

Part 5: IS THE BIBLE RELIABLE?

Sermon Notes

Text: John 18:37, Luke 4:17-21

Intro:



Asking for a Friend

- Today it is becoming more and more difficult to find out if anything is true!
- POLITICAL CORRECTNESS has made it even dangerous sometimes to declare a thing to be true - if it is not what others around us accept as true

Do you find yourself accepting or rejecting something based on what you want to be true?

- What is it that determines TRUTH or what is true?

- Witnesses

"The evidence for the New Testament writings is much greater than the evidence for many writings of classical authors, the authenticity of which no-one dreams of questioning. And if the New Testament were a collection of secular writings, their authenticity would generally be regarded as beyond all doubt."

Are the New Testament documents reliable? The Inter-Varsity Fellowship, London, UK, p. 19, 1956

Jesus' disciples would have been very capable of recording His statements accurately, and the evidence demonstrates that they did so probably MORE HONESTLY than many would today.

We have many first-century non-Christian historians and writers who confirm the life and execution of Jesus:

Cornelius Tacitus, Lucian of Samosata, Flavius Josephus, Suetonius, Pliny the Younger, Thallus, Phlegon, Mara Bar-Serapion,

"These independent accounts prove that in ancient times even the opponents of Christianity never doubted the historicity of Jesus, which was disputed for the first time and on inadequate grounds by

several authors from the end of the 18th, to the beginning of the 20th centuries."

Encyclopedia Britannica

The support of Archaeology

- "“Luke is a historian of the first rank; not merely are his statements of fact trustworthy ... this author should be placed along with the very greatest of historians.”—Archaeologist Sir William Ramsay

'The NT books did not “become” authoritative for the Church because they were formally included in some canonical list; on the contrary, the Church included them in her canon because she “already regarded” them as divinely inspired, recognizing their innate worth and general apostolic authority, direct or indirect.... [Church] councils [did] not impose something new upon the Christian communities but codified what was already the general practice within those communities.' (Bruce)

When Jesus was brought before Pilate, he was asked a question... His answer?

- In John 18:37, Jesus main mission was to testify to what is true.

Jesus Himself is on record testifying to the Reliability of the O.T. Scriptures

- The following verses describe the statements and actions of Jesus in affirming O.T. Scriptures...

Matt 19:4, Luke 11:51, John 8:56-58 , Matt 12:39-41, Matthew 19:7-8 , Mark 7:6-7, Luke 16:29,31, Matthew 22:29, Luke 4:17-21, John 5:39

Conclusion

Acts 1:8 says... But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And **you will be my witnesses**, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Life Group Discussion

Warm up:

1. What stood out to you in the evidence presented? Did it help to reinforce your confidence of God's Word?
2. Do you personally struggle with determining "What is true?" Do you find yourself making emotional commitments without having any evidence?

Study & Discussion:

1. In what way did the video regarding the origins of the New Testament Manuscripts help you?
2. Are you challenged to investigate further into studying the archeological evidence?
3. In reading John 18:37, what impacts you regarding Jesus' statement?
4. Can you cite other examples where Jesus affirmed the Old Testament writings?
5. Read together Luke 4:17-21 - How can those verses apply to us as believers today?

Application:

1. In what ways can the Scripture in Acts 1:8 be fulfilled in your life? In the life of your group?

Prayer:

- Pray for opportunities to answer questions people have about your faith.

Other Requests

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