

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

UNIQUE CLAIMS OF THE BIBLE

By .E. Phillips

Characteristics of the Book called the Bible are so unique and bold that the reader is at once aware that he is reading something that penetrates the very heart of man, and at the same time the bold claims of the Book far surpass anything else known to man. The Bible makes certain claims that are completely absurd to the human race if it is not the Book of God. These claims excel any claims for other writings, and the Book makes no apology for the claims.

It claims to be indestructible. The Bible claims to be a volume that cannot be destroyed in time or eternity, it submits to no power, but claims to survive all its enemies. Jesus said, *“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away”* (Matt. 24:35). Peter asserts that the word of God will live and abide for ever, and that the word of the Lord will endure for ever (1 Pet. 1:23, 25). Every tool of opposition and destruction known has been hurled against the Bible with all its power, but this book has come out victorious over all.

It claims to be all-sufficient. The Bible claims, *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works”* (2 Tim. 3:16-17). It claims to perfect man unto all good works. It says it contains everything that pertains unto life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3). It contains all truth delivered from God to man (Jn. 16:13). It has been once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 1:3). The Bible will do for mankind all that God wants done. It is the final authority in all matters. It is perfectly adaptable to all men of all ages. No other book can serve all generations of men as does the Bible. It lacks nothing and supplies all things for all men of all nations and times.

It claims to be perfect literature. The Bible claims perfection in literature. It possesses certain qualities that distinguish it from all other writings known. It contains every type of literature known to man. It was reported that Benjamin Franklin, who was one time the ambassador to France, was invited to a French Literary Society of Infidels. It was also reported that it was a rule of this society that each member would write an original story and submit it to the criticism of the other members. When Mr. Franklin’s time came he copied by hand the entire book of Ruth and read it to the assembly. When he finished they applauded his great work and pronounced it a master-piece. They asked for permission to publish it to the world. Ben Franklin replied that he could not grant such permission because it was already in print; it was in the Bible. Before they learned that it came from the Bible, they called it the “best love story in the world.”

The Bible contains poetry, biography, law, history, prophecy, and love stories. It is at the same time the most profound and yet the simplest of all writings. It never grows old with the passing of time.

It claims to contain the highest purpose. The Bible serves a different purpose to the books composed by men. Most other books are given to gratify the passions of men, either for knowledge or entertainment, but the Bible is given to curb and control these passions and to prepare the soul for eternity.

The Bible presents man as a sinner and unfit for his entrance into heaven. Other books tell of man's virtues and accomplishments, but the Bible points out the weaknesses of all men alike, even the greatest men of the world. Noah's intoxication is recorded; Abraham’s weakness in lying to Pharaoh that Sarah was his sister to avoid punishment; David’s adultery with the wife of Uriah is recorded; Peter’s denial of the Lord is given in detail. The Bible is completely impartial in the account of the history of mankind. No ethnic group, no racial or social groups are depicted as inferior to others.

It is also a purpose of the Bible to give the promise of rewards and punishments to those who keep or do not keep its laws. No man can promise rewards beyond his own imaginations and expectations. Neither could this be so in punishments. Its purpose is to guide mankind into a righteous way of living to avoid the punishments stated and to gain the rewards promised.

The demands and claims of the Bible show its purpose. It claims to control the hearts and lives of all men and of all nations without a single apology. No branch of human philosophy has ever thought of such a demand.

It claims to be the foundation of the Religion of Christ. Nothing can survive if the foundation is destroyed. The Bible is the foundation of Christianity because it gives the laws and rules for such. Without the Bible the work of Christ could not exist. No other book has such an influence on the spiritual nature and welfare of all men. They are either saved by its power, or they are hardened in their rebellion against the truth.

The religion of Christ is dependent upon the revelation of God for its nature and working. Christ must be preached before men can believe. The Bible serves this purpose, as John states in John 20:30-31. The Christ must be known. The four gospel records are designed to do this. Some claim that Jesus was a pure moral man of the highest standing, but they deny that he is divine. This claim is absolutely impossible. How could a man be pure morally and be the greatest impostor of all history? Christ claims to be the Son of God and eternal with the Father. If he is not what he claims to be he is a deceiver and does not deserve to be the Saviour and the foundation of the church. But if Christ is what he claims to be, his word, the Bible, is everything it claims to be. ■

“IT DOESN’T SAY NOT TO”

By Greg Gwin

Imagine this: you walk into a fast food restaurant and order a hamburger, fries, and a coke - the all-American meal! But then, you notice that it seems to take an unusually long time to get your “*What's all of this?*” you ask. “*Well,*” answers the waitress, “*it's one of every item on our menu. Your bill comes to \$85.68.*” You protest: “*I didn't tell you to bring me all of that food!*” “*But,*” she replies, “*you didn't tell me not to.*”

Could this happen? Of course not! We all know that when you specify what you want, you automatically eliminate other options. We operate with this understanding every day. In fact, this logic is so standard, that we don't even think about it. When you order something from a catalog, or call in a pizza, or write a grocery list, you naturally assume that it is understood that you want only what is specified, and nothing else.

What's the point of all this? Simply that in religious matters we ought to employ the same logic. God has perfectly revealed through His word what He wants us to do in His service. We should naturally assume that since He has told us what He wants, other things ought to be left out.

For instance: What about music in worship? The New Testament specifies singing — there is no mention of instrumental music in New Testament worship. Since God has told us to sing, and nothing else, we ought to do just that. Someone answers, “*But it doesn't say not to play instruments.*” The Scriptures don't have to say not to — that's the whole point! ■

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 7:21).

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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