



The Bible as we know it, the Protestant Canon, is a thoroughly-vetted document concerning its history, historical accuracy, and viability. This topic is not new to biblical studies. For centuries, the historical reliability of the Bible has been argued and studied. In this discussion we will discover that we can be confident that the Bible, in its entirety, is God's inspired word.

## **MY STORY | Starting Place**

When we talk about the historical reliability of the Bible, we are answering the question of whether or not what it says/records is truthful. What has your experience (if any) been in this conversation? Have you ever been challenged on it, or doubted its reliability yourself? Explain.

## **DIGGING DEEPER | Practical Biblical Application**

There are two tools of evaluation used in answering this question: internal and external evidence to verify Scripture's truthfulness.

Regarding internal evidence (this would be what the Bible says about itself), take a few moments to look up and read: Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:1-2; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:21, 2:1.

What conclusions can you make about Scripture's trustworthiness based on these passages? What is the overall message Scripture claims about itself? Why do you think these claims are important?

Regarding external evidence (this would be things like other writings confirming events that are also in the Bible, and archeology): browse the findings this article presents by either reading it aloud (about a 10 minute read) or printing out copies to share:

<https://www.crossway.org/articles/10-crucial-archaeological-discoveries-related-to-the-bible/>

Had you heard about or been familiar with any of these archeological findings before this discussion? What do you find compelling about them, if any?

What other archeological evidence have you been exposed to that you could share?

## **GROWING TOGETHER | Spiritual Friendship**

Have you been exposed to other arguments for or against historical reliability not mentioned in this guide? What experiences could you share that would be beneficial to the group?

Why is the historical reliability of the Bible critical for Christianity? Why is it important for individual followers of Jesus?

## MOVING OUTWARD | Faith in Action

Is there a friend or family member in your life who really struggles to believe the Bible is trustworthy? Reach out to that person this week and offer them some of the information from this discussion as well as the resources listed below. A voice that counters doubt is a powerful one and should never be stifled, no matter how personally insignificant it may seem or feel to offer that voice.

## FURTHER RESOURCES

### On the Old Testament:

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/the-reliability-of-the-old-testament/>

<https://coldcasechristianity.com/writings/the-case-for-the-reliability-of-the-old-testament-bible-in-sert/>

<https://www.jonathanmorrow.org/is-the-old-testament-reliable-a-short-summary/>

K. A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003)

### On the New Testament:

<https://biblearchaeologyreport.com/2019/01/19/top-ten-discoveries-in-biblical-archaeology-relating-to-the-new-testament/>

Craig L. Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of the Gospels* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2008)

F. F. Bruce, *The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003)

Lee Strobel, *The Case for Christ: A Journalist's Personal Investigation of the Evidence for Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998)