

The Book of God #5

Text : **John 16: 5-15 ; John 17: 6-17**

A. We're involved in a series of lessons to help us understand the bible itself.

S#1.

S#2.

1. We started off observing that we must make scriptures part of our daily thoughts.
2. #1- It's important to dwell on scripture because it's the only way we learn about God.
3. #2- We observed that the bible is inspired of God – verbal, plenary, confluent.
4. #3- Being inspired of God, the bible is both inerrant and infallible.
5. #4- The bible is different from any other book ever written, it is from God.

B. #5- This lesson will deal with how we respond to attacks on the bible.

S#3.

1. What would constitute an error?
2. How do we respond to accusations of error?
3. Examples of supposed errors refuted.

I. What constitutes an error in the bible ?

S#4.

A. If there is any plausible explanation it is not an error.

1. There are difficulties in the scriptures; **but** a difficulty is not necessarily an error.
2. God has not assigned you the responsibility to resolve every difficulty.
3. Just because you cannot resolve a difficulty does not mean it is an error.

B. It is not an error when the scriptures omit certain information.

S#5.

1. The purpose of the bible is to reveal God **and** His plan for man.
 - a. He is our creator and the sovereign ruler of the universe.
 - b. God is totally loving, compassionate and just, but willing to forgive.

I John 4: 16 – We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

S#6.

- c. It is the desire of God that all men be saved so they can dwell with Him.

I Tim. 2: 3-4 – This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth
2. The bible is not for the purpose of telling man everything about everything.
 - a. It is not for the purpose of giving us a comprehensive history of Israel/world.
 - b. It's not a comprehensive account of God's dealings with mankind/His people.
 - c. For example, many events transpired to bring Cyrus to the throne to

Isa. 44: 28-5:1f – "It is I who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd! And he will perform all My desire.' And he declares of Jerusalem, 'She will be built,' and of the temple, 'Your foundation will be laid.'" **5:1** Thus says the Lord to Cyrus His anointed, whom I have taken by the right hand, to subdue nations before him and to loose the loins of kings; to open doors before him so that gates will not be shut:

- 1) This was prophesied 150 yrs before Cyrus came to power ... *liberals deny it.*
- 2) Cyrus was a pagan king illustrating God's working among the nations.
3. God clearly states that He knowingly omits some things from His revelation.
 - a. **Deut. 29: 29** – The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law. **S#8.**
 - b. That which is revealed is to facilitate obedience.
 - c. That which is hidden is none of our business. (e.g., *When is the end of time.*)
4. God is sovereign; He does not owe us more information or a fuller explanation.

C. It is not an error when the scriptures use incorrect grammar. **S#9.**

1. People who write books of biblical criticism seek to impress people with their scholarship by referring to technical grammatical errors. Most commonly they err.
2. Remember : Bible was written **by** common people **to** common people.
 - a. It was never intended to be a scholarly treatise.
 - b. Over 1500 years it was written in the currently common language of the day.
 - c. E.G., Koine Greek was the language of the common people. (koine = common)
3. Languages change over time so word usage varied widely. (*Ezra had to translate.*)
 - a. The bible writers communicated to the people of their day.
 - b. The word choice also reflected their socio-economic status and educational level.
 - c. "I ain't got no money." "I'm broke," "I'm tapped out." "My funds are depleted." All four of these phrases communicate the same message.

D. It is not an error when the bible writers round off numbers. **S#10.**

1. After the ascension, the Apostles returned to Jerusalem which was ½ mile plus, but they referred to it simply as "a Sabbath day's journey."

Acts 1: 12 – Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.
2. In common American English we still use idioms for short distances.
 - a. Within walking distance, hailing distance, spitting distance, striking distance
 - b. Truckers : Just a short hop, Southerner : Just a hop-skip-and-a-jump, stone's throw
3. In scripture "three days" almost never indicates 72 hours.

S#11.**E. It is not an error when the N. T. writers do not quote the O.T. word for word.**

1. The Holy Spirit is the ultimate author and He can site His own work as He pleases.
2. It was not the culture of the time to quote other people word for word.
 - a. The writers wrote to their audience, not to audiences in the distant future.
 - b. Training was often done orally so students had no written text to memorize.
3. These common people most often did not have written texts to memorize.
 - a. Everything in print was expensive b/c it was hand written on expensive material.
 - b. Consequently, training was mostly oral.
4. Even today, we commonly don't quote others word for word.
Frank asks Randy : *The wife wants ya'll to come over for supper tonight.*
Randy replies : *I have a meeting at 5:00 and we're going to our son's ball game.*
Frank tells his wife : *Randy said they're busy tonight.*
5. The objective is to give the proper sense in the proper context, not to repeat words.
6. They had to deal with translating the texts, sometimes to multiple languages.
 (The O.T. was written in Hebrew and Aramaic; the N.T. in Greek, but taught in ...)

II. How should we respond when someone says there are errors in the bible?**S#12.****S#13.****A. If someone says, "*There are errors in the bible.*" ask them to show you where.**

1. Most have just heard that said and cannot point to one.
2. This disarms many, but be nice about it (**Col. 4: 5-6**) and it may open a door for you.

B. We must never just accept that the accusation of an error is true.

1. Most critics approach the bible with a negative assumption.
 - a. One tends to find what he is looking for ... They are looking for errors.
 - b. Thus, they do not conscientiously look for a positive resolution to difficulties.
2. Most critics do not look at the scriptures from a spiritual perspective.
 - a. They tend to approach the word as an academic study.
 - b. Their objective is analysis, NOT understanding.
3. Not having understanding of context and purpose, they do not see obvious solutions.

C. Ask the accuser how they came to be convinced that there is an error ?

1. Were they studying and happened upon it ?
2. Were they reading a book about errors in the bible ? If so, **WHY** ?
3. If they were taught it, ask who taught them and why they were studying,

D. Consider the biases of the critic.

1. People without faith tend to reject anything they cannot explain rationally.
 - a. Many reject the miracles out of hand.
 - b. They reject the virgin birth, the resurrection and the ascension.
2. Those who worship man will resist the authority of God.
 - a. Tend to elevate the credibility of science above the authority of the bible/God.
 - b. “I have the right to believe whatever I want ...” **Rebellious heart**
3. In this era science is a religion based upon man’s faith in his knowledge.
 - a. It takes more faith to believe the big bang than to believe in creation.
 - b. In today’s culture people want to destroy what they cannot accept.

E. If you do not know how to resolve the difficulty, admit you don’t know.

1. Tell them you will study it and get back to them.
2. Be positive; do not express doubt as you assure them you will find out.
3. Ask them to more fully explain it so you can make sure to investigate it properly.

III. Let’s observe some examples of supposed errors.**S#14.****A. Difficulties are to be expected, but they are not errors.**

1. Remember, you are not called to be able to resolve every difficulty.
2. Study the bible, compare scriptures, read books, seek help when needed.
 - a. Always bear in mind the purpose of the scriptures.
 - b. Establish the context and purpose of the text you are examining.
3. We must trust God enough not to allow difficulties to shake our family of God.
 - a. You will learn how to handle some difficulties, but some you will not conquer.
 - b. It is the nature of man to progress from the simple to the more complex.
 - c. From blocks, to sand box, to erector set, to tree house, to ever more complicated

Start with a couple easy ones:**B. The first two chapters of Genesis give differing accounts of the creation.****S#15.**

1. Critics claim this is a textual error, bible contradicts itself.
2. Genesis 1 is chronological giving a step by step account of creation
3. Genesis 2 is not chronological ... context = prepare habitat for man

C. Where did Cain get his wife ? (*Critics say this proves inconsistencies.*) S#16.

1. Like everyone else of that era, Cain married one of his sisters.
Gen. 5: 3 – Then the days of Adam after he became the father of Seth were eight hundred years, and he had other sons and daughters.
2. We have difficulty with this because it is contrary to our modern culture.
3. God did what was necessary to populate the earth.
 - a. **Gen. 1: 28 , 9: 1** ... Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth
 - b. Men lived much longer and had multiple wives.
4. Marrying within the family remained the culture.
 - a. **Gen. 20: 12** ... Abraham married his half sister
 - b. **Gen. 24: 1f** ... Isaac, the son of Abraham married his cousin
 - c. **Gen. 26: 34-35** ... Isaac and Rebekah were distraught when Esau married outside
 - d. **Gen. 20: 12** ... Jacob married his mother's niece
 - e. **II Cor. 6: 14** ... Christians are forbidden to marry outside the family of God.

S#17.

D. Joshua 10: 12-15 .. Joshua prayed and the sun stood still until victory was secure.

1. Critics say this proves scientific inaccuracy because the sun does not move.
2. The text is dealing with the power of God, not with the rotation of the earth.
3. The God who spoke the earth into existence can control how it functions. (*rain*)
4. These same critics deny that Jesus stilled the storm. (**Mark 4: 39**)

E. Critics site Matthew 27: 9 as a clear mistake in the text.

S#18.

1. They claim a passage from Zachariah is mistakenly attributed to Jeremiah.
 - a. **Matt. 27: 9** – Then that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet S#19 was fulfilled: "and they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one whose price had been set by the sons of Israel;"
 - b. **Zach. 11: 12-13** – said to them, "If it is good in your sight, give me my wages; but if not, never mind!" So they weighed out thirty shekels of silver as my wages. **13** Then the Lord said to me, "Throw it to the potter, that magnificent price at which I was valued by them." So I took the thirty shekels of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of the Lord.
2. Ezra reorganized the scrolls and put Jeremiah with the Minor Prophets so the works were often referred to as Jeremiah. (*Jer. is longest and the M.P are short*)
3. P.S. ... **Jer. 32: 6-15** ... God told Jeremiah to purchase a field.

F. Critics claim historical inaccuracies in the bible.**S#20.**

1. The Hittite nation is mentioned about 50 times in the O.T. (Sons of Heth)
 - a. Until the 19th and early 20th centuries skeptics said : "We can't find any evidence for the Hittite civilization outside of the Bible. This demonstrates that the Bible cannot be trusted as an historical source."
 - b. French scholar Félix Texier found the first Hittite ruins in 1834 but not identified
 - c. William Wright in 1884 was found to Hittite diplomatic writings from Aleppo.
 - d. In 1906, archaeologist Hugo Winckler found a royal archive with 10,000 tablets
2. Daniel records that Belshazzar was the eldest son of Nabonidus, the last king of the Neo-Babylonian empire,
 - a. 150 years ago critics were saying that Daniel was in error.
 - b. In 1854 references to him were found in Babylonian cuneiform inscriptions
 - c. The *Persian Verse Account of Nabonidus*, published in 1924, stated that, as "he started out for a long journey", Nabonidus "entrusted the kingship" to "his oldest (son), the firstborn."¹⁰ So Belshazzar clearly functioned in the role of a king for years while his father was away. --

CONCLUSION :**A. There have always been critics and skeptics****S#21.**

1. Do not be intimidated by them.
2. The bible is from God so you can trust it as you trust God.
3. It all boils down to faith ... do you trust God ?

B. You are not responsible to be able to answer every skeptic.**S#22.**

1. You must learn the truth.
2. You must apply the truth.
3. You must share the truth.

C. Have you responded to the truth of God's word?**S#23.**

1. **John 17: 17** – Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.
2. **John 8: 32** – You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.

INVITATION :**S#23.** ... Communion slide

Lesson Text :**John 17: 6-17**

6 I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. **7** "Now they have come to know that everything You have given Me is from You; **8** for the words which You gave Me I have given to them; and they received them and truly understood that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent Me. **9** I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours; **10** and all things that are Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I have been glorified in them. **11** I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are. **12** "While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled.

13 But now I come to You; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves. **14** I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. **15** I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. **16** They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. **17** Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth."

John 16: 5-15

5 "But now I am going to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?' **6** But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. **7** But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. **8** And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; **9** concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; **10** and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; **11** and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

12 I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. **13** But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. **14** He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you. **15** All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you."