



Please take your Bible and your message notes and let's turn to the Old Testament.... **Psalms 19:7-11.**

Tonight as we begin our survey of the Bible I believe the place we need to begin is with...

I. THE INTEGRITY OF THE BIBLE

... OR why we should believe the Bible is true.... Why it is worthy of our trust.

David as he writes about God's word here in Psalm 19, he tells us that it is "perfect" ...the means without flaw.

He says it has the power to "convert the soul". He says that the truths of God's Word can "make wise the simple."

He says it can bring "joy to the heart" and "enlighten the eyes" and that God's Word endures forever.

And did you notice verse 11... David says that the one who obeys what it says will be blessed.

All of those things are wonderful attributes of God's Word, but notice what it says in the middle of **verse 7.**

There David declares that God's Word is "**SURE.**"

That word means ... God's Word is faithful, it is trustworthy, it will not fail us.

That is what the Bible says about itself.

What evidence is there that what the Bible says about itself is true?

We can believe the Bible is true because of...

1. The UNITY of its message.

The Bible consist of 66 individual books.

The Bible was written over a period of about 1500 years in several different places from Babylon to Rome.

There were approximately 40 different human authors including kings, poets, prophets, a physician, farmers and shepherds, fishermen, a tax collector, some apostles, a pastor, and other spiritual leaders.

And these 66 installments cover hundreds of controversial subjects.

Yet these writings fit marvelously together into one cohesive, non-contradictory story, with an appropriate beginning, a logical ending, a consistent theme, and a central character around which every part revolves.

Let me illustrate how unique this is.

Let's say two and a half years ago we picked ten people from our congregation to write down who the nominees would be for president and vice president of the United States and who would eventually be elected...

What do you think the chances are that all ten individuals would have made the exact same predictions?

ZERO !

The unity of the Bible's message is reason to believe that it is a supernatural book!

A second reason we can trust the integrity of the Bible is because....

2. MANUSCRIPT evidence confirms its reliability.

Experts judge HOW reliable a historical document is according to three standards.

- The first one is how many manuscripts exist?

- Among the manuscripts that exist do they agree?
- How long of a span of time exists between the original document and the oldest copy?

The Bible passes all of these tests better than any other ancient writing in the history of the world.

For example concerning the number of manuscripts, there are more than **5300 Greek** manuscripts of the New Testament, and in addition to that there are more than **10,000 very old Latin manuscripts** of scriptures and in addition to that there are more than **9300** other early versions.

All in all there are more than **24,000 ancient manuscripts of the New Testament** in existence, which is by far more supporting evidence than any other ancient writing.

Homer's Iliad (written about 500 B.C.) comes in second with only **643 existing ancient manuscripts**.

What about the Old Testament?

For years the oldest copy of the Old Testament was dated 900 AD.

But in 1947 a shepherd boy in Israel threw a rock at one of his goats.

When the stone flew through the opening of a small cave, the boy heard a crashing sound.

He climbed up the cliff and into the cave to make one of the greatest archaeological discoveries of all time — the Dead Sea Scrolls— 40,000 ancient scrolls hidden in clay jars in caves near the Dead Sea that were 1000 years older than any existing manuscript.

What happens when the manuscripts are compared?

Are they alike?

There has never been found when comparing manuscripts any contradictions to any truth of the Bible.

3. We can trust the Bible because its PROPHICIES are true.

Just the prophecies about Jesus prove that the scriptures are reliable.

Hundreds of years before Jesus came to Earth, many predictions were given about the identity of The Messiah. Jesus matched every prediction.

Josh McDowell in his book, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict* says that the Old Testament contains over 300 references to the Messiah that were fulfilled in Jesus.

4. We can trust the Bible because it WORKS !

Listen, the Bible works. It's promises, commands, warnings, examples all will enrich our lives...our marriages... our business life... It works!

Now I want us to think about....

II. THE STRUCTURE OF THE BIBLE

Some Facts:

- **There are 66 books in the Bible**
- **39 Old Testament books**
- **27 New Testament books**
- **The books of the Bible are not all in chronological order**

For example most Bible scholars believe the events of Job probably took place during the time of Genesis.

Most of the prophets prophesied during the time of 1-2 Kings/1-2 Chronicles.

- **Chapter and verse divisions were added to the Bible to make it easier to locate specific texts.**

The Big Picture Old Testament: