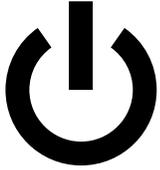


Title: Can We Really Trust the Bible?

Speaker: Randy Smith

Key Verses: Romans 12:1-2; 2 Timothy 2:16; 2 Peter 1:3-7

Summary: The evidence for the reliability of the Bible is overwhelming.



Power Up: Take a moment to prepare

From the outset Randy redresses a naïve understanding of faith. Evidence, he argues, is critical to true faith. How would you define faith?



Replay: Take some time to watch

Note the flow of Randy's talk: **1)** Faith, presuppositions, and responding to cultural pressures; **2)** framing the Bible's big story; **3)** six evidences for the reliability of the Bible; **4)** the importance of trusting the Bible.



Comment: Take some time to talk

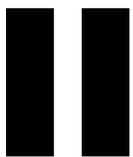
Randy suggests the age of self-examination in the West has sparked greater criticism of the Bible. **What are two typical responses to this cultural pressure? Where do you most often line up?**

How would you summarize the Big Story of the Bible?

What sort of evidence does predictive prophecy offer for Jesus? How does this compare to Islam or Hinduism?

Of the other five lines of evidence for the reliability, which do you find most compelling and why? How might you use these evidences? What were the Dead Sea Scrolls? What are two important details about the ancient manuscripts evidence for the New Testament?

Read Romans 12:1-2: How do we experience transformation? How does knowing the reliability of God's Word help us want to read it?



Pause: Take a moment to pray

Thank God for His desire to related to us through His world. Thank Him for its reliability. Ask Him for greater confidence not only in understanding the Bible but also sharing about it with others.



Take Action: Take a step forward

At the end of his talk, Randy assures his audience of the transforming power of God's Word. "Read it," he implores. "It will change you." Challenge yourself to read the whole New Testament in two months. Take note of what God is teaching you and be willing to change were God asks you to.

Bonus Features | Additional Notes and Quotes from Randy Smith

Power Track Summary: After thousands of years, how can an intelligent generation really trust an old collection of writings as both true and from God? Aren't there other books that claim to be eternal truth? What case can be made for the Bible's integrity and trustworthiness?

About the Speaker: Randy is a husband, father, and Teaching Pastor at Sebring Grace. He founded and instructs at Great Commission Bible Institute. He lived many years in Israel.

"Faith is 'God-glasses.' Seeing the world as God wants us to see it... There are two kinds of people: those who see what God wants us to see and those who don't."

"There are only two ways to fight the [cultural] pressures without getting crushed by it. One, get thick and crusty, focused on what God is against. Or fill up your interior with the power of God to withstand the pressures without."

"Something is true if it matches the facts, not if I feel good about it... When I know the nature of truth, I look for the clues of evidence... the greatest probability."

"[The Bible] wasn't given to us to tell us why God does what he does. It was written to tell us pieces of truth we need to know in order to submit our lives to and follow Him."

Six Compelling Lines of Evidence for the Reliability of the Bible:

1. **Prophecy**

- The Bible has 300 specific statements about Jesus clearly fulfilled.
- Examples: Jesus' lineage (Gen. 12:1-3; 49:10; 2 Sam. 7:8-16); his birthplace and time (Dan. 9:25; Mic. 5:2; Mal. 3:1); his death, resurrection, and enthronement (Gen. 3:15; Ps. 16:9-11; 22; 110:1).
- 300 statements about Jesus fulfilled vs. 0 fulfilled in the Koran, Hinduism.

2. **Archaeology** - Historical sites and names corroborated

- 1998 in Tel Dan: "I battled against the sons of King David"
- 1961 in Caesarea: Pontus Pilot's name is verified on a Rock
- 1986 ancient cemetery in Jerusalem crashed into; crucifixion nails found

3. **Ancient Writings** - Other ancient writers corroborate biblical events

- Sennacherib Prism (Isaiah 36-39)
- Josephus writes about John the Baptist's execution
- 30 sources written within the first 100 years of Christianity talk about Jesus

4. **Consistency** – key themes, historical details confirmed among biblical authors

5. **Manuscripts** – more and earlier copies of biblical text than any other ancient book

- NT written within 50 to 100 years, 24,000 manuscript evidence
- Dead Sea Scroll copy of Isaiah (200 BC) confirms previous, earliest copy (1500 AD)

6. **Science** – allowing for idiom (e.g., Job 26:7), the Bible is scientifically sound

"There is no [human] word you will [ever] read that can do what the Bible can do for you. It can change your life, transform your thinking, renew your mind, give you the back pressure so that you're not pressed into the mold of the world but you're able to stand there as a transformed person with a renewed mind and say, 'I don't think like you.'"