



Building Our Faith in God's Word

By Willie A. Alvarenga

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and forever. Amen"

(2 Peter 3:18, ASV 1901)

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Building a Strong Faith

By Willie Alvarenga

Introduction:

1. We live in a world full of unbelief
2. This was the case even from the beginning of time (Genesis, the flood, people did not have faith)
3. This pattern followed even in the days of Jesus (many did not believe)
 - a. Mark 6:4-6, Jesus could not perform any signs in His own country because of a lack of faith.
 - b. John 6:35-36, many did not believe in Jesus
 - c. John 7:5, even Jesus' brother did not believe in Him
 - d. 12:42-43, many of the rulers did not have a strong faith in Jesus, for they loved more the praise of men more than the glory that is of God
4. Even after Jesus left to heaven, the apostles saw this lack of faith in many people
 - a. Many did not obey the gospel on Pentecost (only about 3,000)
 - b. Acts 17:32; 26:28, these did not believe in the gospel
 - c. Many departed from the faith because they did not have a strong one (**Demas**, 2 Timothy 4:10; **Hymenaeus** and **Alexander**, 1 Timothy 1:20); **Ananias** and **Sapphira**, Acts 5:1-10)
5. Things are not different today!
 - a. Many do not have faith in God (trying to get out of the picture)
 - b. Most people do not believe in the Bible as the Word of God
 - c. Most people question the historicity of Jesus
 - d. Even some Christians who once were faithful, are no longer cultivating a strong faith
 - e. Some churches of Christ are losing their young people to denominations and to worldliness.
6. Brethren, this is an alarming situation!
7. When I talk about faith, I am referring to what the dictionaries tell us:
 - a. **Faith denotes two very important things:** Trust in God and Jesus conjoined with obedience (*Strong's and Thayers*)
8. What can you and I do to have a strong faith?
9. Let me suggest what the Bible teaches as I answer this very important question

How Can You and I Have a Strong Faith?

I. We Must Have a Strong Conviction in the Word of God.

A. We must be truly convinced that the Bible comes from God:

1. 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; John 17:17; Psalm 119:160
2. How much do you believe in the inspiration of the Bible?

B. We must remember that faith comes through hearing the Word of God:

- a. Romans 10:17
- b. The Word of God, the gospel of Christ the Jews heard on Pentecost, allowed them to have a strong faith: "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42).
- C. **Sadly to say, many Christians don't believe in the Bible. You may say, well, how do you know?**
 - a. "Actions speak, louder than voice"
 - b. With our actions we are telling others that God's Word is not important to us.
 - c. God is not interested in us telling Him that we love His Word. He wants us to show Him!
- D. **In order to have a strong faith, we must be diligent students of the Word of God:**
 1. We must give diligence in Bible study (2 Timothy 2:15)
 2. We must read the Scriptures daily (1 Timothy 4:13)
 3. We must memorize God's Word (Psalm 119:11)
 4. We must love the Word of God (Psalm 119:97)
 5. We must feed on the Word of God (1 Peter 2:1-2)
 6. We must grow in the knowledge of God's Word (2 Peter 3:18)
- E. By doing these things, we will have a strong faith that will take us to heaven!
- F. **Let us encourage our children to have a strong faith in God.**
 - a. We live in a very difficult world
 - b. We must rescue our children from the sin of unbelief (Judges 2:10), otherwise, we will lose them.
- G. May God help us to this end!

Another thing we must consider to have a strong faith is...

- ## II. We Must Acknowledge the Serious and Terrible Consequences of not Having a Strong Faith.
- A. A careful analysis of the terrible consequences of not having a strong faith will help us to give diligence to building a faith that pleases God.
 - B. **What are the serious consequences of not having a strong faith?**
 1. **God will not be pleased** (Hebrews 11:6)
 - a. If God is not pleased, salvation will not be ours.
 - b. If God is not pleased, His protection will not be with us.
 2. **We will not be able to overcome trials and temptations** (1 John 5:4)
 - a. It requires a strong faith in order to be able to overcome the trials and sufferings of life.
 - b. A strong faith can lead us to victory in Christ!
 - c. We have a powerful enemy: Satan. He is trying to destroy us (1 Peter 5:8).
 - d. With our strong faith, we can overcome him.
 3. **We will lose our salvation as many in the past did:**
 - a. Demas (2 Timothy 4:10)
 - b. Ananias and Sapphire (Acts 5:1-11)
 - c. The people of Israel (Hebrews 4)

- d. Judas Iscariot, the betrayer of Jesus (Acts 1:25)
- e. Many have departed from the truth because of weak faith in God

4. We will lose our children:

- a. We need to learn from history.
- b. Judges 2:10 shows one of the saddest verses in the Bible: There was a new generation who knew not God nor the good things that He had done for Israel
- c. God has given parents a great responsibility to teach His Word to their children (Deuteronomy 6:4-6)
- d. Notice the serious consequences when our children do not know God: Judges 2:11, 13; 3:7, 12; 4:1; 6:1
- e. Our children will do evil in the sight of the Lord if we don't worry about helping them have a strong faith in God

5. Church growth will not be successful:

- a. Many years ago, the Lord's church had a tremendous numerical growth. This was due to the strong faith the church had (cf. Acts 2:41; 4:4; 5:14, 28; 6:7; 8:4; 11:24; 12:24; 17:6)
 - b. Back in the 20s and 50s, the Lord's church in the United States had a successful membership!
 - c. Many were evangelizing and living the Christian life
 - d. Sadly to say, many church buildings are closing their doors due to a lack of membership to continue services
 - e. One of the reasons that we could suggest for this condition is the lack of a strong faith in many Christians' lives
 - f. We must strive to have a strong faith so the Lord's church can grow the way God would have it to grow
6. Let us acknowledge the terrible consequences of not having a strong faith.

Something else we must consider is prayer:

III. We Must Ask God to Give Us More Faith.

- A. **This is where a life of prayer is of much importance!**
 - 1. One of the reasons why there is such a great emphasis upon prayer is because prayer can help us to have a strong faith in God.
 - 2. **Notice the emphasis upon prayer we see in the Scriptures:**
 - a. Daniel prayed three times a day (Daniel 6:10)
 - b. Jeremiah was encouraged to pray (Jeremiah 33:3)
 - c. Jesus prayed a lot (Luke 6:12; Mark 1:35; John 17)
 - d. Jesus encouraged others to pray (Matthew 6:9-15; Luke 18:1; Matthew 26:41)
 - e. Paul taught a lot on prayer: Romans 12:12; Ephesians 6:18; Colossians 4:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:17)
- B. We must depend upon God for everything (2 Corinthians 3:4-5; John 15:5).
 - 1. Let us spend more time in prayer so that we can cultivate a strong faith in God.

2. Let us encourage our family to be people of prayer. This is the only way to make it.
- C. How often do you pray? Are you asking God to help you have a strong faith?

Also, to have a strong faith, we must men of strong faith:

IV. We Must Carefully Consider the Strong Faith of Others.

- A. **The Bible contains several examples of people who had a strong faith in God.**
 1. Joshua
 2. Jeremiah
 3. Ezekiel
 4. Daniel and his friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego
 5. Paul
 6. Peter
 7. And many others!
 8. All of these men had a strong faith in God which allowed them to please God and also to secure their salvation. We must do the same.
 9. Their faith was so strong, even in the midst of trials and afflictions.
- B. **Hebrews chapter 11 shows many examples of people of faith:**
 - a. We must strive to be like them (cf. 3 John 11; Philippians 3:17)
 - b. They were humans just like you and I are!
 - c. We can have their faith!
- C. **In order to have their faith, we must do the following:**
 1. We must not trust in ourselves but in God (2 Corinthians 3:4-5; John 15:5; Philippians 4:13; Proverbs 3:5-6)
 2. We must stay close to God at all times (James 4:7)
 3. We must love God the way they did it (Mark 12:30)
 4. We must set our eyes on God (Hebrews 12:2; Colossians 3:1-2)
 5. We must stay away from the temptations of the world (Genesis 39:9; Daniel 1:8; 1 John 2:15-17; James 4:4)
- D. **The Bible encourages all of us to be imitators of all the good examples we find in the Bible:**
 1. Paul said it (1 Corinthians 4:16; 11:1; Philippians 3:17; 3 John 11).
- E. Are we following the example of those who had a strong faith?

Conclusion:

1. In this lesson we have considered the need to have a strong faith in God.
2. May I encourage all of us to carefully consider practicing the things we have learned from God's Word?
3. The matter of having a strong faith is a matter of life and death.
4. May God help us to be doers of His Word and not listeners only (James 1:22-25).
5. If you have not obeyed the gospel, please do so, before it is eternally too late!

The Reality of Sin and Its Consequences

By Willie Alvarenga

Introduction:

1. One of the biggest problems humanity face today is not:
 - a. The economy
 - b. War
 - c. Hunger
 - d. Cancer
 - e. Health insurance
 - f. Natural disasters
 - g. Etc.
2. The biggest problem man faces today is: **SIN**
3. You may be poor, sick and without a health insurance, but if you have God with you, and you are obedient to His will, you have everything!
4. In this lesson I want to discuss three points in relation to our topic under consideration:
 - a. The reality of sin
 - b. The terrible consequences of sin
 - c. The solution to the sin problem
5. As we study God's Word, let me encourage you to consider the following:
 - a. Consider what the Bible teaches (Acts 17:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:21; 1 John 4:1)
 - b. Be a doer of God's Word (James 1:22-25; Luke 11:28)
6. May God help us to understand His Word as we study this lesson!
7. If you are here with us, and you have not given your life to Christ, we hope and pray that you will obey today, before it is eternally too late!

Let us first of all, consider the reality of sin:

I. The Sad Reality of Sin.

A. The reality of sin: *Its definition:*

1. The Greek word for sin is **HAMARTIA**, which means, to miss the mark, to be mistaken, to miss or wander from the path of uprightness and honor, to do or go wrong (**Strong's**).
 2. Sin, according to **Thayers Greek Lexicon**, means to do wrong, to violate the divine law in thought or act.
 3. Sin is violation of God's Word (1 John 3:4)
 4. Sin is all unrighteousness (1 John 5:7)
 5. Sin is to not do that which is right, when we know we should (James 4:17)
 6. Sin is that which is not of faith (Romans 14:23)
 7. Sin is the thoughts of the foolish man (Proverbs 24:9)
- B. The Bible teaches everyone what sin is; we must know what it is so that we can stay away from it.

- C. **Reality # 1 about Sin:** *It came into the world through man: Adam and Eve chose to obey Satan, instead of God.*
 - 1. Romans 5:12 “Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned”
 - 2. The word “**man**” comes from the Greek, **ANTROPOS**, which includes Adam and Eve.
 - 3. They violated the commandment of God when they disobey Him (Genesis 2:16-17; Genesis 3)
- D. **Reality # 2 about sin:** *Sin is universal*, in the sense that everyone is affected by it, that is, those who have knowledge of good and evil.
 - 1. Paul said in Romans 3:9-10, 23 that all have sinned (Jews and Gentiles)
 - a. Romans 1: Gentiles are in sin and need the gospel of Christ
 - b. Romans 2: Jews are in sin and need the gospel of Christ
 - c. Romans 3: Gentiles and Jews are guilty of sin
 - 2. This does not include babies, since they have no sin at all (Ezekiel 18:20; Deuteronomy 1:39).
 - 3. Babies cannot violate the Word of God (1 John 3:4; James 4:17; cf. Deuteronomy 1:39).
 - 4. Everyone in the entire world is guilty of sin!
- E. **Reality # 3 about sin:** *Sin was the cause by which Jesus Christ died on the cross.*
 - 1. The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ died on the cross because of sin:
 - a. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4
 - b. John 1:29, Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world
 - c. Matthew 26:28, Jesus’ blood was shed for the remission of sins
 - d. 2 Corinthians 5:21, Jesus is the sin offering
 - e. Galatians 1:4, Jesus gave himself for our sins
 - f. 1 Peter 2:24, Jesus bore our sins in His own body
 - 2. **Sins that crucified Jesus:**
 - a. The sin of unbelief
 - b. The sin of envy
 - c. The sin of hatred
 - d. The sin of favoritism
 - e. The love of money
 - f. Etc.
 - 3. **Reality # 4 about sin: It entices, deceives people.**
 - a. Satan is very clever. He presents sin very attractive:
 - b. 1 John 2:15-17; Genesis 3:6; Hebrews 3:13; James 1:13-15
 - c. This is what happened to Demas, he loved the world (2 Timothy 4:10)
 - d. This is what has happened to many Christians who have fallen away from the faith.
 - 4. **TV commercials entice people to sin**
 - a. Beer commercials present sin attractive
 - b. Commercials about smoking present sin very attractive
 - c. People must be very careful not to fall into sin

5. Brethren, sin is real and we must believe it!

Now, let us consider the terrible consequences sin brings to man:

II. The Terrible Consequences of Sin.

A. What are the terrible consequences of sin:

1. Sin makes people slaves (John 8:34; Romans 6:16)
2. Sin makes people the children of Satan (1 John 3:8, 10; John 8:44)
3. Sin separates you from God (Isaiah 59:1-2; Genesis 3:23-24)
4. Sin makes you an enemy of God (Romans 5:10; James 4:4)
5. Sin becomes a hindrance to prayer (John 9:31; 1 Peter 3:7; Proverbs 28:9; 15:29; Psalm 34:15; 66:18)
6. Sin destroys your life, reputation, families, marriages, etc.
7. Sin causes the name of God to be blasphemed (Romans 2:24)
8. Sin brings physical death (Acts 5:1-11)
9. Sin brings spiritual death (Romans 6:23)

- B. These are terrible consequences and we must be aware of them.

Finally, let us consider the solution to the sin problem:

III. The Solution to the Sin Problem.

A. Thanks to God, there is a solution to the sin problem:

1. In Christ we have the solution: 1 Corinthians 15:57; 2 Corinthians 2:14)

B. God has provided a Way to be saved from sin: Jesus is the answer to the sin problem:

1. Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18-20; John 1:29; Acts 4:12; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; John 14:6; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 John 5:11

C. Man must obey the gospel in order to defeat sin in his life:

1. He must hear the gospel (Romans 10:17; Romans 1:16)
2. He must truly believe in Jesus (Mark 16:16; John 3:16)
3. He must be willing to repent of his sins (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30)
4. He must be willing to publically confess Jesus as the Son of God (Romans 10:9-10; Acts 8:37)
5. He must be willing to be baptized in water for the remission of his sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16)

D. All who obey the gospel are added to the Body of Christ, His church:

1. Acts 2:41; 2:47; Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:23)

E. In the Body of Christ you can enjoy many blessings:

1. Reconciliation (Ephesians 2:13-16; Romans 5:1-10)
2. Justification (Romans 3:19-20)
3. Forgiveness of sins (Ephesians 1:7)
4. Salvation from the wrath to come (Romans 8:1)
5. Eternal life (1 John 5:11; Titus 1:2; Colossians 1:27; Romans 8:24)

- F. All of these blessings can be yours if you make the decision to obey the gospel of Christ.
- G. You can be victorious over sin by doing what God teaches through His Word!

Conclusion:

1. In this lesson we have considered three very important points:
 - a. The sad reality of sin
 - b. The terrible consequences of sin
 - c. The solution to the sin problem
2. It is imperative that we make the necessary changes to be right with God.
3. Today, you can be free from the power of sin by doing what God would have you to do.
4. Please consider becoming a child of God today!

The Second Coming of Christ

By Willie Alvarenga

Introduction:

1. How many of us believe in the second coming of Christ?
2. How many of us want Christ to come some day?
3. How many of us want Christ to come right now?
4. Did you know that there are many Christians who do not want Christ to come right now?
5. When was the last time we actually thought about the second coming of Christ?
6. In this lesson I want to submit to you certain points about the coming of Christ which you and I must remember. **We will consider...**
 - a. The promise of His coming
 - b. The time of His coming
 - c. The manner of His coming
 - d. The events of His coming
 - e. The preparations for His coming
7. I am confident that the information I will present to you, you already know? Nevertheless, it is imperative that we make remembrance of these things:
 - a. **Paul said**, "...to write to you the same things is not irksome, but for you it is safe..." (Philippians 3:1)
 - b. **Peter said**, "Wherefore I shall be ready always to put you in remembrance of these things, though ye know them..." (2 Peter 1:12)
 - c. **Jude said**, "But ye, beloved, remember ye the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 17)
8. As we consider this lesson, let us be doers of God's Word and not hearers only (James 1:22; Luke 11:28).
9. With this in mind, let us carefully consider what God teaches in His Word concerning the second coming of His beloved Son!

Let us consider the promise of Christ's coming:

I. The Promise of His Coming.

A. The first coming of Christ was promised in the Old Testament:

1. Genesis 3:15 Prophecy of His coming to defeat Satan
2. Isaiah 7 Prophecy of His birth and coming
3. Psalm 22; Isaiah 53 Prophecy of His suffering during His first coming
4. His coming was in the mind of God before the foundation of the world (1 Peter 1:18-20)
5. We were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4)
6. This implies that His first coming was in the mind of God before the foundation of the world.
7. He did come, just as it was prophesied in the Old Testament!
8. God's Word is sure!

B. His second coming was promised by several in the first century:

1. **Christ himself spoke about His second coming:**

- a. There are several references about His second coming:
- b. Mark 8:38, He will come again with His holy angels

- c. Matthew 24, Destruction of Jerusalem and second coming (vss. 36, 44)
- d. Matthew 25:1-13, the parable of the 10 virgins
- e. John 14:1-3, promised to come back again

2. *Messengers of God spoke about His coming:*

- a. Acts 1:9-11, two men in white apparel promised He will come again!

3. *The apostle Paul and others spoke about His coming:*

- a. 1 Corinthians 11:26, we proclaim the Lord's death till He comes
- b. 1 Corinthians 15:24, at Christ's return, He will give the kingdom to His Father
- c. Philippians 3:20, from whence we wait for our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ
- d. Colossians 3:4, when Christ who is our life, shall be manifested
- e. 1 Thessalonians 1:10, and wait for His Son from heaven
- f. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, the Christian's hope
- g. Hebrews 9:28, Christ shall appear a second time, apart from sin
- h. 1 Peter 1:13, prepare your life for the second coming of Christ
- i. 1 John 2:28, Christ will come again

4. *We speak about His coming:*

- a. Every faithful gospel preacher has preached about the second coming of Christ from the beginning of the first century until this day.
- b. We preach about it because we strongly believe He will come again someday!

C. Christ will come again someday!

- a. Are you ready?

Now let us consider the time of His coming:

II. The Time of His Coming.

A. Sadly to say, throughout the years, many have come to the conclusion that they know more about God!

B. Several people have predicted the second coming of Christ and the end of the world:

- 1. Destruction of the earth, May 21st; October 21st, 2011 (Harold Camping)
- 2. Charles Russell predicted the second coming of Christ in 1914:
 - 1. When I spoke to a Jehovah's Witness about this, he said, "We are humans and we make mistakes. Even the apostles made mistakes". Brethren and friends, this is outrageous!
 - 3. According to some studies that have been made, there are approximately more than 200 false predictions about the second coming of Christ.
 - 4. We could spend all night just talking about each of them! Thank God we don't need to do so!
 - 5. Man needs to pay more attention to what God has said in His Word.
 - 6. One of the reasons why man is not interpreting the Scriptures correctly is because they are not reasoning correctly about them (cf. 2 Timothy 2:15; 2 Peter 3:16).

C. It is not our business to know when Christ will come!

D. God, through His Word, has indicated that no one knows about the second coming of His Son:

- a. Matthew 24:36, 44; Matthew 25:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-2; 2 Peter 3:10

E. It is our business to know that He is coming and that we need to be ready for this glorious day!

Let us also take the time to consider the manner of Christ's coming:

III. The Manner of His Coming.

- A. Please consider the manner of Christ's coming:
 - 1. **The second coming will be visible:** Jesus *will come in the clouds* (Revelation 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Acts 1:9-11)
 - 2. **Jesus will not come alone:** Paul said Jesus is *coming from heaven with the angels of His power in flaming fire* (2 Thessalonians 1:7; Mark 8:38)
 - 3. **The second coming will be unexpected:** Paul said Jesus *will come as a thief in the night* (1 Thessalonians 5:1-2; cf. 2 Peter 3:10)
- B. God has given us enough information to know the manner of His coming!
 - 1. We must be thankful for this!
- C. Are you ready for the coming of the Lord?

Let me also submit to you the events of Christ's coming:

IV. The Events of His Coming.

- A. **Resurrection of the dead:**
 - 1. John 5:28-29 Resurrection of life and judgment
 - 2. 1 Corinthians 15, the resurrection chapter
 - 3. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, the resurrection of the dead
 - 4. Which resurrection will apply to you: Judgment or Reward?
- B. **Judgment day:**
 - 1. Acts 17:30-31, Jesus will judge the world in righteousness
 - 2. Hebrews 9:27, man will die once, and then cometh judgment
 - 3. 2 Corinthians 5:10, we will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ
 - 4. Matthew 25:31-32, all nations will be gathered before the Lord
- C. **Destruction of the world:**
 - 1. This world is not my home; I'm just a passing through!
 - 2. Some glad morning when this life is over, I'll fly away!
 - 3. We are sojourners and pilgrims in this world (1 Peter 2:11). Why?
 - 4. This world will be destroyed (2 Peter 3:10-13)
 - 5. It was never God's plan for this earth to remain forever
- D. **Something we need to explain: Christ is not coming to set up an earthly kingdom.**
 - 1. **This is the teaching of the premillennialist:** Christ will come again to set up His kingdom because, after all, He was not able to establish it in the first century. The church is God's plan "B", since the kingdom was not established. This is false teaching all the way to the core!
 - 2. According to God's Word, the kingdom of Christ is now in existence:
 - a. Jesus promised the kingdom to be established in the first century (Mark 9:1; Acts 2)
 - b. The Colossians were in the kingdom (Colossians 1:13-14)
 - c. John the apostle was in the kingdom (Revelation 1:9)
 - d. Jesus was able to establish an earthly kingdom, but did not do so (John 6:15; John 18:36)
 - e. Who will you believe, Jesus or the false teachers of Premillennialism?

E. Are we ready for the events of His coming?

Finally my brethren and friends let me suggest to you, some preparations you and I can do for the second coming of Christ:

V. The Preparations for His Coming.

A. What non-Christians must do:

1. They must do God's will in order to be saved. Salvation is conditioned upon obedience (Matthew 7:21; Hebrews 5:8-9)
2. God's will involves obeying the gospel of Christ:
 - a. You must hear the gospel of Christ (Rom. 10:17; Acts 8:12; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Romans 1:16)
 - b. You must believe in the Son of God (John 3:16; Acts 18:8)
 - c. You must repent of your sins (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30; Luke 13:3, 5)
 - d. You must confess Christ as the Son of God (Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 8:37)
 - e. You must be baptized in order to have your sins forgiven (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Ephesians 1:7; Galatians 3:27)
 - f. You must live a faithful life in Christ until He comes back again (Revelation 2:10; Philippians 2:12; 1 Corinthians 15:58)
3. Many in the first century obeyed the gospel. You can do the same today!

B. Christians:

- a. First Thessalonians mentions the second coming of Christ at the end of each chapter.
- b. **The central theme of First Thessalonians is:** Living a faithful life in view of the second coming of Christ.
- c. First Thessalonians mentions several practical lessons Christian can practice in order to be ready for the second coming of Christ:
- d. Consider the following: Work (vs. 3), Perseverance (vs. 3), be imitators of good examples (vs. 6), be a good example to others (vs. 7; cf. Matthew 5:16), be evangelistic (vs. 8; cf. Mark 16:15), stay away from sin (vs. 9), wait for the Lord (vs. 10).
- e. Additional points: Work on your salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12)
- f. **The main ingredient to be ready:** Faithfulness!

Conclusion:

1. I have submitted to you a very important lesson: The second coming of Christ
2. The question is: What will you do with this lesson?
3. Will you make the necessary changes to be ready for this coming?
4. May I remind you that this is a life and death subject!
5. I hope and pray that we live our lives in such a way that when Christ comes, we will not depart from him ashamed (1 John 2:28)
6. Are you ready for the coming of Christ, if this one took place today?

The Bible: A Source of Encouragement Even in the Midst of Discouragement

By Willie Alvarenga

Text: Philippians 4:1-20

Proposition: Every Christian must believe that the Word of God can provide encouragement when difficult times come our way.

Objective: Encourage Christians to turn to the Word of God for encouragement.

Introduction:

1. The central theme of the letter to the Philippians is “**Living for Christ**” (Philippians 1:21).
2. Now, in the process of living for Christ, we will all face trials and afflictions which may discourage Christians.
3. Difficult times are real:
 - a. Death of a love one
 - b. House burnt down
 - c. Someone stealing our car
 - d. Losing our job and having no money
 - e. Natural disasters
 - f. Etc.
4. What do we do when difficult times come our way?
 - a. Do we turn to God?
 - b. Do we stay away from God?
5. How do we handle discouragement?
 - a. If we take a moment to realize, we will notice that **many Christians get discouraged and walk away from Christianity** because of discouragement in their lives.
 - b. **How we handle discouragement will determine where we will spend eternity.** If we forsake God, we will lose our salvation. If we stay close to God, we will be saved!
 - c. **The Hebrews writer exhorts Christians** not to forsake the Lord and abandon Christianity because of the various sufferings they were experiencing (cf. Hebrews 10:35; see Revelation 2:10).
6. **The Bible speaks about the reality of sufferings:**
 - a. 2 Timothy 3:12; Philippians 1:29; Matthew 5:10-12; Acts 14:22; Matthew 16:24; John 16:33; 1 Peter 4:16
7. In this lesson, I want to share with you a few biblical principles taken from God’s Word, which can help us to overcome difficult times in our lives.
8. **Let us remember that there is power in the Word of God to...**

- a. Save us (James 1:21; Romans 1:16)
 - b. Give us happiness (Jeremiah 15:16)
 - c. Keep us away from sinning (Psalm 119:11)
 - d. Feed us spiritually (1 Peter 2:2)
 - e. Comfort us (Romans 15:5)
 - f. Guide us (Psalm 119:105)
9. The Bible also has power to encourage Christians who suffer!
10. Therefore, as we consider these principles, may I encourage you to be a doer of God's Word? (James 1:22; Luke 9:44; Luke 8:12)
11. These Biblical principles will be taken from the fourth chapter of the letter to the Philippians.

Statement of Discussion: According to the Word of God, if every Christian wants to overcome discouragements in life, he must...

I. Remember to Stand Fast in the Lord (Philippians 4:1).

- A. When difficult times come, the Bible instructs us **to stand fast in the Lord**.
- B. **Consider the teaching of the Bible about standing fast in the Lord:**
 - a. **Philippians 4:1**, "Wherefore, my brethren beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my beloved"
 - b. **Ephesians 6:10-18**, "Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might" (v. 10)
 - c. **Philippians 1:27**, "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ: that, whether I come and see you or be absent, I may hear of your state, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one soul striving for the faith of the gospel"
 - d. **Psalm 27:14**, "Wait for Jehovah: Be strong, and let thy heart take courage; yea, wait thou for Jehovah"
 - e. **Psalm 55:22**, "Cast thy burden upon Jehovah, and he will sustain thee: He will never suffer the righteous to be moved"
 - f. **Psalm 34:19**, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but Jehovah delivereth him out of them all"
 - g. **Revelation 2:10**, "Be faithful unto death..."

C. Many stood fast in the Lord, even in the midst of affliction:

- a. **Job (Job 1-42)**
 1. In the midst of affliction, noticed what his attitude was:
 - a. "Then Job arose, and rent his robe, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped; and he said, naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: Jehovah gave, and Jehovah hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Jehovah. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly" (Job 1:20—23)
 - b. "Behold, he will slay me; I have no hope: Nevertheless I will maintain my ways before him" (Job 13:15)

- c. "My foot hath held fast to his steps; His way have I kept, and turned not aside. I have not gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have treasured up the words of his mouth more than my necessary food" (Job 23:11-12)
 - 2. We must imitate this great man of God!
 - b. Daniel (Daniel 6) the lion's den, God delivered him because he stood fast in God!
 - c. Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego (Daniel 3). Notice: v. 16-18 for their courage and steadfastness.
 - d. Many of the prophets of old stood fast in the Lord!
- D. Notice that Philippians 4:1 says, "Stand fast in the Lord"**
- a. We are not to stand fast in our might (2 Corinthians 3:4-5; John 15:5)
 - b. We are not to stand fast in our own understanding (Proverbs 3:5-6)
 - c. We are not to stand fast in the world (1 John 2:15-17; James 4:4)
 - d. We are to stand fast **IN THE LORD!**
- E. Are you standing fast in the Lord? I Hope and pray that your answer is yes!

Consider another practical lesson to overcome discouragement in life:

II. Remember that Our Names are Written in the Book of Life (Philippians 4:3).

- A. This is another way how the Bible encourages Christians to remain faithful, even when trouble times are here.
- B. The Bible says a lot about the Book of Life:**
- a. We can know our names are written in the Book of Life?
 - i. Some argue that we cannot know (this is a false reasoning)
 - b. God, through His Word, says we can know (1 John 5:13; Philippians 4:3).
 - c. If we have obeyed the gospel of Christ, we can be sure that our names are written in the Book of Life (Baptism puts us into Christ, Galatians 3:27; cf. Acts 2:47), and in Christ is the hope of eternal life found (1 John 5:11; John 11:25).
 - d. God wants us in Heaven (John 14:1-3)!
- C. We must remember that our names can be blotted out of the book of life (Revelation 3:5; 20:14-15)
- a. There is no such doctrine as, "Once saved, always saved".
 - b. Salvation can be lost!
 - c. We must work on our salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12)
 - d. We must be faithful unto death (Revelation 2:10)
- D. We must keep Heaven in our minds so that we may not give up (Revelation 21:4)
- E. There is a great reward to those who never give up:**
- a. 2 Timothy 4:7-8
 - b. James 1:12
 - c. Revelation 2:10
 - d. Matthew 24:13
 - e. 1 Peter 5:8-11
 - f. Revelation 3:5
 - g. Revelation 3:12

- F. Let us never forget the reward that God bestows upon the faithful ones!
- G. How often do you think about heaven and your name in the Book of Life?
 - a. The more we think about this, the more faithful we will ever be!

Consider another practical lesson to overcome discouragements in life:

III. Remember to Rejoice in the Lord no Matter What (Philippians 4:4).

- A. This makes no sense to the people of the world and even among some Christians.
 - a. A gospel preacher was teaching a Bible class one day, and he said that there is no way that we can rejoice when we face suffering and persecution. One of the elders of this congregation asked him whether he should erase James 1:2 from the Bible. The preacher said, no, we should not do that, but at the same time, he said, we must be realistic about this.
 - b. If the Word of God says we can rejoice, then, brethren, we can rejoice!
- B. **The Bible tells us that we must rejoice in the midst of affliction:**
 - a. **Philippians 4:4** Where was Paul when he wrote this verse?
 - b. **Colossians 1:24**, “Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body’s sake, which is the church”
 - c. **James 1:2**, “Count it all joy, my brethren, when ye fall into manifold temptations;”
- C. **The apostles rejoiced in the Lord when they suffered for the cause of Christ:**
 - a. **Acts 5:40-41** (Peter and John)
 - b. **Acts 16:25** (Paul and Silas)
 - c. **Hebrews 12:2** (Jesus) “Looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God”
 - d. **Matthew 5:10-12** (Sermon on the Mount)
 - e. **1 Peter 4:13, 16** (Rejoice as we partake of Christ’s sufferings)
- D. This may not be an easy task, but fully trusting in God’s help, we can have the strength to rejoice even when we face trouble times.
- E. Are you rejoicing in the Lord?

Let us consider another way to overcome discouragement in life:

IV. Remember the Blessing of the Avenue of Prayer (Philippians 4:6-7).

- A. Yes brethren, we **MUST** remember the blessing of the avenue of prayer.
- B. **We are instructed to pray at all times:**
 - a. Philippians 4:6-7
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 5:17
 - c. Colossians 4:2
 - d. Romans 12:12
 - e. Matthew 26:41

C. Jesus is our example on prayer:

- a. Mark 1:35
- b. Luke 6:12
- c. Matthew 26:36, 39, 42, 44

D. How often do we pray?

E. We must turn to God in times of need (Hebrews 4:16).

Let us also consider an essential attitude that can help us to overcome trials:

V. Remember to Keep an Optimistic Attitude (Philippians 4:13).

A. A faithful Christian must keep an optimistic attitude at all times.

B. Examples of those who had an optimistic attitude:

- a. Paul (Philippians 4:13; 2 Timothy 4:16-18)

C. An optimistic attitude will help us to not get discouraged!

D. We have many Christians who lose their faith and end up giving up Christianity.

- a. We must remember that God is with us (Hebrews 13:5; Matthew 28:20)

E. Do you have an optimistic attitude?

- a. Remember that without faith, it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6).

Something else we must remember in order to overcome discouragements in life:

VI. Remember God's Provisions (Philippians 4:19).

A. If you have studied the Bible, you will realize that God has never forsaken His people.

B. God cares for us:

- a. **Matthew 6:25-34** (Sermon on the Mount)

b. God has said that He will never forsake us (**Hebrews 13:5**). These were the same words God told Joshua. As we read the 24 chapters of Joshua, we realize that God never forsook him.

- c. God, through His providence, will provide for our needs.

d. **Luke 22:35**, God provided for His people.

e. **Genesis 48:15**, Jacob's words as he blesses Joseph's sons "**The God who has fed me all my life long to this day**"

f. **Psalm 84:11 "No good thing will God withhold from those who walk uprightly"**

C. We must trust in God at all times!

Finally, let us remember one more thing that is needed to overcome discouragements:

VII. Remember to Give God the Glory No Matter What (Philippians 4:20).

A. **This is one very important point:** God must receive the glory, even when we suffer.

- a. Let us remember the life of Job, a man who suffered so much, but that still gave God the glory (Job 1:20-22).

B. Notice that Paul, finishes this letter, by telling the brethren at Philippi that God must be glorified forever and ever (Philippians 4:20).

- C. No matter what we experience in life, we MUST give God the glory at all times.
- D. Paul was in prison at the time he writes Philippians. Even though he was there, he still gave God the glory!
 - a. We must do the same!
- E. May God help us to this end!

Conclusion:

- 1. In this lesson we have discussed several principles that help us to stay encouraged, no matter what.
- 2. Therefore, next time you face trials and afflictions, remember the following...
 - a. Remember to stand fast in the Lord
 - b. Remember your name in the Book of Life
 - c. Remember to rejoice at all times
 - d. Remember the blessing of the avenue of prayer
 - e. Remember to keep an optimistic attitude
 - f. Remember that God will supply all of your needs
 - g. Remember to give God the glory now and forever
- 3. All of these things, we learned from God's Word, the Bible, which is a source of encouragement even in the midst of discouragement.
- 4. By doing these things, we will be able to be more than conquerors over discouragements and afflictions.
- 5. God will always give us the victory (1 Corinthians 15:57)!

The One True Church of the Bible

By Willie Alvarenga

Objective: Show the audience irrefutable evidence that proves there is only one true church.

Proposition: The Bible teaches there is only one true church in existence today and that salvation is found in this church.

Introduction:

- 1. As we study our lesson under consideration, it is imperative that we practice the following passages:**
 - a. Acts 17:11, Search the Scriptures daily to make sure the things you are hearing are in accordance with the will of God
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 5:21, Prove all things to make sure they are from God
 - c. 1 John 4:1, Prove the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.
- 2. As we study this lesson, we must also realize that this topic is a matter of life and death:**
 - a. What you and I teach about this subject will determine where we are going to spend eternity
 - b. Let us remember that the topic of the New Testament church is connected to salvation, even though some may say it doesn't
- 3. You and I know how much religious confusion we have today concerning the subject of the one true church:**
 - a. Some have suggested that there are about 1,500 organized religions in America today.
 - b. Others have suggested that there are about 30,000 denominations in the world.
 - c. People are confused about which is the one true church of the New Testament (cf. 1 Corinthians 14:33, God is not the author of confusion, man is)
 - d. What would happen if everyone would just follow the Word of God? The answer is simple: Everyone would believe the same thing.
 - e. If everyone taught exactly the same thing about the one true church, then everyone would be part of this one true church.
- 4. Some misunderstandings about the church today:**
 - a. It does not matter what church you attend, as long as you attend a church where you feel comfortable
 - b. Others say, "One church is as good as another"
 - c. Others say, "Don't preach about the church, preach about Christ, the church is not important"
 - d. Others say, "The church is just a plan "B" (a back-up plan) in the scheme of redemption

- e. Others think the church is the building
 - f. Some believe the church is just another denomination
5. **Some have suggested that there is no way we can know if there is one true church:**
- a. The Bible refutes this erroneous mentality.
 - b. **We can know the truth about some things** (cf. John 8:32; 1 John 5:13; Ephesians 3:4; 5:17; John 7:17)
 - c. If we can understand the Bible, then, we can come to the knowledge of the one true church!
6. **It is the purpose of this lesson to show evidence that proves the following proposition:**
There is one true church in existence today, and anyone who is not part of this church, will not be saved.
- a. I will prove this proposition by showing evidence from the Bible.
 - b. It is imperative that we use logic when we study this subject.
 - c. Logic is the science of correct reasoning. Therefore, we must reason correctly about what the Bible teaches concerning the one true church of the Bible.
 - d. We must respect the authority of the Scriptures (cf. Colossians 3:17; 1 Peter 4:11).
7. **Clarifying some terms:**
- a. When I mention the word church, I am referring to the one Jesus established, as we shall see later in this lesson
 - 8. Let me remind you that, even though you are already a member of the body of Christ, you still have a responsibility to give an answer to anyone that asks concerning the subject under consideration. This is what Peter taught in 1 Peter 3:15.
 - 9. With this in mind, let us carefully consider the evidence the Bible shows to all of us tonight.

In order to be convinced that there is only one true church in existence today, we must...

I. **Recognize Who the Founder of this Church is.**

- A. **According to the Word of God, Jesus is the founder of this church, not John the Baptist, John Calvin, Martin Luther, Abraham, Peter, or Paul.**
1. **Evidence # 1: Matthew 16:16-18** (read) this passage shows that the builder, the founder of the church is Jesus Christ.
 - a. Jesus said He will build His church, not His churches.
 - b. There is only one body, one church (Ephesians 4:4; 1 Corinthians 12:13)
 - c. **Some say that there are many bodies, denominations:** John 15 cannot be used to establish the false doctrine that denominations are the branches. Christians are the branches who are part of the true vine.
 - d. John 10:16 is not talking about denominations, but Gentiles
 2. **Evidence # 2: 1 Corinthians 3:11**, “For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ”
 3. **Evidence # 3: Ephesians 2:20**, “Being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone” (**again, not John**

the Baptist, John Calvin, John Wesley, Thomas Campbell, or Alexander Campbell)

- a. John the Baptist was dead when Jesus promised to build His church (cf. Matthew 14:10)
- 4. **Evidence # 4:** Psalm 118:22; Acts 4:11-12; Matthew 21:42
 - a. Jesus is the head corner stone, not others!
- 5. **Evidence # 5:** Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:23
 - a. Jesus is the head of the church not someone else!
- B. Therefore, as we can see, Jesus Christ is the founder of the church, not any man in existence today, or in the past.
- C. Any church that just started a few years ago, and who claims that any man was its founder is not the one true church of the Bible.

In order to be convinced that there is only one true church in existence today, we must also...

II. Carefully Consider the Place of the Establishment of the One True Church.

- A. One thing I can tell you for sure is that the church was not established in Salt Lake City, New York, England, Mexico, Rome, Spain, etc.
- B. The Bible provides evidence concerning the place where the one true church was going to be established:
 1. There are approximately over 300 prophecies concerning Christ in the Bible. Some of them have to do with the establishment of the church.
 2. **Isaiah 2:1-3** teaches that the church was going to be establish in Jerusalem
 3. **Micah 4:1-2** also provides evidence that the church of Christ was going to be established in Jerusalem.
- 4. **Luke 24:46-49:**
 - a. The apostles needed to remain in Jerusalem and wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit
 - b. The gospel was preached first in Jerusalem (Acts 1:8)
 - c. The kingdom of Christ was established in Jerusalem (cf. Mark 9:1; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1ff)
 - d. The kingdom and the church are the same divine institution (cf. Acts 2:46, added to the church; Colossians 1:13, translated into the kingdom)
- 5. Once again, the evidence we have considered proves that the one true church of the New Testament was established in the city of Jerusalem, not somewhere else.

In order to be convinced that there is only one true church in existence today, we must also...

III. Consider the Names by Which the Church is Identified.

- A. The Bible shows how the church is described:
 1. **Romans 16:16**, “the churches of Christ”
 - a. Why of Christ? Answer: Matthew 16:18

- 2. **1 Corinthians 1:2**, “the church of God”
 - 3. **1 Timothy 3:15**, “the House of God”
 - 4. **Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:23**, the church is described as the body of Christ, where He is the head
 - 5. Etc.
- B. The names we hear today in the religious world do not find their origin in the pages of the Bible.**
- a. Remember that we must have Bible authority for everything we do (cf. Colossians 3:17; 1 Peter 4:11).
 - b. Many are not reasoning correctly about this point, and this is the reason why we read about unscriptural names
 - c. There was this denomination where they had a name on their church sign, and at the bottom of this sign, they wrote, “Where Jesus is honored” (what an inconsistency)
 - d. Many use the seven churches of Asia as their authority for their man-made names. We must reason correctly: These are not names, but cities where the church of Christ was located.
- C. Any church which wears an unscriptural name is not the one true church of the Bible.
- D. Some say the name by which the church is known is not important:**
- a. Is this is right, then, would you name your new born son, “Judas Iscariot”, or “Herod”?
 - b. If the name is not important, can I write my name on your pay check you received every two weeks at work?
 - c. If the name is not important, would you mind if your wife had the last name of another man, instead of yours?
 - d. We must reason correctly about this!
- E. Brethren and friends, here is evidence that proves there is one true church in existence today.

In order to be convinced that there is only one true church in existence today, we must also...

IV. Consider the Worship of the New Testament Church.

- A. The Bible is clear when she talks about the kind of worship God expects in His church. Consider the evidence:
1. **John 4:23-24**, God must be worshipped in spirit and in truth!
 2. **We must do it by the authority of God (Colossians 3:17)**
 3. Man does not have the right to worship God however he pleases.
 - a. On a certain occasion, a preacher at a youth rally, made the following statement: “The question is not HOW to worship, but WHO to worship”. In this youth rally, there was hand clapping during the singing, singing making sounds with their throats, etc.
 - b. I wonder what Nadab and Abihu would have said if they heard this statement?

- c. God does care HOW we worship Him. Why? Because He has indicated through His Word how He wants us to worship.

4. New Testament Worship:

- a. Singing without the use of instruments (cf. Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 14:15). No authority for instruments in worship!
- b. Praying to God (Acts 2:42; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; 1 Timothy 2:8).
- c. The Lord's Supper every first day of the week (Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).
- d. Contribution on the first day of the week (1 Corinthians 16:1-2).
- e. Preaching of the gospel (2 Timothy 4:2; 1 Peter 4:11)
- 5. There is no authority in the Scriptures for many of the things we see being practiced in the religious world of today!
- 6. The New Testament church, the only true church, worships God according to His Word, and not according to our feelings and opinions.
- 7. Any church that does not worship according to the Bible is not the New Testament church.

In order to be convinced that there is only one true church in existence today, we must also...

V. Consider the Organization / Government of the One True Church of the Bible.

A. What is the biblical organization of the New Testament church?

- 1. **Plurality of elders in the church** (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Philippians 1:1)
- 2. **Deacons who serve under the elders** (1 Timothy 3:8-13; Philippians 1:1)
- 3. **Members who are called, Christians** (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16). No authority for the names we hear today in the denominations.
- 4. **Preachers, ministers, evangelists** (2 Timothy 4:5)
- B. There is no authority for pastors (preachers), Reverends, Fathers (Matthew 23:9), the Pope, and many of the titles we hear today.
- C. You and I can go to the Bible and read about the biblical organization of the church.
- D. All of the churches who do not have this biblical organization are not the one true church of the Bible.
- E. Again, here is more evidence that shows which is the one true church.

We have considered several evidences that prove that there is one true church in existence today. Now, let me provide a few reasons why you must consider allowing God to add you to His church:

VI. Things You Must Do to Become a Member of the Body of Christ, the church of Christ.

A. The Bible is very clear as to what you must do to be a member of the one true church, the kingdom of God:

1. First of all, you must obey the gospel of Jesus Christ:
 - a. You must hear the gospel (Acts 8:12; Romans 10:17)
 - b. You must truly believe in the gospel (Mark 16:16; Acts 18:8)
 - c. You must be willing to repent of your sins (Acts 2:38; 17:30)
 - d. You must be willing to publicly confess Jesus as the Son of God (Acts 8:37; Romans 10:9-10)
 - e. You must be willing to be immerse in water (baptized) for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16)
 2. Once you have obeyed these steps of salvation, the Lord will add you to His church (cf. Acts 2:47; Galatians 3:27). After this, you are now a member of the one true church of the Bible, a member of the kingdom of God.
 3. Millions and millions of people have obeyed the gospel since the first century, you can do the same today!
- B. **What are the blessings of being a part of the body of Christ?** All blessings are found in Christ, in His church (Ephesians 1:7)
1. The blessing of reconciliation (Ephesians 2:13-16; Romans 5:10)
 2. The blessing of justification (Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; Romans 5:1)
 3. The blessing of no condemnation (Romans 8:1-2)
 4. The blessing of the hope of eternal life (Titus 1:2; cf. 1 John 5:11)
 5. The blessing of being able to enter heaven some day! (Matthew 7:21)
- C. We hope and pray that you will obey the gospel of Christ today, before it is eternally too late!

Conclusion:

1. As I said at the beginning of this lesson, the topic of the church is a matter of life and death.
2. Men must consider what the Bible teaches concerning the one true church of the Bible.
3. I hope and pray that you will make the right decision of becoming a member of the New Testament church today!
4. Remember, the church is known as the “House of God” (1 Timothy 3:15). God wants you in His house! He wants you to be a member of His family by being born again of water and the Spirit (John 3:3-5).
5. Salvation is found only in the one true church of the Bible! (Acts 2:47; 4:12)
6. May God grant you the opportunity to do what is right today!

We Can Trust the Bible

By Willie Alvarenga

Objective: Show the audience evidence that proves we can trust the Word of God.

Proposition: The Bible is the only inspired Book from God that we can trust.

Introduction:

1. We live in a world filled with unbelief.
 - a. Many do not believe in the Bible
 - b. Many have given to the task of attacking the Bible
 - c. Many are trying to discredit the miracles of the Bible (e.g. feeding of the five thousand no real miracle, everyone shared their lunch; destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah no real working of God, there were volcanoes nearby which erupted and fire came out from volcanoes and destroyed these two cities; Jesus walking on water was no real miracle since it was cold at the time, and the water was frozen so that Jesus could walk on ice, instead of water; Etc. Many are just trying to discredit the Bible)
 - d. All of these things cause people to not believe and trust in the Bible.
2. **The purpose of this lesson is to show information that can help us to have a deep confidence in the Bible.**
 - a. Sadly to say, many people today do not trust in the Bible.
 - b. Some have given themselves to the task of proving the Bible is not what it claims to be.
3. I would like to encourage our visitors to please consider Acts 17:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:21 & 1 John 4:1
 - a. Don't believe what I say about the Bible, but what the Bible teaches!
 - b. Please have a honest heart to accept what the Scriptures teach!
4. I am sure that most of us Christians already trust in the Bible. If this is the case, let me encourage you to pay close attention to this lesson so that you can be ready to give an answer in case someone ask you about the Bible (cf. 1 Peter 3:15).
5. Let us consider the following points about the topic under consideration:

According to the Word of God, man can trust the Bible for the following reasons:

I. The Bible is Inspired of God.

- A. Consider the internal evidence that proves the inspiration of the Scriptures:
 1. **2 Timothy 3:16-17**
 - a. The Bible is inspired of God, which literally means, "given by the breath of God"
 - b. Gr. **PASA GRAPHE THEOPNEUSTOS**, every Scripture given by the breath of God.

- c. Notice what Brother Wayne Jackson said about inspiration: “The Greek word *theopneustos* is actually a compound term. Its two parts (*theos* and *pneustos*) literally mean “God-breathed.” For this reason, English translations render the word by the phrase “inspired of God,” rather than just “inspired.” The phrase “inspiration of the Bible” means that this book is authoritative. The Bible is the final word in religious matters. As Paul discussed some doctrinal issues in Romans, he said, “What saith the scriptures?” (Rom. 4:3). The Lord charged the Sadducees, “Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures . . .” (Mt. 22:29). What God has revealed is important when considering *any* religious matter.¹

2. 2 Peter 1:20-21

- a. Peter says that holy men of God spoke, being moved by the Holy Spirit
- b. They did not write their own thinking, but what God, through the Holy Spirit, told them to write.

3. 2 Samuel 23:2

- a. “The Spirit of Jehovah spake by me, and his word was upon my tongue”
- b. This is what 2 Peter 1:20-21 teaches!

4. John 17:17

- a. “Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth” (cf. Psalm 119:160)
- b. Since the Word of God is true, there is no lies found within the pages of the Sacred Book!

B. The apostles were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write God’s Word:

- 1. Jesus promised the coming of the Holy Spirit upon His apostles:²**
 - a. **John 14:26**, “But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name he shall teach you all thing, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you”
 - b. **John 15:26**, “But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Farther, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall bear witness of me”
 - c. **John 16:13**, “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come”
 - d. **1 Corinthians 14:37, the apostles wrote the commandments of God.**
- 2. The purpose of the miracles the apostles performed was to confirm the Word of God (cf. Mark 16:17-20).

¹ <http://www.christiancourier.com/articles/1158-what-is-bible-inspiration>

² None of these promises apply to us today. Christians today do not have the baptism of the Holy Spirit as the apostles of the first century did.

- a. Today we have the complete revelation of God (cf. 1 Corinthians 13:8) and therefore, we do not need the power of the Holy Spirit to perform miracles today.

3. This is the internal evidence we can use to prove the inspiration of the Bible.

C. Let us notice some additional proofs of inspiration:

1. The indestructibility of the Bible:

- a. **The Bible has been persecuted for centuries**, yet it still abides until this day.
- b. King Jehoiakim (Jeremiah 36) tried to destroyed the Word of God, but to no avail. This man has been utterly forgotten, the Bible continues on!
- c. **Diocletian**, emperor of Rome (fourth century). This emperor took pleasure in the burning of every copy of the Scriptures he could get his hands on. This man claimed to have exterminated the Christian writings from the face of the earth. He even erected a monument over the ashes of burned Bibles with the inscription: Extincto Nomine Christianorum – “Extinct is the name of Christians.” (Goodpasture, p. 13)
- d. **Another emperor named, Constantine**, dedicated himself to put the New Testament in all of the churches of his empire. He offered a sizable reward to anyone who would deliver a copy of the Scriptures to him. Within twenty-five hours, Constantine was offered fifty copies of the Word of God (Winkler, The Case for Christianity, p. 167).
- e. **The French infidel Voltaire (1694-1778), declared**, “One hundred years from my day there will not be a Bible in the earth except one that is looked upon by an antiquarian curiosity seeker” (Dunn, Frank J., The Holy Scriptures: The Second Annual “Fort Worth” Lectures, Ed. Wendell Winkler, p. 49). Concerning the boast of Voltaire on the extinction of Christianity and the Bible in 100 years, Geisler and Nix point out that “only fifty years after his death the Geneva Bible Society used his press and house to produce stacks of Bibles.”³
- f. **Jesus said**, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away” (Matthew 24:35; Mark 13:31 and Luke 21:23)
- g. **Peter said**, “Having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of grass. The grass withered, and the flower falleth: but the word of the Lord abideth forever. And this is the word of good tidings which was preached unto you” (1 Peter 1:23-25).
- h. The Bible is the first religious book to be taken into outer space (it was on microfilm). It is the first book read describing the source of

³ Geisler, Norman L. and William E. Nix. A General Introduction to the Bible. Chicago: Moody Press, 1968.

the earth (astronauts read Genesis 1:1 – “In the beginning God...”). Just think, Voltaire said it would be extinct by 1850⁴

2. The Bible and Archeology:

- a. William F. Albright, known for his reputation as one of the great archeologists, states: “There can be no doubt that archeology has confirmed the substantial historicity of the Old Testament tradition.”⁵
- b. Albright adds: “The excessive skepticism shown toward the Bible by important historical schools of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, certain phrases of which still appear periodically, has been progressively discredited. Discovery after discovery has established the accuracy of innumerable details, and has brought increased recognition to the value of the Bible as a source of history.”⁶

3. The Uniqueness of the Bible in Translation:

- a. The Encyclopedia Britannica says that by “1966 the whole Bible had appeared... in 240 languages and dialects,... one or more whole books of the Bible in 739 additional ones, a total of publication of 1,280 languages.”⁷

4. The Scientific Foreknowledge of the Bible:

- a. “Many scientific facts, which prove the infallibility of Scripture, are tucked away in its pages. These proofs are given in nonscientific language; nevertheless, they substantiate the claims of authenticity of the Holy Scriptures.... In some cases, scientific concepts have been known through the ages, but these concepts are mentioned in a unique manner in Scripture. In other cases, scientific topics have been mentioned hundreds or even thousands of years before man discovered them”⁸

5. The Bible and Medicine:

- a. “Circumcision on the eighth day is ideal (Genesis 17:12; Leviticus 12:3; Luke 1:59). Medical science has discovered that on the eighth day, the blood clotting chemical prothrombin is elevated far above normal—and is the only day in the male’s life in which this will be the case under normal conditions. It also happens like clockwork in every normal healthy male baby. If surgery is to be performed, day eight is the safest day to do it, when Vitamin K and prothrombin levels are at their peak, as published by S.I. McMillen, M.D., in his book, *None of These Diseases* p.93, 1984.

While the chemical levels will register in medical equipment, the effect is actually not visually noticeable, and could even be called

⁴ McDowell, Josh, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, p. 26 (1972).

⁵ Albright, William, *Recent Discoveries in Bible Lands*. New York: Funk and Wagnals, 1955.

⁶ Albright, W.F. *The Archeology of Palestine*. Rev. ed. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Pelican Books, 1960.

⁷ McDowell, Josh, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, p. 21 (1972).

⁸ Morton, Jean S. (1978), *Science in the Bible* (Chicago, IL: Moody), p. 10

negligible. Nevertheless, it is a biological fact. How could Moses have possibly picked the 8th day without being able to tell the difference? Lucky guess of an arbitrary number?”⁹

6. The Bible and Oceanography:

- a. “Ocean currents (Psalm 8:8). Three thousand years ago the Bible described the “paths of the seas.” The first solid oceanography was not done until Louis Antoine de Bougainville sailed the South Pacific between 1766-1769. Hundreds of years prior, sailors sometimes set out with the winds to their backs, yet to their confusion, landed elsewhere, such as a few Portuguese expeditions to Brazil which were believed to have landed in Africa. In the 19th century Matthew Maury – the father of oceanography – researched and charted ocean currents that follow specific paths through the seas. Utilizing Maury’s data, marine navigators have since reduced by many days the time required to traverse the seas. How could ancient man have known this, when it went unproven for 3,000 years? Lucky guess?¹⁰

7. Time will not permit us to consider all of the external evidence that proves the Bible is the Word of God.

- a. Let me encourage each and every one of us to diligently study the subject of the inspiration of the Bible. There are hundreds of books and articles that have been written about this subject. Please let us make time to study the fundamental subjects of the Bible!
- D. The evidence we have considered thus far helps us to trust in the Bible.
- E. The question is do you trust the Bible?

We can trust the Bible because...

II. The Bible Produces the Best People in the World.

- A. **Once upon a time, President Thomas Jefferson said**, “I have always said and always will say that the studious perusal of the Sacred Volume will make better citizens, better fathers, better husbands... the Bible makes the best people in the world”¹¹
- B. Friends, this is so right, not because President Thomas Jefferson said it, but because the Bible teaches this to be the case. **2 Timothy 3:17, “that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work”.**
 1. God’s Word can help men to be a better husband (Ephesians 5:21-33)
 2. God’s Word can help women to be better wives (Ephesians 5:21-33)
 3. God’s Word can help children be better sons and daughters (Ephesians 6:1-3)
 4. God’s Word can help men and women be better parents (Deuteronomy 6:4-6; Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4)
 5. God’s Word can help us in every area of our Christian living!

⁹ <http://www.thejesuscommandment.com/proof.html>

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ <http://www.biblein90days.org/en/quotes/search.asp?category=Presidents+and+the+Bible>

C. One of the reasons why society is the way it is, is because man is following his own thinking, and not what the Word of God teaches.

- a. This has been the case for centuries (cf. Judges 17:6; 21:25)
- b. Man must acknowledge that the only way to be the best people in the world is by following God's Word and not his own thinking (cf. Jeremiah 10:23; Proverbs 14:12)
- c. **George Washington once said**, "It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible"¹²

D. Examples of the best people in the world:

- 1. **Everyone who follows the Word of God will be a good example to others:**
 - a. Acts 2:47, the early century Christians had favor with all the people.
 - b. Proverbs 16:7, "When a man's ways please Jehovah, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him"
 - c. Acts 16:1-2, Timothy, the young evangelist was a great example to others.
 - d. 2 Timothy 1:5, Lois and Eunice are great examples of godly mothers and grandmothers.
- 2. Christians have the best law ever, which is completely different from any other law (e.g. the Sermon on the Mount)
- E. As we can see, the Bible does produce the best people in the whole world.

We can trust the Bible because...

III. The Bible Has the Power to Change People's Lives Out of Sin.

- A. Another reason why men must trust in the Bible is because she has power to change people's lives.
- B. We have several examples of people who had a change of life out of sin:
 - 1. **Saul of Tarsus** used to persecute Christians in the past, but then, he received a change of life for the better (Acts 9, 22, 26)
 - 2. **The Corinthians** were given to sinful practices, but then, their lives change for the better (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).
 - 3. Those who used to practice magic received a change of life (Acts 19:18-20)

C. How does the Bible help people come out of sin?

- 1. **Obedience to the gospel of Christ brings about a change in people's lives:**
 - a. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16)
 - b. The truth of God can help people be free from sin (John 8:32)
 - c. Man MUST obey the Word of God in order to experience a change of life.
 - d. Many men in the past used to be in bondage to sin; maybe they would get drunk or do drugs and beat up on their wives and kids. I knew a family where the father would get drunk every weekend. He would come home and beat up his wife and children, and would kick

¹² <http://www.biblein90days.org/en/quotes/search.asp?category=Presidents+and+the+Bible>

them out of the house. When this man obeyed the gospel, his life changed for the better.

- e. Maybe you experienced the same thing in the past.
- f. 2 Corinthians 5:17 We are now a new creature in Christ!
- 2. During the preaching at Pentecost, the apostle Peter exhorted them saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation" (Acts 2:40). That is exactly what the about three thousand people did!
- D. Friends, this is another reason why you and I can trust in the Bible.

Finally, we can trust the Bible because...

IV. The Bible Teaches People Exactly What They Must Do to Be in Heaven Someday.

- A. There is so much religious confusion in the world concerning what a person must do to be saved.**
 - 1. Some say that all you have to do to be saved is repeat a sinner's prayer.
 - 2. Others say there is nothing you can do to be saved.
 - 3. Others say, just touch the radio and you will be saved.
 - 4. Others say, just flip your high beams and low beams to be saved.
 - 5. Others say, salvation is just like coming to this building, you may come through the east, or the west or the north or the south. Either way will take you to heaven.
 - 6. Concerning baptism, Billy Graham said on National Television, "Concerning baptism, even my wife and I disagree about it. Just ask your priest or preacher on this" (paraphrasing)
 - 7. These are some of the things men say concerning salvation.
- B. I am glad God has given us His Word, and through His Word, we can learn exactly what to do to be saved and spend eternity in heaven.
- C. Notice what the Bible teaches concerning salvation:**
 - 1. Salvation is found only in Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12; John 14:6; 1 Timothy 2:5; 2 Timothy 2:10)
 - 2. Eternal life is found in Christ (1 John 5:11; John 11:25)
 - 3. There is only one door to salvation (John 10:9)
 - 4. Forgiveness of sins is found in Christ (Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14)
 - 5. Reconciliation with God is found only in Christ (Ephesians 2:13-16)
 - 6. All spiritual blessings are found in Christ (Ephesians 1:3)
- D. If all of these great blessings are in Christ, the question arises, where must man be to enjoy all of these blessings? How can man be in Christ?**
 - 1. The Bible teaches that obedience to the gospel can get man into Christ.
 - 2. Baptism is the act by which man enters into Christ (Galatians 3:27; Romans 6:4; 1 Corinthians 12:13)
 - 3. Therefore, in order for man to be in Christ, he must be baptized according to what God teaches in His Word!
 - 4. We learn these things in the Word of God!

- E. Man must acknowledge that there are many people in this world who have perverted the plan of salvation.**
 - a. You must obey the plan of salvation you read about in the pages of the New Testament!
 - b. If every man taught only that which God teaches in His Word, then all of us would follow only the plan of salvation we find in the Bible.
- F. Again, this is another reason why we can trust in the Bible: This is the only Book that can teach us correctly about salvation.

Conclusion:

1. We have discussed several points that can help us to have confidence in the Word of God.
 2. May God help us to cherish His Word all of the time!
 3. Let us:
 - a. Study God's Word (2 Timothy 2:15)
 - b. Read it all the time (1 Timothy 4:13)
 - c. Memorize it (Psalm 119:11)
 - d. Desire the Word (1 Peter 2:2)
 - e. Share it with others (Mark 16:15)
 4. God's Word is the Book of books. May we always have a deep love and appreciation for the message we find therein (cf. Psalm 119:97).
 5. If you have not obeyed the gospel of Christ, please do so today. God wants you in heaven:
 6. Plan of Salvation:
 - a. Hear the gospel (Romans 10:17; Acts 8:12)
 - b. Believe (John 3:16; Acts 18:8)
 - c. Repent of your sins (Acts 2:38; 17:30)
 - d. Confess Christ as the Son of God (Acts 8:37; Romans 10:9-10)
 - e. Be immerse in water for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16)
 - f. Live a faithful life in Christ (Philippians 2:12; Revelation 2:10)
 7. Don't wait for tomorrow (cf. James 4:14; Proverbs 27:1).
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About the Author



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