

## Defending the Bible

### 1 Peter 3:13-16

We should be ready to defend both the Authenticity and Author of the Bible.

#### 1 Peter 3.13-16

Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.

- **The Truth is...** We're in the midst of a world-wide debate with people standing on a side yelling about marriage, sexuality, money, violence, government, religion, etc.
  - If you haven't faced this attack, you will. And if you're not ready, it'll destroy you. **So what's your defense?**
- This morning, we're going to equip ourselves with the best defense for the Bible according to some brilliant scholars and according to God Himself
  - **Heads up:** We're going to start out **zoomed in** (what?), **zoom out** for perspective (why?), then **zoom back in**.

#### How the Bible is attacked & a Quick Defense

- People who disagree with Christianity just go for our source: "We can't trust the Bible!" for various reasons, but **just remember PUPPIES**

**P**rophesy, **U**nity, **P**ower in **P**eople, **I**ndestructible, **E**vents, **S**ources

- **Internal – PUPP**
  - **Prophecy** – Hundreds of detailed prophecies about nations, cities, humanity – over 300 in Old Testament about Jesus
  - **Unity** – 66 books written on 3 continents in 3 languages over about 1500yrs by over 40 authors – one theme/message
  - **Power in People** – more subjective, but lives are radically changed by the Bible both in ancient times and today
- **External – IES**
  - **Indestructible** – Because of its claims, the Bible has been attacked more than any other book & survived all of them
  - **Events** – Detailed descriptions of historical events have been proven through other writings and archaeology
  - **Sources** – Chart & Dan Wallace 1<sup>st</sup> century Mark fragment

<b>Plato</b>	427-347 B.C.	900 A.D.	1200 yrs	7	----
<b>Demosthenes</b>	4th Cent. B.C.	1100 A.D.	800 yrs	8	----
<b>Herodotus</b>	480-425 B.C.	900 A.D.	1300 yrs	8	----
<b>Suetonius</b>	75-160 A.D.	950 A.D.	800 yrs	8	----
<b>Thucydides</b>	460-400 B.C.	900 A.D.	1300 yrs	8	----
<b>Euripides</b>	480-406 B.C.	1100 A.D.	1300 yrs	9	----
<b>Aristophanes</b>	450-385 B.C.	900 A.D.	1200	10	----
<b>Caesar</b>	100-44 B.C.	900 A.D.	1000	10	----
<b>Livy</b>	59 BC-AD 17	----	???	20	----
<b>Tacitus</b>	circa 100 A.D.	1100 A.D.	1000 yrs	20	----
<b>Aristotle</b>	384-322 B.C.	1100 A.D.	1400	49	----
<b>Sophocles</b>	496-406 B.C.	1000 A.D.	1400 yrs	193	----
<b>Homer (Iliad)</b>	900 B.C.	400 B.C.	500 yrs	643	95%
<b>New Testament</b>	1st Cent. A.D. (50-100 A.D.)	2nd Cent. A.D. (c. 130 A.D. f.)	less than 100 years	5600	99.5%

- **More Resources:**

- On the New Testament
  - Mark Driscoll
- Canon Revisited: Establishing the Origins and Authority of the New Testament Books
  - Michael Kruger
- Inspiration and Authority of the Bible
  - B.B. Warfield

- So now we're ready to **argue everyone into Christianity?**

- **Ex: Prof's response** to extended debate – "Let's just assume I answered every question/issue. Would you believe? No? **Then this isn't an authenticity argument.**" – 95% success rate

- Our real problem isn't HOW people attack... It's WHY. Zoom out!

### Why is the Bible attacked?

- Almost every conflict has the same core issue: **Who's the Poobah?**

- Thanks to its ridiculousness and awesome meaning, my friends and I love this term from the 1800s: "**Poobah**" roughly meaning "**Lord High of Everything**"
- **Ex: Talking conflict in HS Bible study...** who's the Poobah? Johnny Football conflict for **signing autographs...** who's the Poobah? (JF in 2<sup>nd</sup> half!) Conflict over **Sex outside of marriage between man and woman...** who's the Poobah?

- This is why **we will always experience conflict:** A Christian correctly reacting to Culture with God's Grace, Bible, and Church answers the Poobah question: "**God.**" But our culture answers: "**Me. I'm the Poobah**"

- People claim to be **Tolerant** or **Relativist** (no lines in the sand), but no one really holds to that... **everyone draws lines**
- **Ex:** Multiple recent court cases/legislation involving letting **kids decide their genders** and schools have to allow them express it however they want. When one school insisted on bathroom use based on physical gender, "**How dare you try to limit someone's sexual choices! No lines!**"

- **Relativism always breaks down** because people “forbid him to forbid him” – but people don’t really care because it’s not really about toleration. **It’s really about “Who’s the Poobah?” “Who should be Lord of Everything?”**
  - You have to let your kids pick their genders because I think that’s right! You can’t vote that way because I don’t want you to! Everyone has a right to this or that because I think they should!
- People don’t just attack the Bible because **they don’t trust its accuracy**, they attack the Bible because **they don’t trust its Author** – they don’t trust God to be the Lord High of Everything – **so how do we defend God’s Authority?**

### Defense through Demonstration

- **1 Peter 3.13-16** –the best defense we have for God’s Authority in our culture is a regular demonstration of God’s Authority in our lives
  - **John 13.35:** “By this all people will know that you are my disciples, **if you have love** for one another.”
  - **1 John 2.3:** And by this we know that we have come to know him, **if we keep his commandments.**
  - – Christians demonstrate God’s Authority by obeying Him and loving His people
- **Athenagoras**

2<sup>nd</sup> Century Christians faced many of the same challenges as modern Christians. Tons of **misunderstanding** (3 accusations) and **Relativism** – “believe whatever you want as long as you pay your taxes and worship Caesar as a god.”

- In response to this culture, there was an awesome Christian apologist named Athenagoras who wrote “**A Plea for the Christians**” as a defense.

What, then, are those teachings in which we are brought up? "I say unto you, Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be the sons of your Father who is in heaven, who causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust." *Who of [other religions] have so purged their souls as, instead of hating their enemies, to love them; and, instead of speaking ill of those who have reviled them... to bless them; and to pray for those who plot against their lives? But among us you will find uneducated persons, and artisans, and old women, who, if they are **unable in words** to prove the benefit of our doctrine, yet **by their deeds** exhibit the benefit arising from their persuasion of its truth: they do not rehearse speeches, but exhibit good works; when struck, they do not strike again; when robbed, they do not go to law; they give to those that ask of them, and love their neighbors as themselves.*

- **Note:** Can a Christian fail to demonstrate God’s Authority? Most definitely. **If you’re a Christian, you’re a hypocrite – and a child of grace.** And by God’s grace, He picks you up/turns you around – **Obedience is always our goal, not to obtain our salvation or to prove it, but to demonstrate God’s Authority**
- **The Common Ground:** Peter and Athenagoras both emphasize our What & How
  - “yet with gentleness and respect”

### Application

- **Where do you need a stronger defense?** With roommates? With friends? With family? On campus? At church?
- If you really trust God as the Author of the Bible... **do you study it?** Are you **memorizing** it? Are you joining a **SMALL GROUP** to study the Bible and surround yourself with fellow believers seeking God?