

Sermon preached by Pastor Ben Kuerth on July 6, 2014 at Victory of the Lamb on Matthew 5:17-18.

**Series: Good Questions – Honest Answers**  
**Today's Focus: Why Should I Trust the Bible?**

**“Because Jesus Did...”**

- 1. He believed the Scriptures.**
- 2. He fulfilled the Scriptures**
- 3. He preserves the Scriptures**

One of the things I've learned about starting a church from scratch is that when you start out...you really don't have a lot of people! We had about 8. So a couple years ago I was out going door to door inviting people here in Franklin to come to church. And I got to this one house. A man and a woman were sitting in their chairs in the driveway just outside the garage door with an MGD in their hands. Perfect, I thought. I don't even have to ring the doorbell. No sooner though had I started up their driveway when the shirtless man hollers at me, “I know what you're trying to do and I don't want any of your crap.” To which I said, “Hey my friend, I'm not here to sell anything. What I've got I'm actually here just to give away. (I was trying to be clever, you know, thinking about the good news of Jesus and how it's a free gift from God to the world and all that).”

But the man says, “Young man, haven't you heard of the Council of Nicea?” And I thought, “Well that's an interesting historical reference from a man without his shirt on drinking an MGD.” So I said, “Why actually yes. It took place in 325 A.D I believe. What do you want to know about it?” To which he replied, “Well that's just where human beings decided which human books should be in the Bible and which other human books should be suppressed. Because you do know, don't you, that Jesus was actually married, and that he probably had a bunch of kids and the church just tried to cover it up and turn Jesus into a God which he never intended”?

And I said, “Well that's a very imaginative take on history, where did you get those ideas from?” And after talking a little bit, it became clear. The man got his ideas from the movie *The Da Vinci Code* (based on the fictional book by author Dan Brown) and by watching a couple episodes of some series on the History Channel. But when I asked him, “Have you ever taken the time to actually study the Bible, sir?” His answer was, “No, and why would I want to do that? It's all just a bunch of crap.”

Ok, so why am I telling you this story? Well it's not so much to try and make fun of that guy sitting on a chair in his driveway. No, it's really because I think there are a lot of folks just him and, if we're honest, there's a little unbeliever sitting there in his little chair in the driveway of our own hearts sneering at us and saying, “Now why would you believe that?” Right?

Because here's the world we live in. Maybe you've noticed. On the one hand, the Bible is the all-time most beloved and best-selling book in the history of the world; yet on the other hand today it's the most scrutinized and hated book in the world. To simply quote directly from the Bible today is often to draw the backlash of all kinds of people. And when so many people are telling us that the Bible is an unreliable book full of myths and legends, a book that just must be filled with all kinds of mistakes and errors, why would we trust it? Perhaps you've thought, “Why should I trust the Bible?”

At the very least are you ever tempted to be embarrassed by the Bible? Maybe you have no problem quoting Jesus who says, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Or "Blessed are the peacemakers." Or maybe even when he says, "Love your enemies." But perhaps you have a harder time believing that water was actually turned into wine, or that a little boy's lunch miraculously fed 5,000...plus women and children, or that Lazarus was bodily raised from the dead even after rigor mortis had set in.

First of all I can totally understand why, if nothing else, you are drawn to Jesus himself. I mean Jesus is the most magnetic and important person in the history of the world. And that's really pretty remarkable if you think about it. Jesus was a man who never wrote a book. He never left the Middle East. Never ruled over a country. Never really owned a home. Never had a family. Didn't leave behind any new innovative technology. And yet, he changed history. When Jesus walked the earth, crowds gathered to listen to him. He seemed to teach in a way that was totally different than the rabbis and religious leaders of his day. The people said, "He teaches as one who has authority, not like our teachers of the law" (cf. Matthew 7:29).

In our sermon text today Jesus has gathered such a crowd. They wanted to know more about Jesus. And they had some of the same questions we have. They wanted to know, "Is this a new teaching? Is Jesus starting a new religion? Has Jesus come to do away with the teachings of Moses and the Prophets? Is he updating the message? If I follow Jesus does that mean I follow the God of the Old Testament? If I love Jesus do I have to trust the rest of the Scriptures?"

And here's what Jesus says to those questions. *"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them."* First of all, what does Jesus mean by "The Law and the Prophets"? "The Law and the Prophets" was how the people of Jesus' day talked about the Old Testament. The Law was the Torah, the first five books of the Bible written by Moses (whose authorship by the way Jesus affirmed! Cf. John 5:46) and the Prophets were all the other writings in the Old Testament. Jesus is saying, "I have not come to teach you something brand new. I don't really have a different teaching. I didn't come to dismantle or abolish the Old Testament or any of the Scriptures. I came to fulfill them."

Jesus was not embarrassed by the miracle stories of the Old Testament. In fact, he said he was intimately connected to "The Law and the Prophets." It's sort of a package deal. If you love Jesus, you will love the rest of the Scriptures. If you want to trust in Jesus you will trust in the rest of the Scriptures. Why should I trust the Bible? The simple, quick answer: because Jesus did. **1) Jesus believed the Scriptures.**

Why do I believe in Adam and Eve as real historical figures? Why do I believe in the worldwide flood in the days of Noah? Why do I believe that Jonah was actually swallowed by a fish appointed by God to spit him up safely on dry ground? Simply, because Jesus did. Jesus referred to all of these stories as historical events during his ministry. Jesus was putting his stamp of approval on all that was written before him. So one reason I believe in the whole Bible is because I trust Jesus, and Jesus believed in the whole Bible. Jesus and the Bible... it's a package deal. You can't have one without the other.

It's kind of like getting married. When you get married you don't just marry a spouse. I mean...you do, but you're also marrying into a family. Along with your spouse you get a bunch of in-laws. You're going to spend a lot of time celebrating the holidays with your in-laws. You're going to spend a lot of time seeing your in-laws at family reunions, at family weddings, and at family funerals. It's kind of a package deal that when you marry your bride, you get your bride...along the family that she loves. Now my wife Sarah and I just celebrated our

11<sup>th</sup> anniversary yesterday in fact and I'm thankful that even though I didn't know her big family all that well when we got married, over time I've grown to love not only her more and more but also her family more and more.

This is what Jesus is talking about. If you accept Jesus you will accept the rest of the Word. If you believe in Jesus then you will believe in the Bible. Why? Because Jesus did. Jesus believed the Scriptures. He loved the Scriptures. And as you get to know Jesus more, so will you come to love the Scriptures more and more too.

So why should I trust the Bible? Because Jesus did. He believed in the Scriptures. But Jesus says he did more than just trust in the Scriptures. He said he came **to fulfill them**. *"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them."* And one huge, important, not often thought about way that he fulfilled the Scriptures was by keeping the Law. He kept the Law of God perfectly.

Think of like this. What if we had a movie day at church? We've got that big screen up there after all. But let's say the movie was going to be your life story. Everything in it. I'm sure we would see some of the good things that you've done in your life. That time you gave money to someone just to help them out. The time you thought of cheating to help yourself out but didn't because you knew it was wrong. But imagine that all our church members and all our regular attenders together—all 300 of them are gathered to watch the story of your life. We would start in your childhood. We would see everything you thought and did in high school. Every personal story from college. Your early twenties. We'd watch your dating history. Your private moments. We would listen to every word that you said to your spouse. Every movie that you watched at home. Every click of your mouse. Every Instagram pic. Every snapchat.

Imagine that we all gathered to watch this movie, popcorn in hand. But...as the story opens, it is different than what you might expect. It is a story of a baby born in Bethlehem. It is the story about a boy who grows up and never disobeys his parents. As a teenager he resists sexual temptation. His thoughts remain pure his whole life. He never hurts a friend. He never misses a worship service. In fact he gets up early every day to pray. The story of your life is not about you at all, it is about Jesus. You see, friends, that is why you want to trust the Bible because the Bible, and only the Bible, tells you about how Jesus perfectly kept the commandments of God. The Bible is about the Law that Jesus kept in your place. Here's how this works. Everything that the law of God says that you must do, you can legitimately say that you have done in Christ Jesus. This is why Jesus says he came, to fulfill the Law, right down to the tiniest strike of a pen, the smallest little serif on the font God used when carved his commandments into stone.

Why should you trust the Bible? Because Jesus did. **2) He fulfilled the Scriptures** in your place. Wow! But he also fulfilled the prophecies contained in the Scriptures. You see the Bible is the only book where 100% of its prophecies have come true as they were promised. This alone is worthy of further diligent study. Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, the Old Testament prophets said that Jesus would be born of a virgin who conceived by a miracle and that Jesus would be God who became man (cf. Isaiah 7:14). That he would be born in a small town called Bethlehem (cf. Micah 5:2). That Jesus would live his life without committing any sins (cf. Isaiah 53:9).

The Prophets said that he would do miracles. That he would open the eyes of the blind and that the deaf would hear (cf. Isaiah 35:5). That he would make the lame walk (cf. Isaiah 35:6). That he would one day enter

into Jerusalem in humility riding on a donkey (cf. Zech 9:9). That he would be betrayed by a close friend and for 30 pieces of silver (cf. Ps. 41:9 and Zech. 11:12-13). That Jesus would be beaten, mocked, and spit upon (cf. Isaiah 50:6). That lots would be cast for his clothing (cf. Ps. 22:18). That he would be hated and rejected but would not defend himself (cf. Isaiah 53:3,7). That he would be killed in a very specific way via crucifixion (hundreds of years before crucifixion was invented!) (cf. Ps. 22:16). That none of his bones would be broken (cf. Ps. 34:20). That he would die for the sins of the world (cf. Isaiah 53:5-6). That he would be buried in a tomb given him by a rich man (cf. Isaiah 53:9). That he would resurrect from death (cf Psalm 16:10-11; Is. 53:10-11)! That would ascend into heaven (cf. Ps. 68:18). And ones yet to be fulfilled...such as that he will come again in glory (cf. Dan 7:9-10).

Friends, what does this all mean? It means you can trust the Bible because **Jesus fulfilled the Scriptures**. You can trust the Bible because it prophecies that Jesus would die for your sins, and Jesus fulfilled those prophecies perfectly. He's the reality of all the shadows that outlined what he would do. He lived for you. He died for you. Most importantly, he rose from the dead for you.

Jesus even fulfilled his own prophecies. Jesus himself highlighted the prophecies that spoke about his resurrection. He said what the prophets before him said, "Destroy his body, and I will raise it in three days." (cf. John 2:19). So if you are being led to doubt the Bible, ask yourself two questions: Is the tomb empty? If it is empty Jesus is who he said he is. He is God in the flesh. Then ask yourself, "What did Jesus say about the Bible?" It is true and he came to fulfill it.

What else but the resurrection of Jesus from the dead could account for the fact that the message of the Bible still stands despite all the vicious attacks it has faced throughout the years? It has stood the test of time. Well finally, this is exactly what Jesus said in our sermon text. *"I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished."* Jesus says that the whole Bible is always true. Nothing will be changed or taken out of the Bible. The Bible will be the Bible until heaven and earth disappear.

Why should I trust the Bible? Because Jesus did and Jesus fulfilled the Scriptures. And his Word has stood the test of time because **3) he preserves the Scriptures**. There was a time in the 1800s when many thought they had finally undermined the Bible. Darwin's teachings were just starting to become popular. Many people figured faith would be eliminated in a hundred years. Many so-called scholars said, "How do we know if the Old Testament has changed over time? Books like the prophet Isaiah have to be just an evolved piece of literature that has been added to and changed over thousands of years." Until there was a discovery in the 1940s of an ancient library that had among other things an entire scroll of Isaiah, which was over 1000 years older than our oldest previous manuscript. And what was the big discovery? The text of Isaiah hadn't changed. And this is what we continually find. It's just as Jesus said, *"[U]ntil heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished."* So it's ok to have some good questions about the Bible. Just don't ever bet against it. Jesus believed it. Jesus fulfilled it. Jesus preserves it.

That's why for all the other things we could talk about today as to why you should believe the Bible, perhaps the best encouragement I can give you is to actually study it. Get a good study Bible like the Lutheran Study

Bible or the Concordia Self-Study Bible and read it. Keep bugging me about when my next Bible 101 class is going to start (in August by the way!). Make it a priority to keep coming to church to learn more and...perhaps even set your alarm for just 49 minutes earlier so you can come to Bible study. We've got a Seminary professor as one of our members who is teaching Bible class right now. Take advantage of that blessing.

Charles Spurgeon, a fairly famous British pastor of a couple generations ago, is widely quoted as saying this, "I defend the Bible in the same way that I defend a lion. I just let it out its cage." That's really what I'm trying to say today. Why Should I Trust the Bible? Because Jesus did. Get to know Jesus better. He believed the Scriptures. He fulfilled the Scriptures. And his saving Word will stand until heaven and earth disappear. Amen.

### **My Next Steps**

**Connect:** It's amazing sometimes what people will question. For example, there are some people who sincerely believe that the holocaust never happened despite all the evidence to the contrary. Any examples like that you can think of?

**Treasure:** *"For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit"* (2 Peter 1:21).

**Challenge:** One of the biggest reasons people today do not accept the Bible as the Word of God is that they form their opinions based on what they've heard other people say about the Bible rather than basing their opinions on their own honest study of the Bible for themselves.

This is why Pastor Ben offers his free Bible 101 class so that you have an opportunity to find answers to whatever questions you have and see for yourself what the Bible actually says in its proper context. Contact Pastor Ben for more info about his next Bible 101 class! [benkuerth@gmail.com](mailto:benkuerth@gmail.com) / 414-403-3275