic the writings of such notables as Cicero, Sophocles, Virgil, etc. even though copies of their works are scant. The number of copies of the New Testament are more numerous by far than all of these put together, and the copies are not as old.

The Old Testament

Jesus often quoted from the books of the Old Testament to bring across a truth to His listeners. Would He quote from books not reliable? He said, "Search the Scriptures…these are they which testify of Me." Would Jesus suggest people search a fabrication? The Old Testament is as true as Jesus is true.

The Old Testament was quoted, and therefore validated, by writers of the New Testament books, historians at that age, and early church saints.

God gave the Jewish people the responsibility of safeguarding the Old Testament and they did so with great care and rigidity. In many cases, before beginning his work the copyist had to be dressed in a certain manner and wash his whole body. He copied each word and each letter with precision, never by memory, often using a counting system to assure not one letter was missed. The lines, the number of words, the spaces between words and even the spaces between letters were carefully determined.

The Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered in 1947, confirm the accuracy of the copyists. Before this discovery the oldest known complete manuscripts of the Old Testament date back to 900 A.D. The Dead Sea Scrolls go back to 100 B.C., about 1000 years previous. How did the Dead Sea Scrolls compare to the younger manuscripts? The answer: amazingly well! This proved that the system of copying and recopying through the centuries was incredibly accurate, and what we read in the Bible today compares well with the original writings (autographs).

Archaeology confirms the Old Testament. For example: Genesis tells us that the patriarch Abraham moved from the city of "Ur of the Chaldees." Where is this Ur? skeptics asked. In 1929 archaeologists uncovered one of the oldest cities of the world near the Persian Gulf, further advanced and more luxurious than even the acclaimed Babylon. This once prosperous city proved to be the city of "Ur of the Chaldees."

The Bible tells of the city of Jericho whose walls "fell down flat" when the Israelites gave a loud shout at the command of God. This account of Jericho bothered some because the walls of a city will fall inward and therefore the sides of the walls could not lay "flat" as the Bible says, but rather would lay on one another in a heap. When archaeologists discovered the ancient city they found that, mysteriously, the walls did indeed fall outward and lay flat on the ground.

Many other Biblical cities were discovered, their location and the time of their existence in accord with Scripture.

No discovery of any archaeologist has at any time discredited the reliability of the Old Testament.

No matter what test one might put to books to check their reliability, the Bible would come in first place. To discard the Bible one most certainly would have to renounce every historical writing. The Bible: just another book? Your verdict, please.





STANDING ON THE WORD

It happened on a Sunday evening at Tenerife airport in the Canary Islands.

A KLM 747 from Holland began its takeoff, streaking down the runway through a heavy fog at about 180 miles an hour. “Gotte dam!” the Dutch pilot exclaimed when he spotted another 747, a Pan Am from the U.S., directly in front of him. The Pan Am tried to escape by turning off the runway but it all

happened so fast. The Dutch pilot pulled hard on the lift control in a desperate attempt to leap over the Pan Am, the tail end of his KLM 747 dug into the pavement, his mammoth ship bounced off the top of the Pan Am and crashed and skidded into a fiery explosion. All 243 passengers and 14 crewmen died instantly.

Inside the Pan Am 747 everything was an incredible chaos. Screaming, panic, dying. Fire everywhere. A melting inferno, people shriveling in the heat, unspeakable agony. Flying shrapnel, the roar of fire, pleas for help, woeful shouts for loved ones. And much, much cursing.

With each passing second passengers became incinerated corpses. Some were trampled under the on rush of people escaping through holes and doors. Some who jumped free were killed by others jumping on top of them. Yet 68 of the passengers and crew escaped that fiery ordeal, some by nothing less than a miracle.

One such miracle was Norman Williams, 51 years old, a born-again Christian from Los Angeles. While others only inches away melted to the floor, he was not burned, not even a little. In that screaming panic he was kept at peace. When a huge fiery piece of steel shot at him, he brushed it away with his arm, just like he was superman.

In that moment of shrieking panic he saw himself and his aging mother in his living room at home, both laying hands on the Bible, praying for a safe trip. Unusual, his mother had tears in her eyes as she prayed for her son. That was just yesterday.

Norman cried out in that fiery furnace, “in the Name of Jesus, through Your shed blood, I stand upon Your Word.” He was guided by an unseen force through the havoc until he saw a hole in the roof. Seeing the hole and escaping through it were two different matters, however. How could he possibly lift his sluggish heavy frame up and out that hole? The fact is he could not. All the time he was declaring, “I stand upon Your Word! I stand upon Your Word!” He is enveloped in a supernatural serenity and somehow finds himself lifting his body out of the hole, not knowing how. He jumps down to the slippery wing, makes his way to the far end and, still declaring “I stand on Your Word,” jumps thirty feet to the ground and limps his way to safety. His hands are badly cut from the edge of the hole in the roof, one foot was broken from the jump, but he was safe, not a burn on his body.

583 lives were interrupted by sudden death in a very few moments. Death is often like that, it sneaks up on you. But Norman Williams was prepared for death. Had he not escaped the Tenerife disaster, he knows he would be in a better place today. He would be with Jesus. Standing on the Word protected him from certain death. Standing on that same Word will protect him, and anyone else, from eternal death, and assure a place in heaven.

"Fire everywhere"



"One such miracle was Norman Williams"





BIBLE HIGHLITE

Proverbs 13:13: He who despises the word will be destroyed.

This proverb is a promise.

It is a promise from God to you, delivered to you by means of the Bible.

If you despise God's word you will surely be destroyed.

Because only God's word can save you from the destruction just ahead. What destruction? This destruction will be all too apparent the moment you enter a Christless eternity.

Despising God's word is saying to God that you do not consider His words worth heeding.
That His words are of little value. That they cannot be trusted. That you would rather place your trust in the words of another.

Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."
God's promise to you will come to pass; you will surely be destroyed if you despise His words.





Have you ever asked yourself....

WHY SHOULD I BOTHER TO READ THE BIBLE?

Doesn't it make sense to read the Bible, especially if you are convinced of even a remote possibility it is God's word? The Bible contains truths that you must come to comprehend. Your eternal future depends on it.

The theme of the Bible, from beginning to end, is man's need for redemption and God's provision of that redemption. You need to be saved. The Bible points to your salvation.

WHO SAID THAT?

A student in a New England university said he had an intellectual problem with Christianity and could not therefore accept Christ as Savior. "Why can't you believe?" I asked. He replied, "The New Testament is not reliable." I then asked, "If I demonstrate to you that the New Testament is one of the most reliable pieces of literature of antiquity, will you believe?" He retorted, "NO!" "You don't have a problem with your mind, but with your will," I answered.

Josh McDowell, author, lecturer

"Whatever one may think of the authority of and the message presented in the book we call the Bible, there is worldwide agreement that in more ways than one it is the most remarkable volume that has ever been produced in the some five thousand years of writing on the part of the human race."

Wilbur Smith, author, collector of 25,000 volumes



DEAD SEA SCROLLS

Around the year 70 A.D. the Roman general Vespasian was about to destroy Jerusalem, just as Jesus had prophesied. The library of a particular Jewish brotherhood was in danger. After carefully sealing some of their precious treasure in large jars, they hid them in desert caves in the mountain wilderness of Judea near the Dead Sea.

The scrolls remained undisturbed until a shepherd boy threw a stone through a small opening of one of the caves nineteen hundred years later, in 1947. The boy's tribe had no idea of the value of the find. They removed some of the scrolls from the cave and carried them place to place as they tended their sheep.

They brought the scrolls to a dealer in Bethlehem who indifferently heaped them on the floor, thinking to someday use them as material for his part-time shoe repair business! After again scanning the strange writings, the dealer-cobbler considered the possibility they may be valuable, and brought them to a Syrian convent in Jerusalem. It soon became apparent these scrolls were indeed valuable, and after finding the cave of the initial discovery he removed the remainder of the seven scrolls and many fragment pieces.

The removal and selling of manuscripts is illegal, and all excavations had to be done in secret; the buying and selling of the precious, ancient manuscripts was done in the intrigue of the underworld. Someone buried manuscripts in a garden and upon retrieving them found only globs of glue. Everything was further complicated by the Israel-Egyptian war that broke out immediately after Israel's declaration of independence in 1948.

Eventually some of the manuscripts, including the complete book of Isaiah, ended up in the American School of Oriental Research. Photographs were taken of the priceless manuscripts and were finally examined by competent paleographers. It was concluded the writings were very old, even pre-Christian. The world was most excited as the news of the find hit the press.

The manuscripts were smuggled to America for safekeeping and then, upon demand of the Jordanian government, returned to Israel. During that interval the Americans managed, with permission, to translate and publish the material, and the scholastic world became much richer for it.

The remainder of the discoveries were very difficult to obtain because now their value was no secret. Much money in bribes was spent retrieving the documents from the Bedouin tribes before they were smuggled out of the country or sold to tourists. Over the next few years other caves were discovered by Bedouins and by the Department of Antiquities, yielding great finds.

Tens of thousands of fragments from every Old Testament book except the book of Ezra were found and, when possible, pieced together. Most of the Dead Sea Scrolls are today placed in the Shrine of the Book, the Palestine Archaeological Museum and the Museum of the Department of

Antiquities.

The Dead Sea Scrolls confirm the accuracy of the Bible. Critics had often questioned the accuracy of the Old Testament, suggesting it must have lost accuracy through the process of copying and recopying through the centuries. But since the ancient Dead Sea Scrolls of the second century B.C. matched so well with the scrolls of a much later period already in our possession, those critics have been forever silenced and the integrity of God's Word to man has been greatly reinforced.



" a shepherd boy threw a stone"

"and carried them place to place as they tended their sheep"



"those critics have been forever silenced"



THE MESSIANIC PROPHECIES

Many Old Testament writers foretold, with incredible accuracy, details about the coming Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. The elapsed time between prophecy and fulfillment was sometimes thousands of years. EVERY ONE OF THE LISTED PROPHECIES HAS BEEN FULFILLED:

1.) The prophet Isaiah prophesied Jesus would be born of a virgin.

2.) Moses prophesied Jesus would be a descendant of Abraham, as well as of Isaac and Jacob.

3.) Moses also foretold that, of the twelve tribes of Israel, Jesus would be born of the tribe of Judah.

4.) Micah predicted, by the power of God, the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.

5.) David stated that kings from the East would bring gifts to the babe.

6.) Jeremiah foretold the slaying of innocent babies (in an attempt to kill the Christ-child).

7.) The Old Testament tells of His rejection by His own people, by the Gentiles (non-Jews), and the betrayal by a friend (Judas).

8.) The purchase of Potter's field was prophesied by Jeremiah.

9.) The buffeting and scourging of Jesus was prophesied, as was His crucifixion.

10.) It was foretold that lots (dice) would be cast for His garments.

11.) It was prophesied Jesus would be buried with the rich, He would be raised from the dead and ascend into heaven.

There is zero possibility that all these prophecies could be fulfilled by coincidence in one person. It should be mentioned there are also many Old and New Testament prophecies regarding the second coming of Christ when He will come, not as a babe in a manger, but as King. He will come to rule the nations. As the prophecies of the first coming of Christ were so accurately fulfilled, so the prophecies of His second coming will likewise occur. His second coming is very, very soon. The Bible: just another book? What is your verdict, Judge?



"Jeremiah foretold the slaying of innocent babies"







TEEN PROBE

S-T-R-A-I-G-H-T T-A-L-K T-O T-E-E-N-S

If I challenge your comfort..... hey! that's what it's all about. Because I don't think where you are is where you really wanna be. Wouldn't want you to get all settled in before you become unteach- and

unreachable. As I said before, somebody is going to get to you, you're going to get glued to something. And if that something is not Jesus you will be in a real mess. So I'm here to challenge that something, that door, that whatever you're walking into.

I want you to look at two things..... PERSPECTIVE and PEER PRESSURE.
How can I make you see that peer pressure fuzzes your perspective and makes you nearsighted? You have to be able to see past your nose and into reality..... you know, who you really are and where you're headed and stuff like that. Because of peer pressure you do not allow yourself to come to conclusions beyond the fences placed around your life. That makes it hard to see yourself in true perspective. Hey, what fences?! What perspective?

Perspective later. First the fences.

Believe me there are fences around your life. And hey! that's not always bad. Fences keep people together, manageable, un-crazy. Often fences are good. You help maintain those fences when you call the guys on the other side weirdos and airheads and other compliments. It's your way of bringing them back. A form of peer pressure.

But fences can also keep people in bondage. Keep them from checking things out. From challenging the accepted to see if the accepted makes sense. Sometimes fences limit your view and your perspective. What you do and what you believe is often the result of fences placed around your life.

Chances are you will become other people's product. You will be the effect of what they have done and said and believed. If you lived in another era and/or country you would be a different product..... you would fit into that scenario and mentality. You would be spewing some other saying or slogan and think of yourself as right awesome.

For instance if you lived in the southern States forty, fifty years ago you would be taught to be a racist. And if all you wanted was to be one of the guys, a racist you would be. You would embrace the sordid ethics of that time and place which decreed that a man is an underling if his skin is black. Hey, it must be right cause everybody thinks that way. How could so many be off? To challenge the accepted would cost a bigger price than you might be willing to pay. Chances for a date on Friday would be slim – who wants to go out with a crazy? You would be ignored, ridiculed, ostracized. So you're happy to just fit in, go with the flow, be one of the guys.

Or suppose you were raised in some religious family. Maybe you would be wearing a black suit and tie, knocking on doors and telling everyone how great it is to be a Mormon. Or maybe you would be standing on the corner with an Awake! magazine in your hand. Or you might be counting Hail Marys on a string of beads. All because you were afraid to challenge the fences. To most, loyalty to the group means more than searching for truth.

If you lived in the Soviet Union a few decades ago you would belong to the Young Pioneers and be

wearing a bright red scarf and chanting funny collectivist slogans. Nothing more than a clone. Someone's mouthpiece. And you would think you were cool. Their fences would keep you boxed into that mentality and value system and very few would challenge those fences.

Nikolai was an exception, but man did he pay the price. This fifteen-year old Christian refused to take the Pioneer's oath to "live, study and fight as the great Lenin commanded and as the Communist Party teaches." This made life hard. You see Nikolai was an embarrassment to Nikolai's teacher and the teacher's supervisor and everyone up the line. So guess who wasn't too popular. It's hard to make friends without that red scarf. No field trips. No musicals. None of the fun stuff. Though a good swimmer he didn't make the team. And university? Hey, that's only for cooperative kids.

Anyone stepping outside the realm of the accepted might find life getting a bit uncomfortable, you know, like swimming upstream.

I know what you're thinking. You would be different, right? You wouldn't wear no dumb scarf. And you would sit in the back of the bus with the Blacks and show those racists. And there's no way you would stand on the corner holding some religious magazine. You are more than a yes man. You ain't nobody's clone.

Hey, I hate to tell you this but if you don't have the stuff to question the established where you're at you would also accept the fences wherever and whenever and whatever they might be. But, okay, okay..... I'll give you the benefit of the doubt. You're not average. You are going to think for yourself, challenge the accepted, have an open mind. Good! Now we can talk about perspective. Perspective..... where you're at..... who you are..... where you're going.

You are up in the Cariboo country prospecting for gold. It's been a long day and you're like exhausted and now you're in your canoe heading back to the cabin on the other side of this big beautiful lake with hills all around and you figure you should reach your cabin in about another hour. Too bad you didn't have some gold to impress your pal who is probably back at the cabin by now and you hope he hasn't found any yellow stuff neither. You're getting thirsty so you unscrew the cup off the thermos, reach over the side and scoop some water.

Now hold it there!

Perspective: See that cup of water? That represents your life on earth. Now look around at the lake. See how big it is? Well, that's your eternity. Your life on earth compared to your eternal life is like the cup of water compared to the lake. Got it?

There's a song we Christians sing that goes like this: "When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun, we've no less days to sing God's praise then when we first begun." Yep, after we have been in heaven ten thousand years life just got started.

You finally make it back to the cabin and think a hot chocolate would warm your insides real good. You light the stove, no plugging in a kettle here, and twenty minutes later you're sipping away and

just like relaxing and you notice the steam rising from the hot chocolate.

Perspective: Your life can be compared to the steam floating up from your drink of hot chocolate. There's a verse in the Bible that says, "What is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away." How long is a "little time"? Count the seconds it takes for the steam to disappear..... one second and two seconds and three seconds and four..... poof! ..... it's gone. Your life on earth is that short compared to your eternal life.

Now get this. WHAT YOU DO WITH JESUS DURING THESE 'FEW SECONDS' ON EARTH WILL DETERMINE WHERE AND HOW YOU WILL SPEND YOUR ETERNITY. It's true! As I said before..... life without Christ is nutso, and entering a Christless eternity is pure insanity.

Your friend chides, Didn't find anything did you?

You think, Some friend.

Well I told you a dozen times, all the gold you want is right in the backyard.

Sure, sure, you reply, but you're thinking your partner has got cabin fever or something. Everyone knows you don't find gold in the backyard. Gold is always like way out there someplace.
But your friend is right. If you just went behind the cabin and dug a little you would find a fortune. But no, you are already planning tomorrow's search. Maybe it's over the next mountain, around the next bend.

Perspective: You search so hard and long for a better life thinking it's way down the road someplace, but all your heart longs for is closer to you than your own breath. Jesus is life's real treasure. He is worth more than all the gold and silver. And He is as close as a prayer.

After months of searching the hills you finally take your comrade's advice and start digging in the back yard and sure enough you discover an extremely rich lode of gold. Problem is this property belongs to the old man you rented the cabin from. What to do? If only you had enough to buy this place you would own all the gold. Maybe you could buy it on time or something. So into town you go looking for the old man, but oh oh, you see some dude talking to him.

Sir, how much do you want for your property? Now this guy doesn't know anything about the gold, just likes the cabin and property and the fishing is pretty good.

The old man doesn't hesitate, Everything you got, Sonny.

Are you kidding me? Hey! I'm rich. Just inherited my father's fortune.

Sorry, but the price is firm.

Now it's your turn.

Sir, how much do you want for your property?

The answer is the same, Everything you got, Sonny.

Ha! You don't understand. I only have some change in my pocket. I was hoping I could buy it on.....

The price is firm.

Perspective: The greatest treasure will cost you all you have whether much or little. Jesus is the "pearl of great price." To have this treasure you must surrender all you have to Him, and accept His lordship over your life.

So for about five dollars worth of change you purchase the property with its gold and now you are rich beyond your wildest dreams. You marry a sweet honey, move into the biggest house in the city and you have everything a person could ever want. Except one thing. You both want a baby. Real bad. But the years roll by and the house is still so empty. After many years your doctor makes the long awaited announcement, you guys will have a baby in the spring. Oh how long the winter is! Will spring ever get here? Finally it comes and so does the little one, some pretty baby. You call the relatives and friends over to celebrate, your servants - yeah, you got a half dozen servants and if that's not enough I can make it a dozen - are so excited and you and your spouse glow with pride and joy.

Perspective: You are loved much more than that baby. You are loved more than any baby was ever loved by any person. Though your self-esteem may be low God holds you in very high esteem. I know it's hard to believe but He loves you more than words can express. He wants you as His very own.

You love the child so much that you spend a small fortune on a gift on its first birthday – a gold laden chest with an antique porcelain doll inside. One of the servants gives the baby what she can afford – a small trinket. To your dismay the child is fascinated with the trinket and ignores your gift altogether.

Perspective: You have been the small child who puts such emphasis on things that don't matter while ignoring the priceless.

Don't ask me how it happened but the precious child got lost, like just walked away when no one was looking and got swallowed up by the city. You panic and get mad and weep and search day and night and offer a huge reward but still no baby. But you don't give up. You will never give up.
Perspective: You are the lost child. Jesus said He came to seek those who are lost. The Father is doing everything to bring you home into His kingdom. It is a very urgent predicament.

This is the true perspective of who you are, where you're at and where you're going: You were born into eternity. Spiritually, you will never die. Your life on earth is very short compared to your life on the other side. During this short span of time you choose for yourself where and how you will spend your eternity. Eternity is a very long, long time.

You are separated from God. Not by distance because God is everywhere. But separated by sin. You are lost..... lost in your own sin.

This doesn't mean you are not loved. You are a unique creation, a product of God's perfection and imagination. You are loved dearly and God wants you as His own. The proof of that love is seen in an innocent Man nailed to a cross.

When you think of the cross you must not only see Jesus but yourself. Because He is thinking of you, dying for you, paying the penalty of your sins.

Whatever you are now leaning on cannot stand scrutiny. Compared to Jesus your heroes are feeble and your gods anemic.

There is a war being waged for your eternal life. You can't see this war, but it's real. satan covets you as his own. And so does Jesus.

satan is real – don't think he's not. You will spend your very long eternity with either satan or Jesus. The Bible is very clear on this; this statement is as true as the Bible is true. Jesus came to earth with you in mind, to rescue you from satan's grip. Jesus defeated satan on the cross. It is only in Christ that you can get your deliverance.

Scripture says, "Our gospel is veiled..... to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, less the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ..... should shine on them." Who is the "god of this age"? It is satan, the one some people have told you doesn't exist. He and his underlings spend a lot of energy to keep the gospel from you. They successfully blinded most. Including you. He invented many counterfeit religions and cults and philosophies to confuse you and keep you from receiving the true gospel.

But there are also a lot of forces trying to get the gospel to you and believe me it ain't easy. People are praying. Angels are waging war against these enemies of your soul. The biggest problem in getting the gospel to you is those fences. It seems you're scared to give much attention to spiritual truths. What would the guys think? You just want to fit into the crowd, you know, the herd mentality. You got a finger stuck in each ear. You don't want to hear about anything that's not in. Approval of peers means everything.

Hey, look around. Some of the people affecting your life are atheists, agnostics, humanists, religionists, New Agers, evolutionists, nationalists, feminists, satanists, etc. These people are editors, teachers, rock stars, salesmen, parents, politicians, lecturers, relatives, writers, singers, friends. They are tugging at your heart and mind, affecting the way you think. Together they have made and are making an impact on your life. Now it's time for you to check things out. How are you doing? Where are you heading?

Am I getting through? Are you listening? Hey, what's going on in that head of yours?

"if I challenge your comfort"



"Believe me there are fences around your life"




"Or you might be counting Hail Marys on a string of beads"


"Jesus is life's real treasure"


"Everything you got, Sonny."

"You marry a sweet honey"



"You are loved much more than that baby"



" You were born into eternity"




"When you think of the cross you must not only see Jesus but yourself."


"satan is real - don't think he's not"



FULFILLED PROPHECY

The Bible has prophesied many events that have already occurred. For instance, the city of Tyre. Tyre was a very rich port city on the Mediterranean Sea, the most prosperous of the Phoenician cities. Tyre was built in two parts, one part on the mainland, the other on an island about a half mile offshore. The Bible tells us about 600 years B.C. the prophet Ezekiel prophesied several future happenings concerning Tyre. Let's look at them:

Prophecy: The mainland part of the city would be destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon.

Fulfillment: Nebuchadnezzar attacked Tyre three years later, and after a 13 year siege destroyed the mainland city.

Prophecy: Many nations would rise up against Tyre.

Fulfillment: Several hundred years later Alexander the Great destroyed the rebuilt mainland city and also the mighty fortress island. Tyre rapidly recovered only to be destroyed again, this time by Antigonus, the Judean king. Again the city was rebuilt and captured by the Muslims, then the Crusaders, and then the Muslims once more. After the recapture of Tyre the fury of the Muslims was set against it and everything was completely devastated, never to be rebuilt again.

Prophecy: “They will lay your stones, your timber, and your soil in the midst of the water," Ezekiel prophesied. Tyre would be made “like the top of a rock.”

Fulfillment: In order to overtake the island section of the city, Alexander built a causeway from the mainland to the island fortress, about 200 feet wide. This was accomplished by filling the water with debris from the demolished mainland city, scraping the city to bare rock, thereby fulfilling these two prophecies.

Prophecy: The city would never be rebuilt.

Fulfillment: Tyre is an excellent site for a city, strategically located with an abundant supply of fresh water, and yet for the past 2500 years it has remained a barren rock.

Prophecy: Fishermen will spread their nets on the bare rocks.

Fulfillment: Today there is a small community of fishermen at the site who often dry their nets on the bare rocks where the mighty ancient city of Tyre once stood.

Now let's look at other cities:

The city of Sidon: Sidon was the sister city to Tyre. Ezekiel prophesied Sidon was to suffer much bloodshed and be continually beset by enemies. However, unlike Tyre, Ezekiel did not prophesy Sidon's destruction. And Sidon never was destroyed, though it suffered many cruel blows through the ages. In 351 B.C. 40,000 inhabitants of Sidon shut themselves up in their homes, torched their houses, and died in their own fire, rather than suffer at the hands of the invaders of their city. In the days of the Crusades Sidon was taken alternately by the Crusaders and the Muslims, over and over again, each time its citizens spilling their blood. In modern days Sidon's blood still flowed freely during conflicts between the Druses and the Turks, and the Turks and the French.

The city of Samaria: It was predicted this city would fall suddenly and "become as a heap in the field," be covered with vineyards, her building stones poured into a valley, and her foundation would be "discovered." Over the centuries the city was captured three times and at last lay in a heap. The stones were rolled away so that the land could be recovered for fields and vineyards. The ancient quadrangular stones can still be seen on the slopes of the hills.

Ashkelon and Gaza, and the Philistine race: The Philistine city of Ashkelon was destroyed by Sultan Bibars in 1270 as prophesied many centuries previous in the Old Testament and, as also predicted, the site became an abode of shepherds and a place to graze sheep. It was also prophesied Israel would one day resurrect the city for its own use. This they began to do after regaining their homeland in 1948, turning Ashkelon into a garden city. But the Philistine city of Gaza presented a real problem. It was foretold that "baldness shall come upon Gaza," but Gaza is today a flourishing city. Could the prophecy be wrong? It was eventually discovered that Gaza was in the wrong location as far as the Bible was concerned. A search for the ancient Gaza revealed it was two miles away, truly 'bald,' laying dormant under sand dunes, not even a blade of grass to mark its grave. And the Philistines? It was foretold that "the remnant of the Philistines will perish." In all the world there is not to be found one single Philistine!

The kingdom of Edom: No less than six Old Testament prophets foretold nine future events regarding the mighty kingdom of Edom, a kingdom that stretched 110 miles long and 60 miles wide. Every prophecy has been fulfilled.

Nineveh and Babylon: The destruction of these mighty fortress cities, centers of a powerful

militaristic empire, was prophesied at the epic of their power. Nineveh's walls were 100 feet high, 50 feet thick, surrounded by a 150-foot-wide moat. Babylon's walls were three times higher, much wider, and surrounded by a 30-foot-wide moat. Nineveh went down first, after a mere three-month siege. Babylon was taken in less than a day. Both were destroyed, and as prophesied, never rebuilt again.

Capernaum, Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Tiberias: In Jesus' day these four ancient cities were on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus foretold the destruction of three. The only city that remains today is Tiberius, the one city the Lord did not prophesy against.

It is beyond the ability of man to predict future events with such accuracy. How could Ezekiel possibly know that mighty Tyre was to be destroyed and its sister-city, Sidon, would survive the ages? Who would dare predict the fall of the seemingly impregnable Ninevah and Babylon? It is beyond chance happenings that the foretold events would find fulfillment (although an evolutionist might argue this point!). The chances of Tyre meeting the conditions of its prophecies are 1 chance in 750,000,000. The chances of Babylon fulfilling all its prophecies are 1 in 15,000,000,000. Is this not proof a supernatural power inspired the writings of the Bible? The Bible: just another book? What is your verdict?

NUMERICAL MIRACLES

Unlike any other book, the Bible is entwined with numerical phenomena beyond human capability to produce, and must therefore be termed supernatural or miraculous.

To grasp the significance of this fourth piece of evidence, the reader must understand that both the Hebrew and Greek languages do not have a number system as we have. (The Old Testament was written mostly in Hebrew, the New Testament in Greek.) In other words they do not have our 1, 2, 3, 4 method of counting. They do it different. They use the letters of their alphabet to represent numbers.

Can the reader see that if every letter has a number value, then every word must also have a number value? Stay with me as I try to explain.

Suppose we used our alphabet to represent number values: Let's say that a=1, b=2, c=3, d=4, g=7,.i=9, 0=15, etc. Every word would have a number value.. Let's take the word 'big'. b=2, i=9, g=7. The word big has the number value 18 (2 + 9 + 7 = 18).

Likewise every phrase, sentence, paragraph, etc. also must have a number value. Let's look at the phrase 'a big dog.' The word a = 1, the word big (as we have seen) = 18; and the word dog = 26 (d = 4, o = 15, g = 7). Therefore the number value of the phrase 'a big dog' equals 1 + 18 + 26 = 45. In our language we do not use the alphabet to represent numbers, but if we did every letter, every word, every sentence and paragraph would have a number value.

But in the Hebrew and Greek languages (because every letter of their alphabet does have a number value), every word and phrase and sentence, etc. has a numerical value. It has been discovered that the Bible was written in what could be called numerical rhythms. There are patterns intertwined throughout Scripture beyond man's intelligence to produce. Let's examine just a few of these patterns:

1.) A good place to start is the first sentence of the Old Testament, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." (Genesis 1:1). In the English language this sentence contains 10 words, but in the Hebrew language it is 7 words. So what? Well, 7 is a special number to God. It means complete or whole, and is therefore the number best describing God. It is very fitting the first sentence of the Bible contains 7 words. Coincidence? Okay, let's say it is. Interestingly, the seven words have a sum of 28 letters. Now 28 happens to be the multiple of 7 (4 x 7 = 28). Not the multiple of 5 or 6 or 8 or 9 or 10 or 11 or 12 or 13, etc.; but 7. Another coincidence? Maybe. But there's more.

2.) The number value of the three nouns (God, heavens and earth) is 777 (111 x 7). The one verb is 203 (29 x 7). The number value of the first and last letters of all seven words is 1393 (199 x 7), the value of the first and last letters of the first and last words is 497 (71 x 7), the value of the first and last letters of every word in between is 896 (128 x 7). Coincidence? No, we have left the possibility of coincidence and have entered the supernatural!

3.) Altogether, in this short verse alone, there are thirty different features of the number 7. The chances of that occurring accidentally is one chance in 33,000,000,000,000.

4.) Now we are just talking about one verse! Amazing numerical patterns of the number 7 (as well as other numbers) can be found throughout the whole Bible. And the patterns themselves form 'larger' patterns. And then the whole Bible becomes a pattern. Keep in mind that God did not create special languages to accomplish this brilliant feat, but used languages already long in use!

5.) Let us now jump to the beginning of the New Testament. In the first eleven verses Matthew is recording the generations from Abraham (the father of the Israelite nation) to the time when the Jews were captured and forced to live in Babylon. The number of generations is 28 (4 x 7). There are 49 (7 x 7) different words used in these eleven verses, 28 (4 x 7) begin with a vowel, 21 (3 x 7) begin with a consonant, 7 end with a vowel, 42 (6 x 7) end with a consonant. The 49 words have 266 (38 x 7) letters of which 140 (20 x 7) are vowels and 126 (18 x 7) are consonants. 14 (2 x 7) of the 49 words are mentioned once, 35 (5 x 7) more than once, 42 (6 x 7) are nouns, 7 are not. Male names occur 56 (8 x 7) times. The Greek letters of the three women's names add up to 14 (2 x 7).

6.) God sealed His Word with His own number. It is like He signed His name all over His Word to authorize it (confer authority upon it). Let's look again at this number seven. The word seven is written in the Bible a total of 287 (41 x 7) times, the word seventh 98 (14 x 7) times and sevenfold 7 times. The word seventy occurs 56 (8 x 7) times. Seven in combination with other numbers (fifty and seven, a hundred and seven, etc.) occurs a total of 112 (16 x 7) times, whereas seventy in combination

with other numbers occurs 35 (5 x 7) times. God's number (seven) is used as no other number. God blessed Abraham with seven blessings. There are seven miracles recorded in the gospel of John. There are seven appearances of angels to Jesus. There are seven parables in the 13th chapter of Matthew. The book of Romans mentions seven gifts, the book of James mentions seven characteristics of wisdom, Hebrews s tells of seven titles of Christ, the gospels quote Jesus speaking seven times while on the cross. It goes on and on.

7.) The hand of God can be seen in other numbers as well. Let's just look at one more – the number 40. It is no coincidence so many events in Scripture lasted either 40 days or 40 years. After Noah built the ark it rained 40 days and 40 nights. Moses was 40 years old when he killed an Egyptian and was forced to flee from Pharaoh. 40 years later an angel appeared to him in a burning bush. After leading the Israelites out of Egypt Moses sent out spies to determine the strength of the land that God promised to give to them, and the spies returned with their evil reports 40 days later. The people were fearful and rebelled against Moses, and God punished them by sending them in the wilderness for 40 years. There was a time when God summoned Moses up Mount Sinai, and Moses returned 40 days later with the ten commandments only to find his people worshiping a golden image. After slaying the guilty, Moses returned to the mountain to ask God's forgiveness for the people and returned 40 days later. At another time Elijah, a prophet of God, is fleeing from wicked Jezebel and spends 40 days and nights on mount Horeb. Eli, another prophet, died after ruling God's people for 40 years. God sent Jonah to preach repentance to the city of Nineveh and Jonah warned wicked Nineveh that if there was no repentance the city would be overthrown in 40 days. The Israelites cried out to God for a king so that they could be like other nations. God appointed Saul as king and he ruled 40 years before he died. Next David ruled 40 years before his death, and then Solomon ruled 40 years. And into the New Testament the number 40 crops up again. Jesus fasted in the wilderness 40 days and appeared to many people during a 40 day period after His resurrection. The number 40 reveals a DESIGN, both in the history of God's chosen people and in the Bible. Design is proof of a designer. Who is that Designer?

The Bible: just another book? What is your verdict?

Can the reader see that if every letter has a number value, then every word must also have a number value?"





"One chance in 33,000,000,000,000"



" What is your verdict?"



DYING FOR THE WORD

It happened in the year 1536 in the town of Filford, Belgium. William Tyndale was “tied to the stake, strangled by the hangman, and afterwards consumed with fire.” The account of the execution and the events leading to it were written by John Foxe, an intimate friend of Tyndale.

Tyndale attended the universities of Oxford and Cambridge where he grew in knowledge of the Scriptures and became utterly consumed by them. He then became employed as tutor for children of a wealthy knight, Master Welch of Gloucestershire. This gentleman often invited “abbotts, deans, archdeacons, with divers other doctors, and great benefited men” to dine, and there Tyndale had opportunity to share Biblical truths. “And thus continued they for a certain season, reasoning and contending together divers times, till at length they waxed weary, and bare a secret grudge in their hearts against him,” and some of the doctors tried to turn Welch against Tyndale. Tyndale’s persuasion prevailed however, and the doctors lost their welcome.

Then the “priests of the country, chattering together, began to grudge and storm against Tyndale, railing against him in alehouses and other places, affirming that his sayings were heresy; and accused him secretly to the chancellor, and others of the bishop’s officers." The chancellor summoned Tyndale and “threatened him grievously, reviling and rating him as though he had been a dog.” But because no accuser could be brought forth he was released. “The grudge of the priests increasing still more and more against Tyndale, they never ceased barking and rating at him, and laid many things sorely to his charge, saying that he was a heretic."

At that time the religious powers, the Catholic papists, thought it convenient to withhold knowledge of the Bible from the people by disallowing the Bible to be translated into English. It was Tyndale’s purpose to change all that. He wanted everyone to be able to read the Bible in their own language, “that the poor people might read and see the simple plain Word of God.” To do so, he moved to Germany out of the menace of the papists. The first printing of the New Testament materialized in 1529, to the dismay of the Bishop of London who “being sore aggrieved, devised how to destroy that false erroneous translation, as they called it.”

The bishop petitioned a merchant, Augustine Packington, an acquaintance of Tyndale, to purchase all of the printed New Testaments, and the merchant so agreed. This marketer then "went unto William Tyndale and declared the whole matter, and so, upon compact made between them, the Bishop of London had the books, Packington had his thanks, and Tyndale had the money." With this money the printing of the New Testament was increased, “so that they came thick and threefold over into England.”

This caused no little stir amongst the Catholic clergy “who cried out upon it; that there were a thousand heresies in it, and that it wasn’t to be corrected, but utterly to be suppressed. Some said that it was not possible to translate the Scriptures into English; some, that it was not lawful for the lay

people to have it in their mother tongue; some, that it would make them all heretics. And to the intent to induce the temporal rulers unto their purpose, they said that it would make the people to rebel against the king." The king, harried by the English clergy, outlawed Tyndale's translation in 1537. And now the clergy went after Tyndale himself.

A Henry Poole traveled from England to Antwerp, Belgium for the sole purpose of befriending and betraying William Tyndale. After making acquaintance at the home of mutual associates, "within short space Master Tyndale had great confidence in him, and brought him to his lodging…to whom he showed moreover his books, and other secrets of his study, so little did Tyndale then mistrust this traitor." Poole eventually led him into a trap and Tyndale found himself in the emperor's prison awaiting trial. Refusing an advocate, Tyndale defended his works and faith. "At last, after much reasoning, when no reason would serve, although he deserved no death, he was condemned by virtue of the emperor's decree." His lasts words were a prayer, "crying at the stake with a fervent zeal, and a loud voice, 'Lord! open the King of England's eyes.' "

Tyndale's translations were of such quality that they were used in the following century in the compiling of the King James translation of the Bible.