

Common objections to the Bible – Part 1

(from online newsletter called Once Delivered:

<https://oncedelivered.net/2020/09/08/common-objections-to-the-bible-part-1/>)



Many who disbelieve the Bible's claims to be the word of God raise objections. Often, these objections are raised sincerely by people seeking the truth. Whether sincere or not, the objections merit a response. Following are the first of eight common objections. The rest are featured in a future post.

Objection 1: No one really knows what the Bible says because the original manuscripts are lost.

Response: True, the "autographs" no longer exist, but a remarkable number of copies do. No other book from the ancient world has more, earlier, or better-copied manuscripts than the Bible. Nearly 5,800 Greek, 10,000 Latin, and 10,000-15,000 other early versions of the New Testament are in existence, some dating to within a generation of the originals. Compare this with fewer than 1,800 copies of Homer's *Iliad*, with the earliest copies dating 400 years *after* the original.

[James Kuhl's additional comments: "Lost" is misleading. Original manuscripts were written on materials that were never meant to last, like papyrus (plant fibers) and parchment (animal skins).

That's why copies had to be made so that the Scriptures could be handed down to the next generations. See <https://www.josh.org/materials-scribes-used-bible/>

Objection 2: The Bible has been copied so many times, with so many variations, there's no way to know what was originally scripted.

Response: While it's true there are variations among the manuscripts – 150,000 by some counts – the vast majority have to do with changes in spelling, grammar, and style, or accidental omissions or duplications of words or phrases. Only about 400 variants in the New Testament manuscripts have any significant bearing on the meaning of the passage, and most of these are noted in the footnotes or margins of modern translations and editions of Scripture. The only textual variants that affect more than a sentence or two are John 7:53-8:11 and Mark 16:9-20.

Objection 3. The books of the Bible were chosen arbitrarily by councils of men in highly political processes. As a result, they left out some very good books – perhaps some equally inspired writings.

Response: These oft-repeated charges are unfounded. They deny the supernatural inspiration and preservation of Scripture and instead emphasize the efforts of men who, it is argued, wanted only to maintain control over the early church. In truth, the Holy Spirit authored Scripture through the pens of human agents, managed its preservation, and decided which books belonged in the canon (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21). Councils of Christian leaders met in the fourth century and made important decisions about the New Testament based on evidence supporting the books' inspiration and authority, but in no way did they undermine God's revelation of Himself in Scripture. The God who hangs the stars in space and calls them by name (Isa. 40:26) has no problem guiding the means by which His very words are given to His most precious creation: mankind.

Objection 4: It's silly to assume that one book – the Bible – contains all of God's truth and that other great writings, from the Vedas to the Book of Mormon, do not come from God.

Response: We must begin with the claims of the documents themselves. The Bible specifically and repeatedly declares itself to be the written Word of God, while the Vedas do not. Even the Book of Mormon is called "another testament of Jesus Christ," dangerously ignoring a biblical mandate

not to add to or take away from the Scriptures (Rev. 22:18-19). While many religious writings contain moral and ethical truths, some of which are consistent with Scripture, only the Bible claims to be God's written and complete revelation to mankind. The Bible's claim to be the Word of God is backed up by unparalleled textual, archaeological, and historical evidence. Most compelling, however, is the testimony of the Holy Spirit, who authored the Scriptures and who confirms in our human spirits the truth of God's Word.

Common objections to the Bible – Part 2

<https://oncedelivered.net/2020/09/29/common-objections-to-the-bible-part-2/#more-4989>

Objection 5: The Bible is full of contradictions.

Response: Not so. Consider these guidelines for dealing with Bible difficulties: 1) logic and reason – examine the Bible like other documents; 2) translation – consider the nuances between various English versions; 3) time – some seemingly contradictory statements are separated by years and must be seen in their proper time frames; 4) context – study the chapters and books in which apparent contradictions occur; 5) sense – words and phrases may be used literally or figuratively; 6) quotations – many Old Testament passages are paraphrased or summarized in the New Testament; 7) perspective – when two or more writers provide separate accounts of the same events, differences in names, numbers, and conversations may be accounted for by each writer's perspective.

Objection 6: The Bible can't be true because it depicts a different God in the Old and New Testaments.

Response: The Bible is God's progressive revelation of Himself and must be understood in its context. When one reads both the Old and the New Testaments it becomes evident that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Mal. 3:6; Heb. 13:8). For example, both testaments tell us that God judges the unrepentant in time and eternity; He is compassionate and gracious; He desires a personal relationship with people; and He is actively engaged in human history.

Concerning the Trinity, while the Bible emphatically declares that there is one true and living God (Deut. 6:4; James 2:19), the Old Testament hints at the triune Godhead and the New Testament more fully reveals one God in three persons (see Gen. 1:1-2, 26; 3:22; 11:7; Isa. 6:8; Matt. 3:16-17; John 1:1, 14; 10:30; Acts 5:3-4; Col. 1:16; 2:9; Heb. 1:8; 1 Peter 1:2).

Objection 7: There are so many translations of the Bible today, it's impossible to know which translation is the right one.

Response: There are many Bible translations available today, leading some to ask, "Which version is right?" and others to conclude that because there is so much variation between translations, none of them is correct. Keep in mind, however, that the *autographs*, or original documents, of Scripture are inerrant – not the subsequent copies and translations. Even though there are dozens of English translations that differ in varying degrees from one another, we have a high degree of confidence that the source documents from which these versions came are accurate representations of the autographs.

Objection 8: There are so many Christian denominations today, it's clear that Christians can't agree on what the Bible teaches.

Response: Christian denominations generally developed out of a desire for fellowship and joint ministry between individual churches – a biblical concept (Acts. 11:27-30). There is a rich diversity among Christian denominations today, and the differences between them are not as wide as they appear. Many of the disagreements are over matters of conscience, such as which day of the week to worship, dietary restrictions, or which translation of the Bible to use (see Rom. 14:1-23; 1 Cor. 10:23-33), or they focus on lesser points of doctrine, such as the manner in which missions activities are organized and funded. It should be acknowledged that Christians often have engaged in petty squabbling, internal power struggles, and political wrangling. The New Testament implores believers to be gracious toward and forgiving of one another (Eph. 4:32).