

Class Objective: To reaffirm, renew and expand the believer's understanding of and confidence in the trustworthiness of the Bible.

Class Overview

1. Clarify the role of the Bible in evangelical Christianity
2. Understand the factors that make the study of the Bible's reliability a critical necessity
3. Address the charge of circular reasoning in defending the integrity of Scripture
4. Remember that conversion is not primarily a product of logic but a work of the Spirit
5. Identify common attempts to discredit Scripture
6. Explore alleged contradictions in the Bible
7. Examine the formation of the Bible
8. Describe the history and importance of the copying of the Bible
9. Consider the principles and place of interpretation of Scripture
10. Explain the purpose and value of translations of Scripture
11. Reflect on the ultimate confirmation of the Bible's truthfulness
12. Delineate the practical implications of believing the Bible is trustworthy

Notes

XI. **How is the trustworthy nature of Scripture ultimately realized in us?**

A. We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scripture. And the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is, to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it does abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God: yet notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts. Westminster Confession of Faith (1647) 1.5

1. People suppress the truth of natural revelation.

a) ¹⁸For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ¹⁹For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. Romans 1:18-20

2. Unbelief in the trustworthy nature of Scripture is overcome through the proclamation of the Word accompanied by the work of the Holy Spirit.

a) For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. 1 Cor. 1:21

b) ⁷ But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. ⁸ None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

9 But, as it is written,

“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,

nor the heart of man imagined,

what God has prepared for those who love him” —

¹⁰ these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. ¹¹ For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. ¹² Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. ¹³ And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. ¹⁴ The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. 2 Corinthians 2:9-14

c) ⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” John 3:7, 8

d) ²⁴ So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.” ²⁵ Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me, ²⁶ but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep. ²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. John 10:24-27

e) ³ And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴ In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵ For **what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord**, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶ For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 4:3-6

B. We Are Convinced of the Bible's Claims to Be God's Words as We Read the Bible.

1. "It is one thing to affirm that the Bible claims to be the words of God. It is another thing to be convinced that those claims are true. Our ultimate conviction that the words of the Bible are God's words comes only when the Holy Spirit speaks in and through the words of the Bible to our hearts and gives us an inner assurance that these are the words of our Creator speaking to us. . . . It is important to remember that this conviction that the words of Scripture are the words of God does not come apart from the words of Scripture or in addition to the words of Scripture. It is not as if the Holy Spirit one day whispers in our ear, "Do you see that Bible sitting on your desk? I want you to know that the words of that Bible are God's words." It is rather as people read Scripture that they hear their Creator's voice speaking to them in the words of Scripture and realize that the book they are reading is unlike any other book, that it is indeed a book of God's own words speaking to their hearts." Wayne Grudem

XII. What are some practical implications of the inherent work of the Holy Spirit through the words of Scripture? For discussion in small groups:

- A. What are implications for us as believers?
- B. What are implications for our outreach to unbelievers?
- C. According to James and the writer of Hebrews, what does our response to the words of Scripture say about us?

1. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. James 1:22

2. ¹¹ About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. ¹² For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, ¹³ for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil. Hebrews 5:11-14