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Is the Bible Reliable, Defendable?

Section 1

Discuss what you applied in the past seven days from the last Overflow Show.

Read Acts 17:10-11 Discuss how the author regards scripture in this passage.

What rank does he give scripture with regard to other ideas including a spiritual giant like the apostle Paul? What is the Bible claiming about itself here?

Section 2

Go to www.OverflowShow.com and listen to the 5-minute podcast titled “Bible – Reliable? Defendable?”

Section 3

What did you think? What stood out to you as you listened?

Describe a lecture, a TV special, a book, or article that raised doubts for you, or other factors that have caused you to wonder about scripture being 100% true.

Discuss how archeological discoveries have discredited the Bible, or confirmed it.

Why is it important that the Bible uses the names of real places, real people, actual kings and kingdoms, and tied to commonly accepted historical timelines?

What is an example of how the Bible has disproven historians' skepticism toward the existence of an entire nation and culture mentioned in the Bible?

What about the charge that the Bible should not be seriously studied, since we do not have the original parchments that the Bible was written on? (How do skeptics hold other ancient writers or works to this same test?)

NOTE: (For more information and powerpoints on the relative evidence for Biblical reliability versus widely accepted ancient sources, go to pages 9-23 at this website):

<http://www.josh.org/atf/cf/{E9179AF3-15DC-4EB0-9E59-6491B9F4693C}/Bible%20Fact,%20Fiction%20or%20Fable%20-%202008%20Parent%20Seminar.pdf>

How much has the Bible been changed since the ancient manuscripts, according to the author?

How could we respond to someone who might say the following? “I really like Jesus’ life and example of love in the New Testament, but the Bible shows God as really harsh in the Old Testament.”

What does the author recommend to raise doubt in a skeptic’s mind who might complain, “The idea that God dictated a book to men is simpleminded.”?

Section 4

Discuss some ways we could apply a few of these ideas in the next 7 days?

One suggestion (if needed): Construct a survey that you can poll your friends and others from with questions like, “My Wednesday night spiritual discussion group is polling a lot of people we know to find out what people think. Can I ask you a few quick questions?” Possible ones to use:

How does your image of God or Jesus differ between what you know about the Old Testament versus the New Testament?

What would be a book, television show, or person which has caused you to doubt the Bible’s reliability as an accurate book?

Overflow enthusiastically recommends the book CORNER CONVERSATIONS by Randy Newman from Kregel Publications.

Related 5 minute episodes at OverflowShow.com if you wish to continue on this topic:

“Hard to Believe Bible Passages” - “Ask Questions, You’ll Hear Their Heart”

“Shutting Down Cheap Shots”

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