

### Psalm 119 :97-105

Among those who call themselves Christians over the years, there have been three sources of authority.

- A) Church leaders and the tradition of the church      B) Human reason      C) The Bible

Historically there are three strands of 'Church' or influences upon the Church.

#### Liturgical

e.g. Roman Catholic, Orthodox  
Emphasis on ceremony

#### Evangelical

e.g. Birchwood Community Church  
Emphasis on Bible & knowing God

#### Liberal

e.g. Many Methodist, URC, CofE  
Emphasis on social action

## Questions

How much attention should be applied to each source of authority?

What are the merits of each? What are the sources of authority in our church?

### The question of authority

The Roman Catholic view is both Bible & tradition are sources of authority. John 21 :25, 2 Thess 2 :15

**Sola Scriptura** - The view that the Bible is the final source of doctrine, teaching etc. The phrase came out of The Reformation, and means 'Bible alone', meaning it alone was the supreme authority for the church.

**Solo Scriptura** - The Bible is the only source of authority. Not scriptural Hebrews 13 :17

### What makes the Bible a reliable source of authority?

1. It's honesty Warts and all look at it's hero's. Noah got drunk, Abraham lied, David was an adulterer/murderer etc.

2. God preserved it Dead sea scrolls, Prof FF Bruce-" Best preserved ancient world book" It has survived attempts to ban etc



Author	Earliest copy since original	Number of copies in existence today
Homer	1,300 years	643
Plato	1400 years	7
Aristotle	1000 years	5
Tacitus	1000 years	20
New Testament	100 years (30/40 yrs?)	14,000*

\* This adds challenges because of slight differences, but overall shows accuracy and authenticity.

3. Historical, Scientific, Geographical accuracy Isaiah 40 v22 Job 26 v7 OT law hygiene Leviticus 15 :11-12 Science accurate, but not science textbook. Archaeology supports Biblical narrative e.g. The Capernaum synagogue built in Roman style Luke 7 :5

4. Prophetic accuracy 2,500 prophecies of which 2,000 fulfilled 100+ about Jesus e.g. place of birth

5. Unity of the Bible 66 books, 40ish authors, over 1,600 years however it tells one big story.

In the NT there are 4,000 allusions to the OT (people places, ideas etc) plus 300 direct quotes.

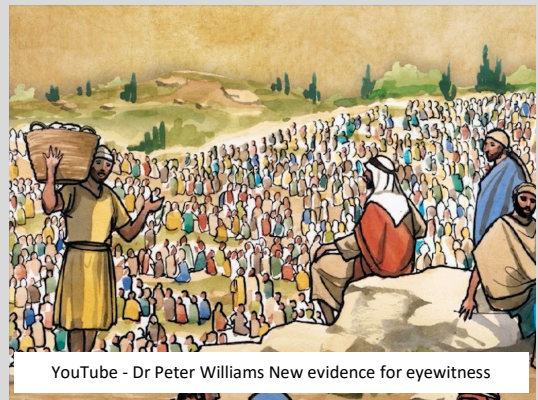
6. Power to change lives, Bible has moral and ethical superiority. It is the basis for the laws and values of the nations.

7. Jesus believed it literally Matthew 12 v40, 22 :29 24 v37 Mark 10 v 6-8,

8. Based on eye witness accounts Luke 1 :1-4

**Case study - The Feeding of the 5,000** Mark 6 :30-44, Luke 9 :10-17, John 6 :1-13

Mark 6 :39 'Green Grass' John 6 :10 'Much grass'  
Mark 6 :31 'Many coming and going'  
John 6 :4 'It was Passover'  
John 6 :5 Jesus asks Philip where to buy bread  
John 6 :7-8 Philip and Andrew reply  
Luke 9 :10 Event happened near Bethsaida  
John 1 :44 Philip and Andrew from Bethsaida  
John 6 :9 'Barley loaves'



9. The way it features women The culture of the time did not accept a woman's testimony, the Bible does. John 20 :1 Matthew 28 :1

10. Corroborating Accounts Other historic writings confirm the Bible e.g. Jewish historian Josephus.

## Questions

A non believer asks you why you base things on the Bible, they add it may have been right for it's own time & culture, but not now. What answer would you give?

**The inspiration of the Bible** What does the Bible say about itself? 2 Timothy 3 :12-17

Warnings about adding or subtracting from it. Deuteronomy 4 :2 Revelation 22 :18-19,

God breathed it, working through the authors personality, interests, and education. A musician can breathe through a trumpet, flute, or kazoo,, playing the same tune, but it will sound different. It is the same with the Spirit and the Bible's authors.

The belief that all of the Bible is inspired and infallible is called 'Verbal plenary inspiration'. It means everything in the Bible is there, because God wanted it there. Jesus told his disciples how it would work John 14 :25-26. Paul talks about his teaching being Spirit revealed Ephesians 3 :5 Peter develops the teaching 2 Peter 1 :20-21, 3 :15-16. Note- Verbal plenary inspiration does not extend to translations

**The infallibility and inerrancy of the Bible** You sometimes hear people say "The Bible contains the Word of God" - beware! The Bible claims God's word is perfect Psalm 12 :6, 19 :1

If part of the Bible is false, who decides which bits are true or false? The Bible reflects the real author Inerrancy means " that scripture in the original manuscripts does not affirm anything that is contrary to fact" However, inerrancy does not mean the language of everyday speech does not apply, eg. If the Bible says 8,000 people died, it would be false to say it was 17,000, but not false to say 7,981 people died. Some of the quotations from the OT are loosely paraphrased in the NT, as you would quote in normal speech.

**Challenges** Some say "You evangelicals are guilty of "Bibliolatry". However, if you believe the Bible is God's words to us, then following all of its message, is worship, not to a book, but to God who spoke the words.

**The sufficiency of the Bible**

The Bible does not tell us everything we wish to know, but all we need to know. John 20 :30-31

When listening to a Christian speaker, be wary if they don't base teachings on the Bible. Colossians 2:8

## Questions

Questions or comments

Next time May 17th - Islam & reaching Muslims