

Holy Trinity, West Palm Beach

# *Is the Bible Reliable?*

**Week 5**

## **Understanding the Bible**

**REV. R-J HEIJMEN, FALL 2020**



# Class Objective

To Understand the Bible's:

- History
- Structure
- Reliability
- Purpose
- Meaning

In order that we might more fully engage with the Bible's  
**Message and Importance** for our lives.

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# Understanding the Bible

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# More Good News!

*The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost.*

- Paul, 1Timothy 1.15

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## Understanding the Bible

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## More Good News!

As Jesus sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”<sup>12</sup> But when he heard this, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.<sup>13</sup> Go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ *For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.*”

- Jesus, Matthew 9:10-13

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# Review: *What is the Bible?*

- A Library, not a Book
- The story of a God who loves us enough to create us, walk with us, rescue us, sustain us and give us eternal life.
- 2 Main Sections: Old Testament (pre-Jesus) and New Testament (Jesus & Early Church)

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# Old Testament

- 39 Books, written between 1200-300BC
- 5 Sections:
  - Pentateuch (Books of Moses) - 5 books
  - History - 12 books
  - Poetry & Wisdom Literature - 5 books
  - Major Prophets - 5 books
  - Minor Prophets - 12 books

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# New Testament

- Jesus and after
- 27 Books, written between 50-100AD
  - 3 Sections:
    - Gospels & Acts (5 books)
    - Letters(Epistles) (21)
    - Revelation (1)

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An open Bible with a warm, golden light background. The Bible is open, showing its pages, and the light is soft and warm, creating a serene atmosphere.

Is the Bible Reliable?

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## Is the Bible Reliable?

- The Bible has been translated and retranslated so many times that it's been corrupted.
- Christians throughout the centuries have edited the Bible to make it fit with their beliefs.
- The Bible is so old that it doesn't have any relevance for us today.
- The Bible is so full of contradictions that we can't trust it.

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## Is the Bible Reliable?

- The Bible talks about miracles, and since we know that miracles can't happen, it can't be true.
- The Bible is just like any other religious book (Qur'an, Book of Mormon) - a good story, maybe, but not true.
- A lot of books were left out of the Bible because they didn't fit the agenda of the people who put it together.
- The authors of the Bible made it all up to suit their own desires.

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*“To be skeptical of the resultant text of the New Testament books is to allow all of classical antiquity to slip into obscurity, for no documents of the ancient period are as well attested bibliographically as the New Testament.”*

- John Warwick Montgomery  
BA, Cornell; MA, University of California, Berkeley; PhD, University of Chicago

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# Is the Bible Reliable?

2 questions:

- Is what we have today what the original authors originally wrote down?
- Were they telling the truth?

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## Understanding the Bible

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Is the Bible Reliable?

Is what we have today what the original authors originally wrote down?

- Determined by 2 more questions:
  - How many manuscript copies do we have?
  - How close (in years) are the copies we have to the original date of writing?

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# Comparison of Documents of Antiquity

Author	Date Written	Earliest Copy	Time Span	# Copies
Plato	427-347 BC	900 AD	1200 yrs	7
Herodotus	480-425 BC	900 AD	1300 yrs	8
Suetonius	75-160 AD	950 AD	800 yrs	8
Thucydides	460-400 BC	900 AD	1300 yrs	8
Caesar	100-44 BC	900 AD	1000 yrs	10
Tacitus	circa 100 AD	1100 AD	1000 yrs	20
Aristotle	384-322 BC	1100 AD	1400 yrs	49
Homer(Iliad)	900 BC	400 BC	500 yrs	643
New Testament	50-100 AD	125 AD	35 yrs	24,000+