

# CAN WE TRUST WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS?

## INTRODUCTION

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- Although there is nothing new under the sun, every generation of the church faces its own unique set of issues that must be addressed and carefully navigated
- The church in the US is currently facing a host of issues that threaten its health, integrity, and witness and require believers to be fully equipped in order to address them (social justice/wokeism/intersectionality/CRT, the relationship between the church and the state, homosexuality/transgenderism, rising persecution)
- The question that is of utmost importance in all of these issues is whether we believe that the Bible is sufficient to deal with them

**2 Peter 1:3** ~ seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

- Unfortunately, we are currently witnessing seismic shifts in the evangelical landscape when it comes to the authority and sufficiency of the Word of God to address the plethora of issues
- Quite frankly, these trends within progressive Christianity are troubling
- One church in Nashville, Tennessee recently publicly stated their position on the trustworthiness of the Bible: “As Progressive Christians, we’re open to the tensions and inconsistencies in the Bible. We know that it can’t live up to impossible, modern standards. We strive to more clearly articulate what Scripture is and isn’t.”
- The pastor of GracePoint Church, Josh Scott, explained: “There is stuff in there (Bible) that I think really goes against the character of God. There are genocides that have been divinely sanctioned in the Bible. People have used the text in the Bible...plain readings of the text at times to support white supremacy, to defend slavery, to defend segregation...Saying the Bible is inerrant and infallible, it absolves us of our responsibility to do what our ancestors did, which is to wrestle.”<sup>1</sup>
- These concerns are evident in the social justice movement where the underlying assumption in CRT/CSJ discussions seems to be that the Bible is not sufficient to address issues of race and/or justice
- “The general theme of the current CSJ [Critical Social Justice] movement within evangelicalism is a covert attack on the sufficiency of Scripture. People are not coming right out and saying that the Bible is not



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.christianpost.com/news/nashville-church-says-bible-isnt-the-word-of-god.html>

enough. Instead, high-profile pastors get up and speak about the ways in which modern sociology texts have done for them what the revelation of Scripture has been unable to do. My dear friend Paul Washer put it well when he noted, ‘Five years ago, I was amazed as I saw the young, restless, and Reformed crowd at conferences talking about their latest encounters with Spurgeon, Calvin, Kuyper, and Machen...now they’re all talking about Christian Smith, Jemar Tisby, and Robin DiAngelo.’”<sup>2</sup>

- “When we start talking about who we are in Christ, our unity in Christ, our brotherhood in Christ, do we believe that the Bible is sufficient? One of the scariest things about some of the present talk is that we are beginning to see a new hermeneutic. Sin is now institutional as opposed to being in the heart of man. We are reading things differently. Not only that, but we are starting to develop a new canon. If you do not see these issues rightly, people are not saying you need to go to a particular text of Scripture. They are saying, ‘You need to read *Divided by Faith*.’ If you are not getting these issues right, then a list of books is provided you need to read in order to understand the Scriptures rightly as it relates to our unity in Christ. That is a problem. I believe that the Bible is sufficient, not just inerrant. It is absolutely sufficient for all matters of faith and practice. How we deal with one another across ethnicities is a matter of faith and practice. The Bible is adequate to the task. I am not arguing that we should not read other things. I quote other books regularly. But the Bible is sufficient. Let me put an even finer point on it. I worry when people suggest that they have had the Bible all this time, and relationships with brethren of different ethnicities, but it was not until they read a particular book that they finally understood God’s heart on this issue of justice. People are not saying when they finally read a book that was an exposition of Scripture. No. When they read a particular *sociology book* is when everything changed for them. So now we have sociology overriding and governing our theology. That is not OK. That is very problematic.”<sup>3</sup>
- These concerns are also evident in the rampant sexual perversion that has seized our society and infiltrated the church
- “The replacement of God’s standard with man’s standard has left us terribly confused about honor and shame. People call what is honorable shameful and what is shameful honorable. The church is caught in the middle, trying not to call shameful things too shameful and trying not to call honorable things too honorable. We kind of want to smooth things out and make sure everybody gets a trophy or at least a ribbon. The question ever before us is, ‘By what standard?’ By what standard is something honorable or shameful? The answer to that question is God’s standard, not man’s. We do people no good by failing to call shameful acts shameful. That is not the way to relieve people of their shame. It actually leaves people in their shame. We fail again when we do not give honor where honor is due. By failing to do so, we fail to cultivate God’s good standard in the world.”<sup>4</sup>
- Added to this is the fact that holding unflinchingly to the Word will likely require courage and boldness in the face of a culture that is increasingly hostile to it
- “Currently, ‘tolerance’ is the guiding principle in any secular altruism, and Christians can be tempted to excuse their fear and weakness in standing for the truth as ‘tolerance.’ A commitment to tolerance as the most noble virtue effectively undermines biblical authority, because it suggests that mixing the gospel with humanitarianism is unloving. Today, it is even considered unchristian to question a person’s beliefs because his or her “journey” is not to be challenged, especially as it relates to faith. The only belief subjected to intolerance (sadly even by some Christians) is the inerrancy and exclusivity of the Word of God. According to the world, those who believe the Bible is absolutely true are part of a fundamentalist conspiracy to destroy all social progress since the Dark Ages. Since no one wants to be seen as restricting human rights, we see Christians abandoning biblical standards and shrinking back from what they’re called to do.”<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Voddie Baucham, *Fault Lines: The Social Justice Movement and Evangelicalism's Looming Catastrophe*

<sup>3</sup> Voddie Baucham, “Racial Reconciliation” in *By What Standard?*, edited by Jared Longshore, 127-128.

<sup>4</sup> Jared Longshore, “The Religious Root of Our Sexual Perversion” in *By What Standard?*, 40.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.masters.edu/news/the-subversion-in-social-justice-silence-and-tolerance.html>

- Thus, do we believe that God’s Word is sufficient to help us navigate the times we live in and the issues we are faced with?

## REASONS WE CAN TRUST THE WORD OF GOD

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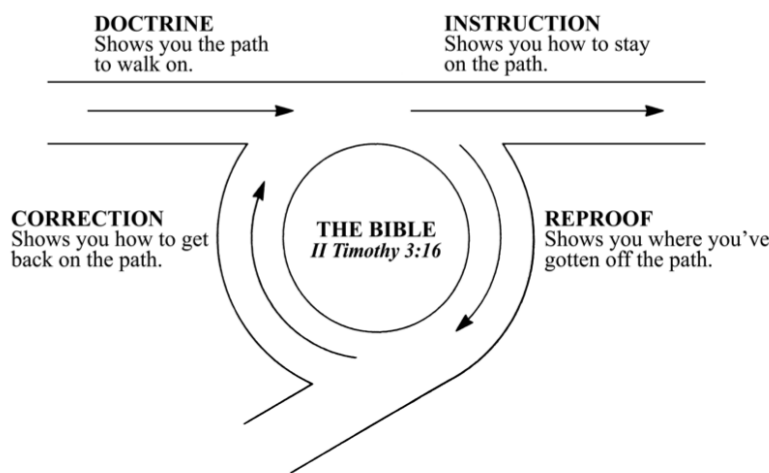
### It is Inspired (God Said It)

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- “Inspiration” means that the Holy Spirit wrote through the biblical writers using their own languages, culture and individual personalities, resulting in God’s Word without error in the original
- To say that the Scriptures are “inspired by God” means that they contain the very breath or words of God Himself
- The “inspiration” of Scripture involves both a divine element (God the Holy Spirit superintended the writers, ensuring the accuracy of the writing) and a human element (human authors wrote according to their individual styles and personalities)
- The result of the divine-human authorship is the recording of God’s truth without error

**2 Timothy 3:16-17** ~ All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work

- The “Scripture” in view here is probably both the OT and the portions of the NT that had been written by that time
- “inspired” (*theopneustos*) means “God-breathed” and emphasizes that Scripture is the product of the breath of God
- Men did not write the Scriptures and then God breathed into them; rather, from the beginning they were breathed out by God
- Paul’s emphasis is on the origin of the Scriptures: they were produced by the creative breath of God Himself
- The profitability of the inspired Word of God is that it is able to equip and train believers to walk in the way God has prescribed for them (“for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness”)



**2 Peter 1:16-21** ~ 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. 17 For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, “This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased”— 18 and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. 19 So we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the

morning star arises in your hearts. 20 But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, 21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

- The context of vv. 16-18 is Peter on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17) where they had seen a glorious, dreadful, amazing, wonderful, fearful appearing of Christ, an experience which confirms the fact that there will be a glorious, dreadful, amazing, wonderful, and fearful appearing of Christ in the future
- But his point in vv. 19-21 is that the Word of God is even "more sure" than that wonderful experience on the mountain with Jesus...because its authority resides in the written text
- This is because the doctrine of inspiration which Peter describes in v. 21 as occurring when "men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God"
- The word "moved/carried" (*phero*) in v. 21 means "to be borne along"...it is the same word used in Acts 27:15, 17 of a ship carried along by wind filling sails
- The decision to write Scripture was not a private decision of the human authors but rather one superintended by the Author
- The inspiration of Scripture extends to the whole, the parts, the words, the letters, and even the smallest part of the original letters

**Matthew 5:18** ~ For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished.

## **It is Inerrant (What God Said is True)**

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- The inerrancy of Scripture means that the Word of God is totally without error in the original
- "Inerrancy means that when all the facts are known, the Scriptures in their original autographs and properly interpreted will be shown to be wholly true in everything that they affirm, whether that has to do with doctrine or morality or with the social, physical, or life sciences."<sup>6</sup>
- The complete inerrancy of Scripture can be confirmed through a number of important biblical truths:

### 1. The Biblical Teaching on Inspiration

**2 Timothy 3:16** ~ All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness

**2 Peter 1:19-20** ~ But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God

### 2. The Biblical Teaching Concerning Its Own Authority

**Matthew 5:17-18** ~ Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

**John 10:34-35** ~ If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken)

### 3. The Biblical Teaching Concerning the Character of God

**Exodus 34:6** ~ Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth

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<sup>6</sup> Paul D. Feinberg, "The Meaning of Inerrancy," in *Inerrancy*, ed. Norman L. Geisler

**Numbers 23:19** ~ God is not a man that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent...

**Titus 1:2** ~ in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago

**Heb 6:18** ~ so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us.

**1 John 5:20** ~ And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

- God's Word must all be true because in Him there can be no error or deceit
- To deny inerrancy is to make God a liar
- "Inerrancy means the word of God always stands over us and we never stand over the word of God. When we reject inerrancy we put ourselves in judgment over God's word. We claim the right to determine which parts of God's revelation can be trusted and which cannot. When we deny the complete trustworthiness of the Scriptures...then we are forced to accept one of two conclusions: either Scripture is not all from God, or God is not always dependable. To make either statement is to affirm a sub-Christian point of view."<sup>7</sup>
- Furthermore, to deny inerrancy naturally leads to a distrust of the Scriptures and a distrust of God Himself

### **It is Preserved (What God Said Hasn't Been Lost)**

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- Incredibly, despite the Word being written over the course of 1500 years, in three different languages, by over 40 different authors, it not only possesses a cohesive unity but it has been providentially preserved
- The doctrine of preservation in regard to Scripture means that the Lord has kept His Word intact as to its original meaning
- Preservation simply means that we can trust the Scriptures because God has sovereignly overseen the process of transmission over the centuries

**Psalms 119:89** ~ Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven.

- Because the Word is settled in heaven, God has graciously ensured that it has also been preserved throughout the ages on earth so that both OT and NT saints have it
- In fact, one of the most amazing testimonies to Scripture's truth is its preservation over thousands of years despite sometimes intense efforts to destroy it
- The writers clearly stated, by the power of the Holy Spirit, that God's Word would remain forever

**Psalms 19:9** ~ The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever...

**Isaiah 40:8** ~ The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.

- Jesus spoke clearly of the fact that His Word will be preserved

**Matthew 24:35** ~ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

**Luke 16:17** ~ But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail.

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<sup>7</sup> Kevin DeYoung, *Taking God at His Word*, 39.

- “The discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls in 1947 confirmed that we still have the same Old Testament as they did at Jesus’s day. The survival of thousands of New Testament manuscripts confirms that the New Testament writings were also providentially preserved...In contrast, few copies have survived from nearly every other classic book, such as Caesar’s *Gallic Wars* or Herodotus’ *Histories*. While copies of major portions of the New Testament survive from documents dated around AD 300, most other classic books survive in copies no older than around AD 900.”<sup>8</sup>
- The texts of both the Old and New Testament have been supernaturally and providentially preserved in remarkable purity
- Therefore, God’s Word will remain and accomplish that which God has planned

### **It is Perspicuous (What God Said is Clear)**

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- This means that the Bible is written in such a way that its teachings are clear enough for the common person to understand
- It is a plain book in that it is intelligible, understandable, and easy to comprehend for every Christian guided by the Holy Spirit
- It is direct and unambiguous as written such that Scripture is clear about what is about
- All that is necessary for man to know, including the way to salvation and the practical guidance necessary for living a godly life, can be learned from the Scriptures

**Psalm 19:7-9** ~ The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; **The testimony of the Lord is sure**, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; **The commandment of the Lord is pure**, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the Lord are true; they are righteous altogether.

**Psalm 119:105** ~ Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.

**Psalm 119:130** ~ The unfolding of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple.

- In fact, the Scriptures are so clear that parents can teach them to their children and they can understand them

**Deuteronomy 6:6-7** ~ These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.

**2 Timothy 3:14-15** ~ You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, 15 and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

- What perspicuity does not mean:<sup>9</sup>

#### 1. It does not mean that all of Scripture is equally clear as to its precise meaning

- The Westminster Confession states is this way: “All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all (2 Pet. 3:16); yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded, and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them.”

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<sup>8</sup> <https://answersingenesis.org/the-word-of-god/the-preservation-of-the-bible/>

<sup>9</sup> Adapted from Larry Pettegrew, “The Perspicuity of Scripture” in *The Master’s Seminary Journal* 15/2 (Fall 2004), 212-214.

## 2. It does not mean that the teaching of Scripture is everywhere equally simple

**2 Peter 3:16** ~ 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, to their own destruction.

## 3. It does not mean that interpretation, explanation, and exposition by a Bible teacher are never necessary

**Ephesians 4:11** ~ And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers,

**1 Timothy 3:2** ~ able to teach

## 4. It does not mean that even essential biblical doctrines are everywhere stated with equal clarity

- It may be necessary to compare one passage with another passage

## **It is Authoritative (What God Said is Binding)**

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- The Scriptures always treat God's Word as powerful and authoritative
- Scripture claims to be the very Word of God and to hold the authority of God himself

**Luke 16:27-31** ~ And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, that you send him to my father's house— 28 for I have five brothers—in order that he may warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.' 29 But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.' 30 But he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!' 31 But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.'

**1 Thessalonians 2:13** ~ For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

**Hebrews 4:12** ~ For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

- There is no more authoritative declaration than what we find in the word of God
- Therefore, we must not water down the authority of God's Word by placing ourselves in the position of God over his Word or looking to other "authorities" for answers to today's issues

## **It is Sufficient (What God Said is All We Need)**

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- Because of the character of the Word of God, it is enough to address every situation we face as it provides everything we need for knowledge of salvation and godly living
- Because it is an adequate guide for all matters of faith and conduct, we don't need to add to it or subtract from it to meet the challenges of the day

**Psalms 19:7-9** ~ The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. 8 The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. 9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether.

### **Psalms 119**

**2 Corinthians 9:8** ~ And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed;

**John 17:17** ~ Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.

- Scripture repeatedly makes a claim about its own sufficiency because it is entirely sufficient to meet every problem of human life
- This is the starting point for a true Christian worldview
- Unfortunately, however, the sufficiency of Scripture is likely the doctrine most under attack in the church of our day
- Many assume that the problems we are currently encountering are beyond the purview of Scripture
- “Of the four attributes of Scripture, this may be the one that evangelicals forget first. If **authority** is the liberal problem, **clarity** the postmodern problem, and **necessity** the problem for atheists and agnostics, then **sufficiency** is the attribute most quickly doubted by rank-and-file churchgoing Christians. We can say all the right things about the Bible, and even read it regularly, but when life gets difficult, or just a bit boring, we look for new words, new revelation, and new experiences to bring us closer to God...we can easily operate as if the Bible were not enough.”<sup>10</sup>
- As a result of their lack of commitment to the sufficiency of Scripture, many believers have embraced worldviews that are not biblical

## CONFIRMATION OF THE TRUSTWORTHINESS OF GOD’S WORD

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### It is True Experientially

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- We know that the Bible is true because it gives us the experience that it claims it will give us
- It does radically change our lives as it promises to do
- Examples:
  - It promises to make anyone who comes to Christ into “a new creature” (2 Cor 5:17)...that is what happens...old things pass away and new things come
  - It promises that, for all those who put their trust in the Lord, He will make their “paths straight” (Prov 3:5-6)...that is what happens...He does direct them according to His sovereign will
  - It promises that the peace of God will guard the hearts and minds of those who let their “requests be made known to God” in prayer (Phil 4:6-7)...that is what happens...He removes worry and fear from those who pray with thanksgiving

### It is True Scientifically

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- Although the Bible is not primarily a scientific book, when it speaks about science it is accurate and true
- Examples:
  - It speaks of the hydrological cycle

**Isaiah 55:10** ~ For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, And do not return there without watering the earth And making it bear and sprout, And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater;

- It speaks of the fact that the earth is round

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<sup>10</sup> DeYoung, *Taking God at His Word*, 45-46, emphasis added.



**Isaiah 40:22** ~ It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.

**Proverbs 8:27** ~ When He established the heavens, I was there, When He inscribed a circle on the face of the deep,

- It speaks of the earth being suspended by nothing

**Job 26:7** ~ He stretches out the north over empty space And hangs the earth on nothing.

- There are numerous examples of how the Bible matches up with discoveries of modern science

### **It is True Archaeologically**

- Archaeology has confirmed the historical accuracy of many of the events and locations of the Bible, especially the OT
- Examples:
  - Abraham's home city of Ur was excavated by Sir Leonard Woolley
  - Solomonic cities such as Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer (1 Kings 9:15) have been excavated
  - The splendor of Babylon (Dan 4:30) was unknown to modern historians until it was confirmed by the German professor Koldewey, who excavated Babylon approximately 100 years ago
- Archaeological discoveries such as these prove that our faith rests on facts (actual events) not myths or stories

### **It is True Prophetically**

- This is one of the greatest arguments for the veracity and trustworthiness of Scripture
- Christ has fulfilled 332 of the prophecies about Him in the OT
- A number of years ago, Peter W. Stoner and Robert C. Newman estimated that the odds of any one man in history fulfilling even 8 of the 332 prophecies fulfilled by the life of Christ was  $1 \times 10^{17}$
- He went further and tried to estimate the probability of one person fulfilling 48 prophecies and estimated it at  $1 \times 10^{157}$
- "Biblical prophecy declares the events of the future with accuracy which is beyond the capability of human wisdom or anticipation. Despite astronomical odds, hundreds of biblical prophecies have come true, and they make the most objective argument for the Bible's authority."<sup>11</sup>

## **PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS**

### **We Must Be Prepared for Increasing Opposition to the Truth**

- As the culture grows in its hatred of the Word, it will be increasingly hostile to those who hold to it
- But this is to be expected as it has always been this way

**Daniel 1, 3, 6**

<sup>11</sup> MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1997). [\*How to Get the Most from God's Word\*](#) (p. 60). Dallas, TX: Word Publishing.

**2 Timothy 3:1-8** ~ But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. 2 For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money...haters of good...7 always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. 8 Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men of depraved mind, rejected in regard to the faith.

**2 Timothy 4:2-4** ~ preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, 4 and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

## **We Must Be Courageous in the Face of Such Opposition**

- We have arrived at a stage in our culture where simply stating the truth is evil
- But in such days, we must proclaim the truth all the more
- “True godliness unashamedly declares what God has said and it does so not just when it is safe but even when that message might cost your life. It is taking God at His Word regardless of cost or consequence and speaking that Word with confidence in its power.”<sup>12</sup>

**Acts 5:27-29** ~ When they had brought them, they stood them before the Council. The high priest questioned them, 28 saying, “We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.” 29 But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men.”

**1 Thessalonians 2:1-2** ~ For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain, 2 but after we had already suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of God amid much opposition.

- Compromising God’s Word at such a time as this must not be an option for faithful believers
- “So this is the choice that Christians are facing in times of difficulty. We can settle for an appearance of godliness while denying its power and win the accolades of this age. Or we can pursue real godliness and trust its power thereby inviting the venom and opposition of the champions of this age. To put it another way, we can signal false virtue and be welcomed by those operating on false principles of righteousness. Or we can practice genuine virtue and be welcomed by the God whose Word we refuse to compromise. What we cannot do is have it both ways.”<sup>13</sup>
- Courage comes from knowing and being firmly convinced that we are speaking divine truth which carries the authority of God

## **We Must Be Convinced that God Always Blesses Obedience to His Word**

- True blessing is found when we keep God’s Word

**Luke 11:28** ~ But He said, “On the contrary, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it.”

- As believers, our greatest desire is to live according to God’s Word to honor our great Savior, rather than to cater to the culture to win its affections

<sup>12</sup> Tom Ascol, *Strong and Courageous: Following Jesus Amid the Rise of America’s New Religion*, 195.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 197.