A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a thick, orange leather-bound Bible. The person is wearing a dark, long-sleeved shirt. The background is a soft-focus outdoor scene with green grass and trees under bright, natural light. The overall tone is contemplative and serene.

SO... HOW DO WE KNOW THE BIBLE IS REALLY GOD'S WORD, ANYWAY?

Examining the Evidence



**HARVEST
BIBLE
CHAPEL**
PITTSBURGH NORTH

DISCIPLESHIP SERIES

Harvest Bible Chapel

Discipleship Series

According to recent surveys, Bible readership is on a steady decline. It is a disturbing trend, especially among younger respondents. As people distance themselves from the Bible we see the devastating effects in our culture. Wickedness is running rampant: traditional marriage is under assault, people are experiencing gender identity crisis, violence is escalating at an alarming rate, abortion is being celebrated as a virtue, and on and on...

There is a direct relationship between how our culture views the Bible and the societal decay that we're experiencing. If people really believed that the Bible was God's direct message to them... if they really believed that the Bible was God's way of revealing Himself, exposing our sinful human nature, and what God's requirements of humans are... then there would be massive revival in our land. This is the heart of the issue: for whatever the reasons may be, many people (self-proclaimed Christians included) simply do not believe the Bible is God's way of communicating to us. They have a hard time with the fact of the Bible being God's book. Our sincere hope is that they might be convinced, however, if presented with the facts.

The evidence for the Bible being the very Word of God is both overwhelming and undeniable. The purpose of this course is present a convincing body of evidence so that Christians will know why they believe what they believe concerning the Bible. After all, Christians are called upon to give a reasonable explanation for the hope that lies within them (1 Peter 3:15). For the skeptics, this course will hopefully provide enough truth to break through any doubt they may have.

Disclaimers

Some of the content of this course has been the result of study and data collection over a number of years from different places and the sources may not have been cited at the time. However, throughout the course, attempts were made to cite sources where possible.

The basic outline of the class and some of the information is based off of sections in Josh McDowell's book: "The New Evidence that Demands a Verdict".

Scripture quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible® (NASB),
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973,
1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation
Used by permission. www.Lockman.org

Harvest Bible Chapel

Discipleship Series



- 1). To honor the divine Author of scripture by having a higher and loftier view of His Word, trembling with holy reverence each time we open the Bible.
- 2). To obtain an increased confidence that the Bible really is what God said it is in 1 Thessalonians 2:13, 'the Word of God' which is sufficient for all matters of faith and conduct. We want to have an increased trust in the veracity and accuracy of the Scriptures.
- 3). To be better equipped to give, to those ask us, a reason for the hope that lies within us (1 Peter 3:15).
- 4). To meditate upon, memorize and believe what the Apostle Paul told his son in the faith, Timothy, regarding the Word of God:

"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

- 2 Timothy 3:16-17



Introduction: The Uniqueness of the Bible

The Bible was written over a 1,500 year period of time.

1450 - 1410 BC - Torah	62 AD - Acts
1050 - 465 BC - History	50 - 67 AD - Pauline Epistles
1000 - 300 BC - Poetry	58 - 90 AD - Other Apostles
50 - 85 AD - Gospels	70 - 95 AD - Revelation

The Bible was written by 40 different human authors:

Kings (David, Solomon)	Military General (Joshua)
Fishermen (Peter, John)	Tax collector (Matthew)
Priests (Ezekiel)	Shepherds (David)
Herdsman (Amos)	Political Leader (Moses)
Doctor (Luke)	Statesmen (Ezra, Nehemiah)
Tent maker & Rabbi (Paul)	Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Joel, etc)

The Bible was written mainly in three different languages:

Hebrew (most of the Old Testament)
 Greek (most of the New Testament)
 Aramaic

Daniel 2:4-7:28

Ezra 4-7

Matt. 27:46 - Eli, Eli lama sabachthani

Matt. 27:33 - Golgotha

Mark 5:41 - Talitha kourai

Mark 14:36 - Abba

1 Cor. 16:22 - Maranatha

The Bible was written from different moods:

Sadness (Lamentations)	Joy (Philippians)
Trust and Confidence (Psalm 3)	Frustration (Psalm 10)
Contrition (Psalm 51)	Anguish & Fear (Psalm 55)
Distress (Psalm 69)	Gratitude (Psalm 100)
Confession and Repentance (Psalm 38)	

The Bible was written in various different places:

Prison (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon)	
Hillside (David)	Dungeon (Jeremiah)
Wilderness (Moses)	Palace (David)
Cave (David in Psalm 142)	

The Bible was written in times of:

War and Sacrifice (David)
Peace and Prosperity (Solomon)

The Bible was written with different literary styles:

- Histories (1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Acts)
- Parables (Matt. 13 - Parable of the Sower)
- Songs/hymns (Psalms)
- Poetry (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 - "A Time for Everything")
- Allegories (Isaiah 5:1-7)
- Proverbs (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes)
- Genealogies (Genesis 5 - Descendants of Adam)
(Genesis 10 - Descendants of Noah)
(Matthew 1; Luke 3 - Lineage of Jesus)
- Laws (Leviticus)
- Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John)
- Letters (Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians,
1 & 2 Corinthians, Revelation 2-3)
- Apocalypses (Revelation)
- Narratives (Genesis 37-50 - Life of Joseph)
(Exodus - Life of Moses)
- Doctrines (Romans, Galatians)
- Ethical teachings (Matthew 7:12 - The Golden Rule)
- Prophecies (Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel)
- Sermons (Matt. 5-7 - Sermon on the Mount)
(Acts 2 and 3 - Peter's sermons)
- Thank-you notes (Philippians)

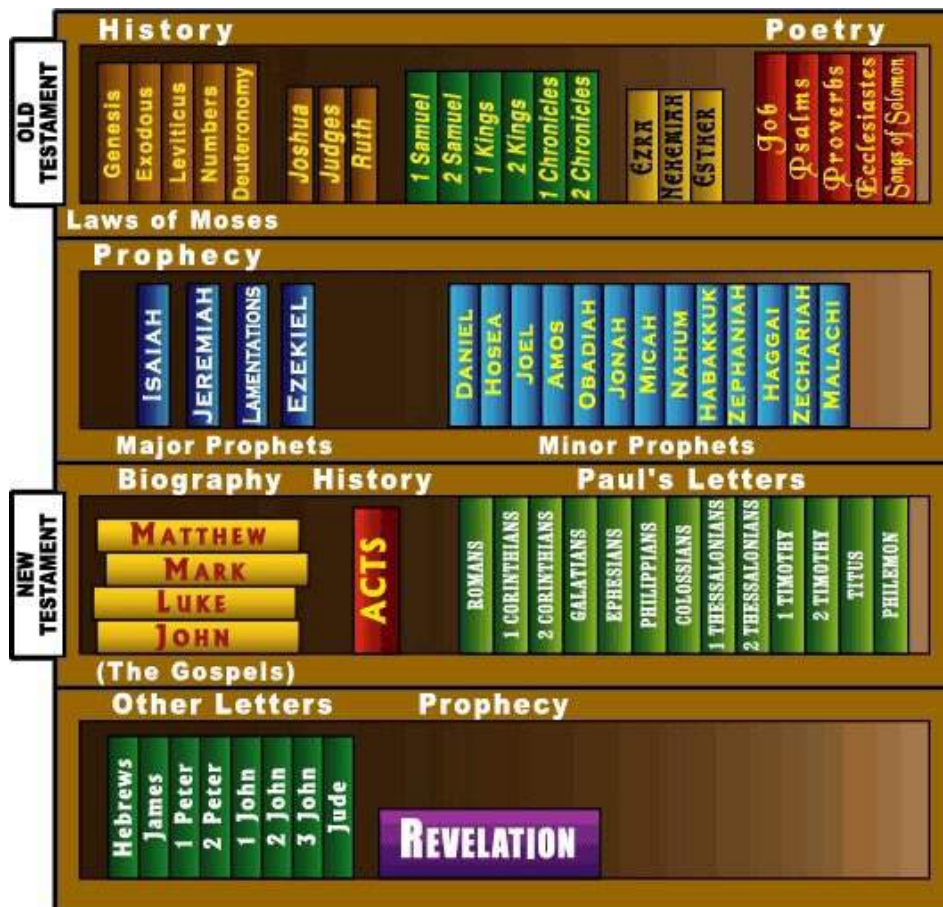
Categories

Old Testament

The Law	- Genesis through Deuteronomy
History	- Joshua through Esther
Wisdom/Poetry	- Job through Song of Solomon
Major Prophets	- Isaiah through Daniel
Minor Prophets	- Hosea through Malachi

New Testament

The Gospels	- Matthew through John
The Ministry of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles	- Acts
The Pauline Epistles	- Romans through Philemon
The General Epistles	- Hebrews through Third John
The Glory of Christ and His Kingdom	- Revelation



Notes on the Intertestamental Period

- 1). 400 years of silence between the last events of the OT and the beginning actions in the NT. (ca. 424 BC to 26 BC).
- 2). Canon of scripture does not and should not include the Old Testament Apocrypha (These materials were all composed between 200 B.C. and A.D. 100).

canon – word derived from the Greek word 'kanon', which means 'a measuring rod or rule'. Refers to the collection of individual books that comprise the OT and NT.

Apocrypha – books that the Roman Catholic Church includes between the OT and NT, that were composed during the Intertestamental period.

Collection and Preservation

The Writing Materials of the Bible - The Spirit of God moved upon the authors of the Bible to record their precious messages upon whatever object was in current use at the time of the writing. Thus once again we see the marvelous condescension of God. These writing materials would include:

- Clay (Jer. 17:13; Ezek. 4:1).
- Stone (Ex. 24:12; 13:18; 32:15, 16; 34:1, 28; Deut. 5:22; 27:2, 3; Josh. 8:31, 32).
- Papyrus (made by pressing and gluing two layers of split papyrus reeds together in order to form a sheet) (2 Jn. 12; Rev. 5:1)
- Vellum (calf skin), parchment (lamb skin), leather (cowhide) (2 Tim. 4:13).
- Metal (Ex. 28:36; Job 19:24; Mt. 22:19, 20).



Note: The Bible references mentioned do not necessarily mean that the original Bible was written on that medium, but that these were the kinds of materials available at the time of the writing.

The Central Message of the Bible

For His own glory, God has chosen to create and gather to Himself a group of people, who will live in His eternal kingdom, to praise, honor, and serve Him forever, and through whom He will display His wisdom, power, mercy, grace and glory.

The Bible tells us about God and His holiness. It tells us about our own sinful condition and how we got that way. It explains the vast gulf between God and mankind because of sin and how we can be restored to a right relationship with Him.



Supporting Themes of the Bible

The character attributes of God.
The judgment for sin and disobedience.
The blessing for faith and obedience.
The plan of salvation:
 The sacrifice of Jesus Christ to atone for sin.
The future kingdom.

How then does the Bible achieve unity despite all the variety mentioned above?



Consider Bible's Divine Author

2 Timothy 3:16-17

**All Scripture comes from
God Himself.**

**“Inspired” means
“God-breathed”**

