

The Reliability of the Bible Handout

Basics of Orthodox Bibliology

- Inspiration - Verbal Plenary Inspiration
 - Verbal – the specific words are inspired (1 Cor 2:2-13)
 - Plenary – all of the words are inspired (2 Tim 3:16-17)
 - Inspiration – God breathed the words out (2 Tim 3:16-17)
 - Greek: θεόπνευστος *theopneustos* “God-breathed”
theos “God”; pneuma “Breath/Spirit”

- Inerrancy
 - “The Scriptures have never erred” –Luther, *Luther’s Works*, XV, 1481.
 - “the inerrancy of the Bible means simply that the Bible tells the truth.” –Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 81.
 - “The every word in the original manuscripts is the true word of God.” - Curto
 - The Chicago Statement 1978
 - “Holy Scripture, being God’s own Word, written by men prepared and superintended by His Spirit, is of infallible divine authority in all matters upon which it touches”

- The Story
 - The Bible is a story. It has 2 overall points:
 1. To lay out the plan of creation, fall, redemption, and resurrection (the storyline of the Bible; most of the narrative literature).
 2. To teach about and glorify the God enacting that plan (the “umph” of the Bible; most of the prophetic, poetic, and didactic literature).
 - 2 Tim 3:15 “able to make you wise unto salvation”
 - Romans 15:4 “was written for our instruction... that we might have hope”
 - It contains many genres
 - E.g. narrative, poetry, proverb, song, census data, genealogical record, legal documents, letters
 - It spans all of human history
 - Our time takes place in the middle of this story. “Biblical times” is all times!



Evidence for Reliability

- Internal
 - Scriptures
 - 2 Timothy 3:13-17 (Purpose, ability, and source of Scripture)
 - John 10:34-35; Matt 5:17-18 (Enduring Authority of Scripture)
 - 2 Peter 3:15-16 (New Testament Authority as Scripture)
 - John 5:37-47; Luke 24:13-27 (The Testimony of Scripture)
 - Fulfillment of Bible Prophecy

- External
 - Cumulative uniqueness suggests divine authorship
 - Unique in Continuity
 - Written over 1,500 years, by 40+ authors, on 3 continents, in 3 languages, in a variety of genres, with 1 continuous story
 - Unique in Circulation
 - Unique in Translation
 - Translated into 2,200 languages/dialects
 - Unique in Survival
 - *see Manuscript Evidence

- Common Criticisms
 - The Bible is full of miracles.
 - The miraculous by definition is unique. This adds to the case, not subtract from it.
 - The Bible isn't historically accurate.
 - There is virtually no archaeological evidence which directly refutes the Bible's account of history. At best an argument from silence.
 - The Bible has little to no archaeological support.
 - This simply isn't true. E.g. Biblical Archaeology Review magazine
 - There are two different Gods in the Bible. Wrathful OT; Loving NT
 - This simply isn't true. Ex 33:19; Revelation 5-20.