

Fundamental Questions: Lesson 3: Can We Trust the Bible?

- I. Some things that help us
 - A. Jesus believed in the authority of Scripture
 - 1. O T
 - a) He quoted from it constantly
 - b) Luke 24:25-27; 44-47; John 19=0L35
 - 2. NT
 - a) John 14:26; 16:12-13
 - b) Consider 1 Tim 5:17-18; 2 Pet 3:15-16
 - B. Amazing historical accuracy
 - 1. A writer who relates his story to the wider context of world history is courting trouble if he is not careful
 - 2. He affords readers so many opportunities to test his accuracy
 - C. Tells about blunders/gaffes; in contrast with other ancient literature
 - 1. One embarrassing event after another
 - 2. Most ancient historians avoid even mentioning unflattering historical events
 - D. Prophecies like Micah 5:2; Zechariah 11
 - E. Foreshadowing: Joseph
- II. Text
 - A. We do not have the autographs
 - 1. But copying them does not lessen their inspiration
 - 2. It is the words that are inspired, not the ink
 - 3. We don't need the original mss to have the original words
 - B. Abundant ms evidence
 - 1. 5700 handwritten Gk mss of the NT of varying amounts
 - 2. 9000 mss in other languages
 - 3. Next closest is Iliad (643); most have fewer than a dozen
 - 4. The more the mss and the earlier the better
 - C. Early Christian writings (2nd and 3rd centuries)
 - 1. Quoted NT so much: 36,289 times
 - 2. Could reconstruct all but 11 vv of the NT from their quotations alone
- III. Canon
 - A. Jesus contested many points of Jewish tradition, but never the canon
 - B. Lk 11:51; 24:44
 - C. Authority was inherent, not based on some later church declaration
 - 1. Canon is list of authoritative books more than an authoritative list of books
 - 2. They weren't picking books, but recognizing them
 - 3. They didn't give authority to the books but simply acknowledged the books that already had it
 - 4. Asking the early Christians why they chose these books would be like asking someone why he chose his parents. The books weren't picked by Christians as handed down to them
- IV. Apocrypha
 - A. O T: read it; Jesus did not cite it
 - B. NT: Clement refers to M 757x, L 402x, J 331x, Mark 182x; apocryphal gospels 16x