

CAN WE RELY ON THE BIBLE?

Today, more and more Americans believe the Bible is merely a collection of fables, written by humans.

That the Bible cannot be inspired because it contains numerous errors and discrepancies.

Is this true?

In 2 Timothy 3:16, the apostle Paul wrote this to the young evangelist Timothy.

16 All scripture — not some, Paul declared — All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

The Bible is inspired by Almighty God.

Therefore, the Bible is flawless.

It does not contain any errors.

Nor are there any discrepancies. Inconsistencies. Nor contradictions.

In this article, let's go through what Bible fact checkers believe are errors; and, take the very words of God in the Bible to validate that what God says is indisputable and factual.

Please open your Bibles, follow along and see for yourselves that God's word is unassailable TRUTH.

The first one we're going to look at is the ancestry of Jesus Christ in Matthew chapter 1, which — Bible critics say — seems to contradict Christ's lineage in Luke chapter 3.

Matthew records the LEGAL descent of Jesus Christ through Joseph.

The Jews kept meticulous records to determine an individual's lineage.

From the legal perspective of the Jews, Jesus was Joseph's son (John 6:42).

Notice Matthew 1:1.

1 The book of the generation [or ancestry] of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

2 Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas [actually Judah] and his brethren;

This same word "begat," which means to become the male parent of, is used throughout this entire list UNTIL we come to Joseph in verse 16.

Notice the change in Matthew 1:16.

16 And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

Since God the Father, NOT Joseph, begat Christ, Matthew now brings Mary into the picture by saying that she was the one "of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ."

Now, turn to Luke chapter 3.

At first glance, this, too, APPEARS to be from Joseph's genealogy.

Luke 3:23.

23 And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which [or who] was the son of Heli,

But, according to Matthew, Joseph was the son of Jacob.

So how can his father be Heli in Luke's record?

This is where the seeming inconsistency occurs.

Now then, notice that the words "the son" are in italics throughout Luke's account of Joseph's ancestry.

Meaning these words in italics are not found in the original, inspired Greek manuscripts recorded by Luke.

The translators added the italicized words to clarify the meaning of the Greek in the English language.

Translator additions can be helpful.

But most of the time, they only create more confusion.

Just as they do in this instance.

So the appropriate and accurate rendering of Luke 3:23 should be: "And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was of Heli.

Since Matthew records Jacob as Joseph's father, then Heli must have been the father of Mary, Christ's biological mother.

Therefore, Luke chapter 3 traces Christ's lineage to David through His mother Mary.

But WHY then was Joseph's name placed instead of Mary's?

Jewish law stipulated an inheritance could only pass through male descendants.

But God made an exception which the Bible calls a statute of judgment (Numbers 27:11).

This was how Mary was able to give her inheritance to her son Jesus Christ.

When a daughter was the only heir, God commanded that she could inherit her father's possessions and rights if she married within her own tribe (Numbers 27:7-11; 36:6-13).

Since Mary may not have had brothers, who could be heirs to the inheritance of her father Heli, her marriage to Joseph — who was also of the tribe of Judah — enabled her to legally pass her inheritance to Jesus Christ as the heir to David's throne.

It was necessary therefore to record both genealogies to establish Christ's right to rule on David's throne.

Matthew's and Luke's genealogies do not contradict.

They actually provide us with information that validates what the Bible says.

SECOND example.

Bible fact-checkers point out the four titles or charges recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John on Christ's stake apparently contradict each other.

What was recorded by Matthew 27:37?

37 And set up over his head his accusation or the charges written,
This Is Jesus The King Of The Jews.

Now, let's see what is recorded by Mark. Turn to Mark 15:26.

26 And the superscription of his accusation was written over [or above], The King Of The Jews.

Next, Luke 23:38.

38 And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, This Is The King Of The Jews.

Now to John's recording of the title Pilate ordered on Christ's cross.

Notice John 19:19.

19 And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was Jesus Of Nazareth The King Of The Jews.

The gospel authors recorded four different headings or titles.

What heading was right then?

ALL FOUR of them were!

John's account tells us that Pilate had ordered a title to be written and put on the stake.

Put what the gospel authors recorded together with Luke's account, we find that the heading, the superscription and the title Pilate ordered written were in THREE different languages: Greek, Latin and Hebrew.

When we put all the scriptures together and let the Bible interpret the Bible, the accounts of the titles by these gospel writers are entirely accurate.

A THIRD and final example is the hour or the time that Christ was crucified and died on the stake.

Let's stay right here in John 19:14.

14 And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he [Pilate] says unto the Jews, "Behold your King!"

Now turn back to Matthew 27:45.

Here is what Matthew writes about the time of Christ's crucifixion.

45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.

Why the time discrepancy between John's account and that of Matthew?

The discrepancy is explained by the fact that two systems of marking time are used in the Gospels: Roman time and Jewish time.

John's account uses Roman time.

Jesus Christ is brought before Pilate and sentenced in the sixth hour, or 6:00 AM Roman time, which began at midnight.

Just as we do today.

Matthew — as did Mark and Luke — used Jewish time to reckon the hours which began at 6:00 AM.

According to Mark's account (15:25), Christ was crucified in the THIRD hour Jewish time or our 9:00 AM.

Matthew (27:45) and Luke (23:44) both say that from the sixth hour to the ninth hour Jewish time (from 12 noon to 3:00 PM our time) there was darkness over all the earth.

When you put them all together, the four accounts do not contradict.

They add to each other.

Jesus' trial before Pilate ended about 6:00 AM.

He was crucified about three hours later at 9:00 AM.

And He died about six hours after that at 3:00 PM.

Let's conclude with 2 Timothy 3:16.

Many have tried to find errors, discrepancies and inconsistencies in God's Bible.

But when we put ALL of the pertinent scriptures together, "the scriptures," as Christ Himself said, "cannot be broken!"

16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

The Bible — every single word from Genesis to Revelation — is inspired by Almighty God.

Therefore, the Bible is flawless.

It cannot, it does not contain any errors.

How thankful we are that we have the surest, most reliable authority from Almighty God.