

The Word of God Confirmed

2 Peter 1:16-21

Introduction

Sola Scriptura! The Bible alone is our authority for doctrine and daily living. Why? Because the Bible is the Word of God. How do we know that? How do we know we are not following “cleverly devised myths” (2 Peter 1:16)? While the final answer is that it is a step of faith, we want to look today at some of the reasons that show it is not a baseless claim to say the Bible is the Word of God.

“Thus Saith the Lord” – the Old Testament Prophets

Eight Old Testament prophets used the phrase, “Thus saith the Lord” a total of 335 times. They were sure that what they were prophesying was the word of the Lord. All faced opposition, some were in danger of losing their lives, while others were tortured. All because they were giving the word of the Lord. No one is going to face such persecution for the sake of their own word, or a lie. According to the Old Testament prophets, this is the Word of the Lord.

Eye Witnesses – the Apostles

In the New Testament, we have the Apostles. Every book of the New Testament was written by an Apostle or under apostolic authority. For example, Mark wasn’t an Apostle but he got his information from Peter. The Apostles were eye witnesses of Jesus Christ. One of the qualifications for being an Apostle was to be a witness of His resurrection. One might ask why Paul was then an Apostle. He saw the risen Christ on the road to Damascus, as he said in 1 Corinthians 9, “Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?” (1 Corinthians 9:1). And in 1 Timothy 2, he says, “for this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle” (1 Timothy 2:7). The apostles were all persecuted and all but one lost their lives because they testified to the risen Christ. No one would endure that for a lie.

Jesus, the Word Made Flesh

John says in his Gospel (read John 1:1-5, 14). In identifying Jesus as the Word, he says that He is also the Second Person of the Trinity. He then became the Messiah, as He became a man and lived among us. Throughout the book of John, Jesus uses the phrase *ego eimi*, which is Greek for “I am,” as He says, “I am the bread of life (John 6:35); I am the light of the world (John 9:5); I am the way, and the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). In Greek, you don’t need to use the *ego* with *eimi*. In doing so, He is emphasizing the “I am” and identifying Himself with YAWEH. It was this claim to be God that got Him crucified. If Jesus is not who He says He is, He is insane. And a lunatic would not have been able to do the things He did.

Confirmed by God

Three times Jesus’ identity as the Son of God was confirmed by the Father Himself. At His baptism, the voice from above said, “This is My beloved Son with whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17). On the mount of transfiguration, the same voice said, “This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him” (Matthew 17:5). After the Triumphal Entry, Jesus said, “Father, glorify Your name.” Then a voice came from heaven: “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again” (John 12:28). Let’s look at what God said on the mount of transfiguration.

“This Is My Son”

Peter, James, and John were not at the Baptism of Jesus. They didn't hear the voice then. Now, the Father speaks to them, confirming that this Jesus they were following is who He said He is. “This is My Son.” As the Son, He has all the power of God; He is equal to the Father in every respect; He is eternal; He is the One who was sent by the Father to save the world from sin.

“With Whom I Am Well Pleased”

The Father is already “well pleased” with the Son, even though Jesus has not finished His mission yet. But His sole desire is to give glory to His Father by obeying Him. Everything He has done so far has given glory to the Father. For this reason, the Father is well pleased with the Son.

“Listen to Him”

Based on who He is, the Father gives this command, “Listen to Him.” Jesus is the Living Word of God. What choice do we have but to listen to Him? You may remember the old E.F. Hutton commercials, “When E.F. Hutton talks, people listen.” If people listen to E.F. Hutton, how much more should we listen to the Son of God? Listening includes putting what He says into practice. Do we really listen to Jesus?

Present Today

Jesus is present with us today in the Written Word of God, the Bible. And His identity as the Son of God is confirmed in the Sacraments. In the Sacrament of the Altar, we can only receive His body and blood because He was crucified, risen, and ascended to the Father. When we receive His body and blood, He is being confirmed as the Son of God and we are affirming that we are listening to Him. The Bible is confirmed as the Written Word of God by the Son of God, the Living Word of God. Hear the voice of the Father: “This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him.”

*And the peace of God,
Which surpasses all understanding,
Will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*