



# The Resolved Church

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED © THE RESOLVED CHURCH | Permissions: you are permitted and encouraged to reproduce and distribute this material provided you NOT alter the wording in any way and you do not charge a fee. For web posting a link to this document is preferred.

The Resolved Church | [www.theresolved.com](http://www.theresolved.com) | [contact@theresolved.com](mailto:contact@theresolved.com) | (619) 393-1990

## The Bible as the Word of God

Pastor Duane Smets

*Understanding the Bible in light of 21 century academia and our cultural experience.*

### FOUR APPROACHES TO THE BIBLE

1. Mythological - The Bible is merely the work of human imagination and/or primitive confusion.

In this view the Bible is seen simply as a piece of ancient religious literature. If someone does not believe there is a God then this is where they usually fit. Hard core scientific naturalists think they have proven that God does not exist and that the Bible is nothing more than fanciful literature which will one day hopefully take its place alongside Homer's Iliad and the Odyssey and the Judeo Christian God will take his place alongside all the other mythological deities.

2. Inspirational - The Bible contains the word of God but is a mix with the words of men.

In this view the Bible is seen in an evolutionary sense, God may be behind it and involved in its creation and message but it is carried, propagated, primarily manufactured by men's own aspirations and postulations. Martin Kahler said the Bible is composed of *histoire* (history, what is actually true) and *geschichte* (myth, what is false) and our job is to "demythologize" the Bible. Followers of this viewpoint will generally say that the Bible can be beneficial in matters of faith and practice but not in history or science.

3. Existential - The Bible becomes the word of God.

In this view the Bible is a particular type of experience one can have when they read it. Karl Barth said when one encounters God through reading the Bible and it is at that time when the Bible becomes inspired or authoritative in the meaning made known to you at that time. On its own the Bible is just words on a page until you have a spiritual encounter with it.

4. Inerrant - The Bible is in its entirety the word of God, without error.

In this view the Bible is God's message to humans. The Bible is inspired or created by God, his message is communicated to men, and the divine perfection of his message is superintended and preserved by him. In every book of the Bible there are two authors, God and the human writer. God communicates his message to each writer and each author wrote down the message through their various styles and unique personalities.

### EVIDENCE FOR #4, BIBLICAL INERRANCY

#### *Divine Authorship and Accuracy*

#### I. External Evidences

##### A. Historical Accuracy

##### 1. Manuscript Evidence

- a. There 25,000 consistent copies of Bible. The next closest ancient attested to is Homer's "Iliad" from which there are 647 copies.
  - b. With so many copies, it would be absurd to say that the Bible was a manufactured myth.
    - example: If five hundred years from now a group of people were able to collect 100 different newspapers which documented the events that occurred on September 11, 2001, it would be absurd to say that they were all wrong and purely manufactured myth.
2. Archeological Evidence
    - a. 25,000 people, cities, etc. verified.
    - b. No archeological discovery ever has disproved one statement of the Bible.
- B. Scientific Accuracy
1. The Bible was not written as a science book. It uses "descriptive" language versus scientific language.
    - example: weather forecasters on the news today talk about what time the sun will rise and when it will set. This is "descriptive" language describing what appears to be happening since we all know that the sun does not really rise and set but that the earth in fact rotates around the sun.
  2. Science is built upon five different elements identified by Herbert Spencer in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He called them the "matrix of existence," which included time, force, action, space, and matter. It is very interesting these five elements are all identified in the first verse of the Bible: time (in the beginning), force (God), action (created), space (the heavens), matter (and the earth).
  3. No scientific discovery has ever disproved one statement of the Bible (for arguments concerning evolution see "God, Creation, and Evolution").
  4. Many scientific discoveries have reinforced the claims of the Bible.
    - a. Hydrology – The process of hydrology was discovered by George Hadley in 1735 but it is described perfectly in Job 26:8 written nearly 3500 years earlier in the Bible.
    - b. Astronomy - One hundred years ago astronomers claimed the Bible could not be true because they knew exactly how many stars there were. Yet now with modern telescopes and other technologies estimations are that the stars are an innumerable host. The Bible states clearly that the stars are countless (Gen 22:17; Jer 33:22)
    - c. The Copernican Revolution – In 1543 Nicholas Copernicus discovered that the earth revolves around sun rather than the modern scientific thought that the sun revolved around the earth. This proved the words of Psalm 19:4-6 which tell of the earth revolving around the sun.
    - d. Geology – For many years people thought the earth was flat yet now science knows that the Bible was correct when it said that the earth was a circular ball (Job 38:14; Is.40:22).
    - e. Isostasy – The earth spins 1,000mph around the sun at 6,000mph in perfect balance just as the Bible describes (Is 40:12; Job 38:14).
- C. Prophetic Witness
1. There are 3,500 specific predictions by the Bible that have come true. The next closest body of literature with predictions to come true are the extremely ambiguous writings of Nostradamus, who if accepted as real predictions in spite of their vague nature, predicted 40 events.
  2. There are over 300 specific prophecies of Christ, like the exact time and place he would be born and would die. If you just take eight of the most specific ones, the chance/likelihood that they would have come true is 1 in 10<sup>17</sup>.
- D. Literature Witness
1. No book so influential, and so unique. More has been written about Jesus Christ and Christianity than any other person or even in history and more major world events have ensued because of His message.
  2. No book is so unified as the Bible. The Bible is written by 40 different authors, in 66 different books over a time period of approximately 1500 years. Yet all of it speaks of one man and one message, an astonishing unity. Today if 40 different people were put in a room and told to write a paper on religion you would most likely have 40 different ideas, not so with the Bible.
- E. Subjective Witness
1. When all people read the Bible they have a sense that it contains a ring of truth. There is an inner feeling that what it is saying is true and different.
  2. Reading the Bible has literally changed people lives in how they live and what they do with it including giving up or changing professions. People credit their change to reading the Bible. No other persons in history who have made drastic changes in their lives have accredited it to a book.

## II. Internal Evidences

### A. Christ' view of Scripture

1. Is Jesus a liar? He consistently treats the Old Testament historical narratives as straightforward records of facts both historically and scientifically.

example: Mt 12:26 "But as touching the dead, that they are raised; have ye not read in the book of Moses, in the place concerning the Bush, how God spake unto him, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?'"

2. Jesus quotes the human writings of the Old Testament from men as being the words of God.

example: Matt 19:4-5 "The Creator said, For this reason a man will leave his father and mother."

### B. Apostles's View of Scripture

1. For the Apostles' and Jesus, Scripture was the supreme authority. They do not attempt to correct it nor seek to but one book or verse against another. They acknowledge that it speaks with one unified voice because it is from God.

a. D. Hay counts 1600 citations of OT where each reference treats the OT as wholly true and factual.

b. The apostles too, like Jesus, interchange references to the author of the OT between being as both the writings of men and the words of God. When Scripture is speaking God is speaking.

examples:

Acts 13:34 "And as for the fact that He (God, see vs.33) raised Him up from the dead, no more to return to decay, He has spoken in this way: 'I WILL GIVE YOU THE HOLY and SURE blessings OF DAVID.'

Rom 9:13,15,17<sup>13</sup> Just as it is written, "JACOB I LOVED, BUT ESAU I HATED."<sup>15</sup> For He (God, see v14) says to Moses, "I WILL HAVE MERCY ON WHOM I HAVE MERCY, AND I WILL HAVE COMPASSION ON WHOM I HAVE COMPASSION."<sup>17</sup> For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "FOR THIS VERY PURPOSE I RAISED YOU UP, TO DEMONSTRATE MY POWER IN YOU, AND THAT MY NAME MIGHT BE PROCLAIMED THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE EARTH."

### C. Explicit Statements of Scripture:

1. Postively Declared

2 Tim 3:16 "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness."

- B.B. Warfield notes that the word "inspired," [Gk. *theopneustos*], is a combination of two words: God [*theos*] and breathed [*pneustos*]. He notes that what is being said God breathed out the Scriptures not breathing into them as if He somehow declared some human writings to be divine.

2 Pet 1:16,20-21<sup>16</sup> "For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty..."<sup>20</sup> "...know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a *matter* of one's own interpretation,<sup>21</sup> for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.can't get more explicit but they still picture it like we do."

2. Apologetically Defended - Some say that the passages above are only referring to the OT testament. However, upon closer examination we find that this is not so.

1 Tim 5:18 states "For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing," and "The laborer is worthy of his wages."

- The phrase "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing" occurs in Deut 25:4.

The phrase "The laborer is worthy of his wages" is found *only* in Luke 10:7. Thus, here we have a clear case where both a Old Testament passage and a New

Testament passage are referred to as Scripture and are considered equal in authority.

2 Pet 3:15-16 states "<sup>15</sup>...our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you,<sup>16</sup> as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures..."

- Here the apostle Peter clearly refers the the New Testament writings of Paul as "Scripture" putting them on par with the authority of the OT.

D. Divine Inspiration applies to everything in the Bible to the extent that none of it has any error (inerrancy).

1. Jesus treated the Bible as wholly with out error even down to its smallest marks in the original autographs (pieces of paper it was written on).

example: Mt 5:17-18 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth

- disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.
2. Legitimate Hermeneutics (rules of interpretation). Good hermeneutics dispell alleged errors and contradictions.
    - a. Authorial Intent (the intention of an author in his writing)
      - 1). A violation of authorial intent - Often it is asserted that God is involved somehow in inspiring the Bible. But since we know humans physically wrote it and since humans are fallible, sinful beings who can make errors or mistakes that the Bible too may have mistakes or errors in it. Thus we must read and interpret the Bible knowing as a human document knowing that at times it may be wrong.
      - 2). A response to the violation of authorial intent.
        - a) The human authors of Scripture go out of their way to say that their writings are not their own but God's (see ref. above). It is clearly their intent that their writings be read as the very words of God and not merly as human writings.
        - b) No author ever desires for their words to be distorted beyond their intention.  
example: If you wrote an email to someone telling them that your dog died it would be a violation if when they received it they responded by saying that you were accusing them of being a dog and that you wanted to kill them.
      - 3) Other examples of violating authorial intent = Bible codes.  
example: If someone took an email of yours and took every 10<sup>th</sup> letter you wrote 5 times in a row and then coverted those letters to ther ascii code number or its number place in the alphabet and then came up with a date by putting them all together, like 8/26/78. It would be a violation of your email's intent to say that it predicted your birthday.
    - b. Phenomonological (describing phenomonea) and figurative (using figures of speech) language.
      - The Bible uses phenomenological and figurative language throughout its entirety. Recognizing when it is using these literary aids dispells many supposed "errors."
      - 1) Phenomenological language - When a text is speaking descriptively, like the sun rising or setting, though we know the sun does not really rise or set.
      - 2) Figurative language - Using comparisons (metaphors, similes, anthropomorphisms, anthropopathisms).
        - a) Anthropomorphisms are comparisons used to describe something/someone non-human, like God, by using human characteristics.
        - b) Anthropopathisms are comparisons used to describe something/someone non-human, like God, by using human emotions.
  3. Inerrancy is a philosophical necessity.
    - a. The cosmological argument for the existence of God demonstrates all truth and perfection to have come from and reside in him. If the Bible is truly His book it cannot have any error for error is an effect from violating truth which causally precedes it.
    - b. The philosophy of Scripture
      - 1) God is a God of truth  
1 Jn 5:20 "...that we may know him who is true...this is the true God.
      - 2) God cannot lie.  
Heb 6:18 "...it is impossible for God to lie."
      - 3) Therefore, God's word is true.  
Jn 17:17 "...thy word is truth."
  4. Scripture outrightly states that God's word does not have any error. How much clearer could it be stated?
    - Ps 19:7 "The law of the Lord is perfect."
    - Ps 19:7 "The testimony of the Lord is sure."
    - Ps 19:8 "The precepts of the Lord are right."
    - Ps 19:8 "The commandment of the Lord is pure."
    - Ps 19:9 "The judgments of the Lord are true."
    - Ps 19:12 "Who can discern His errors."
  5. Inerrancy is the historical, orthodox view of the Christian church.
    - a. Augustine – "Only to those books which are called canonical have I learned to give honor so that I believe most firmly that no author in these books made any error in writing."

- b. Luther - "The Holy Spirit has been blamed for not speaking correctly; He speaks like a drunkard or a fool, He so mixes up things, and uses wild, queer words and statements. But it is our fault, who have not understood the language nor known the matter of the prophets. For it cannot be otherwise; the Holy Ghost is wise and makes the prophets also wise. A wise man must be able to speak correctly; that holds true without fail."
- c. Nearly all the church fathers such as Irenaeus, Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Athanasius, and many others always treat as being wholly true without error.

**for further reading:**

sources specifically addressing scripture

Archer, Gleason L. *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982.

Geisler, Norman. *Inerrancy*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1980.

Haley, John W. *Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible*. Pennsylvania: Whitaker, 1996.

The International Council on Biblical Inerrancy. *The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*, 1982.

Warfield, Benjamin Breckinridge. *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*. Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1948.

Wilkins, Michael J. and Moreland, J.P. *Jesus Under Fire*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995.

sources responding to scientific accuracy of Scripture

Behe, Michael J. *Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution*. New York: Simon & Schuster, March 1998.

Bolin, Ray. *Creation, Evolution, & Modern Science*. Grand Rapids: Kregal Publications, 2000.

Daly, Reginald. *Earth's Most Challenging Mysteries*. USA: The Craig Press, 1972.

Dembski, William A. *Intelligent Design*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1999.

Johnson, Philip. *Darwin On Trial*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993.

McLean, G.S. Oakland, Roger. Larry, McLean. *The Evidence for Creation*. CANADA: FGBI Publications, 1989.

Moreland, J.P. *Christianity and the Nature of Science*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989.

sources addressing both Scripture and science

Geisler, Norman L. *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999.

MacArthur, John. *Think Biblically*. Wheaton, ILL: Crossway Books, 2003.

Moreland, J.P. *Scaling the Secular City*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987.