

21T08 Can You Trust Your Bible

Hello my friends. Thanks for joining me at the PUNLA Coffee Table. So, get your coffee or tea. Get comfortable and let's talk.

Today I want to ask you a question. Can you trust your bible?

But,...

- Can you Really trust your bible.?
- Is every word defensible.?
- Why? Or WHY not

It often comes down to the question of Bible Inerrancy? I think we need to ask ourselves five questions

1. CAN you TRUST your BIBLE?, Why?
2. Can we Trust the Bible word for word?, Why?
3. Do we have original Bible manuscripts?
4. Are there Textual Variances in the Bible manuscripts?
5. Can you Trust your Bible Translation?, Which one?

So keep these questions in your mind as we continue our discussion. These all are very complex questions. I'm going to try and simplify this discussion and give you the Christian Engineer Viewpoint.

Let me begin by saying I'm not a bible scholar. I read my bible, I study my bible, I read commentaries. I've studied Bible translations and how they vary extensively. I am a scholar. I have a PhD in engineering, I am a scientist, I am a statistician. I have been a Christian all of my adult life, and I've been reading my bible since I was a pre-teen. But the key is how do we turn our KNOWLEDGE into WISDOM. The Bible is how.

This slide background show some of the more than 450 English translations of the bible. In fact the bible is the most translated book in history. It has been the best selling book every year since there were books. According to Wycliffe Bible Translators, there are at least 7,000 languages spoken or signed around the world. and about 2,000 languages are yet to be translated. But that means the bible has been at least partially translated into about 5,000 languages.

To better understand why we have so many translations, we first need to look at a brief history of the Christian Bible.

The old testament was written in Hebrew and Aramaic between 1450BC to about 400BC. The Hebrew Square Script was compiled around 300BC as well as the Greek version called the Septuagint. There are records of the old testament being translated into several ancient languages including Coptic 3AD, Ethiopic 4AD, Armenian 5AD, Georgian, Slavonic, Arabic and others. As well as, in Latin by Jerome in about 350AD in what is now referred to as the "Latin Vulgate."

The New Testament was written in Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic. Jesus spoke Aramaic. Yet the most of the early writings are in the ancient language of Koine Greek. These original languages were all translated

into Latin in about 350AD for the “Latin Vulgate.” And we have Greek new testaments or parts of the new testament in Greek manuscripts from 300-400AD and some earlier fragments from the Dead Sea Scrolls and other sources.

This is the starting point of the modern bibles. Lots of manuscripts in several different languages. After Jerome compiled the Latin Vulgate in 350AD, there was very little done on the bible until 1382. This was mainly because the Roman Catholic Church did not think the common man should read or could even understand the bible. The Bible was invisible to the common man.

Then in 1382 the English Wycliffe Bible changed things. And later in 1516 the Greek Textus Receptus was compiled by Erasmus. Then came the protestant reformation with Luther’s German NT in 1522 and the English Tyndale Bible in 1522-1530, followed by the Coverdale Bible in 1535, the Great Bible in 1539 and the Geneva Bible in 1560. These bibles were forbidden by the catholic church and many died for reading or owning these bibles. Then in 1611 the King James bible was published and the Bible world was permanently changed. The King James was published again in 1782. After this English Bible translations begin to get even more complicated. In 1862 the UBS was founded or the United Bible Society and several notable historical events happened including Wescott-Hort discoveries in 1881, Tischendorf in 1887 and the dead sea scrolls in 1947. I encourage you to research these in more detail but we don’t have time today. Through the years more and more English translations have emerged. I myself regularly read the KJV, NLT, AMP, NKJV, NASB and many others.

But do they agree word for word? Well No, No they do not agree. The Question is Why? Even within a given Translation, many changes have been made over time. This is just a sample of the revisions for a couple English bibles. I don’t even think this is complete. I lost my energy doing this once I saw the sheer number of copyright updates for each translation, even our favorite the KJV had several revisions

So let me ask the question again. Can we Trust the Bible word for word? Well no. or maybe the question should be in what language. And which translation can you trust. Which revision? Let’s dig deeper. Remember the earliest copies of the new testament date back to 300-400AD with some earlier fragments. But, these are not original manuscripts and have many textual variants. So, no we do not have original manuscript is the original languages to reference. Only copies of copies of copies.

One thing is for sure. Translating from one language to another cannot be done word for word. Languages often don’t have a word that is similar or may have one word that can be translated many different ways. So the best translation method is Contextually. I recommend you know what type of translation you are using and steer away from the so called word for word translations.

I would like to introduce you to Dr. Daniel Wallace. He has been a professor at the Dallas Theological Seminary and is the executive director of the center for the study of new testament manuscripts. I’m going to put a link for a lecture he gave on textual variations. I encourage you all to check it out. As well as a link to His website

- [Is What We Have Now What They Wrote Then? — Dr. Daniel Wallace - YouTube](#)
- www.csntm.org

Dr. Wallace goes on to tell us, that there are more than 5,000 known Greek manuscripts of the new testament alone. This does not count other languages. In those Greek manuscripts there are more than 500,000 textual variations and the NT only contains about 140,000 words. That means there are more inconsistencies or variations in the texts than there are words. Almost 5 variants for every word.

Remember our questions

1. CAN you TRUST your BIBLE?, Why?
2. Can we Trust the Bible word for word?, **not original language**
3. Do we have original Bible manuscripts? **No, copies or copies**
4. Are there Textual Variations in the Bible manuscripts? **500K nearly 5 for every word.**
5. Can you Trust your Bible Translation?, Which one?

Dr. Wallace goes on to break it down in a way we can all understand. He demonstrates the problems with language to language translations by translating John loves Mary into Greek. More than a thousand different ways all translated accurately as John loves Mary. He goes on to show many types of textual variants and demonstrates how most do nothing to alter the meaning of the text. As He puts it, less than 1/5 of one percent of textual variants are meaningful. Additionally, none of these variant's impact any of the core tenants for the Christian Faith.

So, Can you trust your Bible.? A resounding yes. Topically, contextually, accurate. All major Christian doctrine is consistent.

Are we certain of every word, certainly not? We don't even have original copies or copies of copies. But the mere fact that we have so many ancient copies which are so consistent even when translated over and over, points to the power and authenticity of the Bible.

So, Which Translation? Which language? These are really the wrong questions.

Don't get lost in the specific words used. Stay focused on the message, the context. Now some so called English translations of the bible are just plain bad and corrupted like the Clear Bible or the Gay Bible, etc. and other like the Message are paraphrased and should never be mistaken as a true translation of the Bible.

I suggest we should concentrate on the overall message in context and try not to get bogged down in word studies or digging too deep in search of meanings beyond what the texts say.

God intended everyone to read and understand the Bible. So, we should tell people it's easy to understand, just read it. You do not have to be a bible scholar to understand the bible. I really like how James puts it in James 1:5 (NKJV) *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

We can trust God to give us the wisdom to understand His word. We need to use the resources available to us. But most definitely we can trust our Bible for all core tenants of the Christian faith. But try not to get bogged down in the specific words because that is very difficult to defend.

Let me close with a prayer.

Thank you Lord for giving us your word in a form we can study and understand. Help us to encourage people to read your word because it is easy to understand. And we trust that if we struggle to understand we can ask you for wisdom and you will give it generously.

I pray for the listeners, you know what is on their hearts. Please give them a glimpse of your peace and assurance today.

Thank you for this time studying your Bible and its history, so we can have confidence in your words.

I pray all these things to the Father in your name Jesus. Amen.

Thank you for joining me at the PUNLA Coffee Table. If you liked the message, please click like. And Please Subscribe to our channel. Leave comments here, or our website or mail me. I want your feedback so let me know what you think

See you next time at the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.

LINKS

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