

The Bible – Part 2

Josh McDowell

I. Introduction - Is the Bible true?

A. Review:

1. Using the bibliographical test to determine authenticity through the dates and amounts of manuscripts.
2. Determining the truth of what was written down by seeing that the writers wrote as eye-witness who appealed to the knowledge of the listeners.

II. The second test for determining truth: the external test.

A. Literary test.

1. Is there literature apart from that document that supports what the document testifies to?
2. Iranaeus in 180 AD quotes his teacher Polycarp who was a disciple of the Apostle John. He wrote that the ground that the gospel was established upon was firm and that the heretics could not even question the documents. The heretics had to start from the Bible and establish their heresies henceforth.
3. Eusebius preserves the document of Papias who was influenced by the Apostle John as well. He wrote that Mark who was Peter's transcriber wrote down accurately all that Peter had mentioned whether it was the sayings or doings of Christ. He said that Mark made no mistake in writing down what Peter said in the exact order and that there was no false statement among them.

B. Archaeological test.

1. Is there archaeology that goes back to that time that confirms the witness of the document?
2. Sir William Ramsey was convinced that the Bible was written in the Second Century but after doing a topographical study of Asia Minor and relating it to Luke's history, he concluded that Luke was one of the most accurate historians in history.
3. Luke uses the title of proconsul but there was no other document that used that title at that time. However archaeological evidence was found that confirmed its validity. (Acts 18:12)
4. The word Polytar is used of civil authorities at Thessalonica, and no other documents used this word in the First Century, but nineteen inscriptions were found confirming this. (Acts 17:6)
5. Black said that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted the Scriptures.

The Bible – Part 2

Josh McDowell

STUDY GUIDE

Part 1: What do you see?

1. What are the two external tests for determining the validity of the New Testament? How do they demonstrate that the New Testament is historically accurate?

2. How do quotations from Iranaeus and Eusebius help to establish that the New Testament is an accurate reflection of the life of Jesus and is from the Apostles?

3. What archeological discoveries helped to demonstrate the historical worth of Luke's accounts?

Part 2: What do you think?

1. Why is it so important that other documents exist outside the New Testament that witness to its authenticity?

2. Explain the importance of Sir William Ramsey's testimony. Why is it significant that archeology established the validity of details in Luke's accounts that no other historical document previously had?

3. Why look outside the New Testament to determine its validity at all? Is it vital that the New Testament is consistent with the historical events that it was written in? Why?

Part 3: What will you do?

1. How can understanding the importance of an external witness to the Scriptures make you more sympathetic with nonbelievers who have not benefited from such information?

2. What will you say to those who say that one's faith does not have to be rooted in history?

3. The church fathers were firmly grounded upon testimony of the Scriptures. How will you respond when the Scriptures are put up to the test?
