

# Is the Bible the Inspired Word of God?

By Jason Carlson and Ron Carlson; 5/25/2011

## The Question

During a question and answer session at a recent speaking engagement, a university student asked me, "Why do you believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God?"

Now this is a very interesting question, and probably one of the most important questions any Christian could ask themselves. What is so special, so the unique about the Bible that Christians believe it is literally the inspired word of God?

## The Facts

In answering the students question, I encouraged him to consider the following facts about the Bible.

**First**, the Bible is not just one single book. This is a more common misconception than many people realize, especially with people who do not come from a Judeo-Christian background. Rather than being a single book, the Bible is actually a collection of 66 books, which is called the Canon of Scripture. These 66 books contain a variety of genres: history, poetry, prophecy, wisdom literature, letters, and apocalyptic, just to name a few.

**Second**, these 66 books were written by 40 different authors. These authors came from a variety of backgrounds: shepherds, fishermen, doctors, kings, prophets, and others. And most of these authors never knew one another personally.

**Third**, these 66 books were written over a period of 1500 years. Yet again this is another reminder that many of these authors never knew or collaborated with one another in writing these books.

**Fourth**, the 66 books of the Bible were written in 3 different languages. In the Bible we have books that were written in the ancient languages of Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic; a reflection of the historical and cultural circumstances in which each of these books were written.

**And finally**, these 66 books were written on 3 different continents: Africa, Asia, and Europe. Once again, this is a testament to the varied historical and cultural circumstances of God's people

## The Reality

Think about the above realities: 66 books, written by 40 different authors, over 1500 years, in three different languages, on three different continents. What's more, this collection of books shares a common storyline—the creation, fall, and redemption of God's people: a common thing—God's universal love for all humanity: and a common message—salvation is available to all who repent of their sins and commit to following God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength.

In addition to sharing these commonalities, these 66 books contain **no historical errors or contradictions**. God's word truly is an amazing collection of writings!

## **The Challenge**

After I had shared the above facts with his student, I offered him the following challenge. "If you do not believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God, if you do not believe that the Bible is of supernatural origin, then I challenge you to a test, I challenge you to go to any library in the world, you can choose any library you like, and find 66 books which match the characteristics of the 66 books of the Bible. You must choose 66 books, written by 40 different authors, over 1500 years, in 3 different languages, written on 3 different continents. However, they must share a common storyline, a common theme, and a common message, with no historical errors or contradictions. "I went on to say, if you can produce such a collection of books, I will admit that the Bible is not the inspired word of God."

## **The Impossibility**

The students reply was almost instantaneous, he emphatically stated, "but that's impossible!"

It truly is impossible, for any collection of human writings. However the Bible passes this test. The Bible contains 66 books, written by 40 different authors, over 1500 years, and 3 different languages on 3 different continents, with no historical errors or contradictions. The entire Bible, from Genesis to Revelation bears the mark of divine inspiration.

The next time you encounter someone who asks you why you believe the Bible is the inspired word of God, try sharing this challenge with them. Better yet, don't wait until you are asked, just go ahead and share this challenge with a friend today. You don't even have to mention the Bible upfront, just ask them if they think it would be realistic to assemble such a collection of books. After they say, "But that's impossible!" You've got a ready-made opportunity for sharing the truth of God's word with somebody!

**In God we trust.**