

Small Group Guide: One Book -- Why We Believe the Bible

Introduction

This week's sermon explored the second of the Five Ones: one book, the Bible. The message addressed why Christians base their beliefs on Scripture alone, examining the New Testament's unique origins, the remarkable unity of the Bible as a whole, and the universal reach of its message. Use this guide to go deeper into those themes together as a group.

Key Takeaways

- The Christian faith was not created by a book -- it was created by an event: the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The New Testament is the testimony of those who witnessed it.
 - The New Testament was written by or through the ministry of the apostles -- eyewitnesses to the risen Jesus -- during the lifetime of people who could have challenged false accounts.
 - The Bible is 66 books written by 40 authors over 1,500 years in three languages, yet it speaks with one unified voice because it has one ultimate Author behind it, God himself, and one central subject: Jesus.
 - The Bible's message is universal. It is not for one group of people in one place and time. It is for the whole world, in every generation.
 - We do not worship the Bible. We worship the One the Bible reveals. The Bible is the means by which we come to know him.
-

Discussion Questions

Opening

1. Pastor Scott shared that in life it is more important to know a lot about a little -- provided those things really matter. What are the two or three things in your own life that you feel you genuinely know a lot about? How did those things come to matter to you?

2. Before this sermon, how would you have answered the question, "Why do you believe the Bible?" What would you have said? How has this message added to or changed that answer?
-

The New Testament Is Unique

3. Pastor Scott emphasized that the New Testament was written within the lifetime of eyewitnesses to the death and resurrection of Jesus. He compared the 25-year gap between the resurrection and Paul's account in 1 Corinthians 15 to our own memory of September 11, 2001. Why does the timing of the New Testament writings matter when it comes to trusting them? How does that comparison land with you personally?
 4. Pastor Scott gave a "before and after" case for trusting the apostles as witnesses. Before the resurrection, they consistently looked bad in the Gospel accounts -- running away, arguing over who was greatest, being afraid to ask questions. After the resurrection, they went to the ends of the earth and died for what they proclaimed. How does that pattern affect the way you think about the reliability of their testimony?
 5. Pastor Scott made a distinction between dying for an idea or a book versus dying for something you personally witnessed. Why is that distinction important? What does it tell us about what the apostles actually believed?
-

The Unity of the Bible

6. Pastor Scott described the Bible as 66 books, 40 authors, 1,500 years, three languages -- and yet one unified message. Have you ever personally encountered that unity while reading the Bible? Is there a passage or theme that surprised you by connecting to something else in Scripture?
 7. In John 5, Jesus tells the Pharisees that the Scriptures they study so carefully are the very ones that testify about him. The Pharisees knew the Bible thoroughly but missed Jesus entirely. What does that tell us about the difference between knowing Scripture and truly encountering the one Scripture points to? How do we guard against that same mistake?
 8. Pastor Scott warned that when someone claims to have brand-new, previously undiscovered truth about God, that should be a signal to run. Why is that warning important, especially in the cultural and religious environment many of us live in? Can you think of examples where that kind of claim has caused harm?
-

The Universal Message of the Bible

9. Pastor Scott listed several things people are searching for -- truth, purpose, someone to trust, forgiveness, something to worship -- and showed how Jesus directly addresses each one. Which of those needs resonates most with you personally right now? Which one do you find yourself most often trying to meet somewhere other than in Christ?
 10. The Bible has been translated into 800 languages and billions of copies have been distributed throughout history. What does the global reach of Scripture tell us about the nature of the message it carries? How does that affect the way you think about your own responsibility to share it?
-

Practical and Personal

11. Pastor Scott closed with a direct encouragement: If you feel spiritually dry or dead, start reading your Bible. He called it "food for the soul." How consistently are you currently feeding on Scripture? What is the most honest answer you can give to that question?
 12. The Five Ones framework -- one Lord, one book, one God, one salvation, one church -- is designed to help believers know a lot about the things that really matter. Which of the five do you feel least equipped to explain or defend in a conversation with someone who does not share your faith? What would it look like to grow in that area?
-

Practical Applications

This week, choose at least one of the following:

- **Start or restart a Bible reading habit.** Pick a book of the Bible and commit to reading a chapter a day. If you are not sure where to start, the Gospel of John is a natural entry point given the themes of this sermon.
 - **Read 1 Corinthians 15.** Sit with the earliest written account of the resurrection and the list of eyewitnesses Paul provides. Reflect on what it would have meant for that letter to circulate while so many of those witnesses were still alive.
 - **Memorize 2 Timothy 3:16.** Let the truth that all Scripture is God-breathed shape the way you approach your Bible reading this week.
 - **Have a conversation.** Think of one person in your life who is asking the same kinds of questions the sermon addressed -- questions about truth, purpose, or who Jesus really is. Pray for an opportunity to share something from this message with them.
-

Closing Prayer

Close your time together by praying as a group. You may use this as a guide:

Father, thank you that you did not leave us without guidance or truth. Thank you that in Jesus you became one of us, and that you have given us your Word to lead us to you. Help us not just to believe it, but to feed on it, to be shaped by it, and to live it out. Show us the things in our lives where we are looking for what only you can give. Draw us back to your Word and through your Word draw us back to you. We ask this in Jesus name. Amen.