

## Can We Trust the Bible?

Some people say that we can't trust the Bible anymore- that it is filled with contradictions, that it is scientifically unreliable, that it just isn't trustworthy. I disagree! The Bible is unique. It was written over a period of 1500 years, on three continents, in three different languages, in a variety of cultural settings, by many different authors, most of whom never knew each other. Yet there is an amazing unity in the Bible regarding who God is and what God expects of us. There is no other book like it anywhere in the world!

Having said that, the Bible must be interpreted in light of the contexts in *which it was written*. For example, we must consider the *historical* context of the Bible. What was going on at that time? What historical issues is a particular part of the Bible addressing? We must also consider the *literary context* of the Bible. Is this poetry? Historical material? A parable? A letter? How does the particular passage with which we are dealing fit into the larger literary context?

We must also interpret particular parts of the Bible in light of the larger teaching of the Bible. For example, the Bible consistently teaches that God is good, loving, just, and compassionate. It teaches that individuals are made in the very image of God, yet plagued by

sin. Individual passages must be interpreted in light of those major themes.

The intent of the Bible is to help us understand God, ourselves, how God is redeeming the world, and what God expects from us. As such, I believe that the Bible is a reliable, trustworthy book. I'll try and deal with some particular thorny questions about science and the Bible in another post.

Feel free to write me with your thoughts and comments.

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