

The Bible

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[0 : 0 0] Well, happy Squamish good morning to you today. It's not raining. It's very sunny. It's very hot. One of the things Carl brought up about me wearing a suit, I might consider wearing a suit if Carl would not wear shorts up in the front.

It's one of the things that I will never bow down to. So, please take your Bibles out and keep them open at Psalm 19. This morning we're starting a new series, and this series is entitled What We Believe and Ultimately Why We Believe It.

And one of the things that we're going to do is we're going to go through our statement of faith or affirmation of faith of Squamish Baptist Church. Just in the last few years, there's been enough new people who've come in who ask certain questions about why we believe the things that we believe, why we practice what we practice.

And I'm hoping that we're going to be able to cover some of these things over the next couple of weeks, several weeks. And I'm praying that it will bring some new understanding, perhaps a deeper understanding.

For some of you, it would be a review. I pray that this review would be, how shall I say, refreshing for you, just to know why we believe what we believe.

[1 : 2 3] So, this morning, the first affirmation I'd like to teach on is what is the source of our faith, which is the Bible. That why this Bible is a big deal.

Why do we derive the elements of our faith from the Bible rather than any other religious textbook? What is the priority or why is the Bible a priority to us?

Now, if you guys take a look in your bulletins, there should be an included write-up. Do you guys see it in there? Perfect.

Now, before we read it, I want you to see that this write-up is actually what is contained in our statement of faith or affirmation of faith. If you were to go online and see what Squamish Baptist Church is about, this is the number one thing, statement that we state right from the very beginning that you would know that the source is our Bible.

Now, you're also going to see that in the copy, there's some italicized and bold statements. And some of those statements are very important for the deeper understanding of our faith and our understanding of God's Word.

[2 : 3 9] And as we go through this short little series on the Bible, we're going to cover each of those aspects. So, before I go any further and before I read this, let's just pray and just ask God's blessing upon this time.

Dear Father, we believe you are real. We believe that you have spoken to us. We believe that the Bible contains the knowledge that you desire for us to have about you.

That this book explains us to us. It explains why we are so broken. Why we are so lost.

It explains to us why there is suffering in the world. It also explains how man can be blessed. How man can prosper.

How men and women can live honorable lives before their peers and ultimately before you. Father, I pray that just this short series on your Word would be an encouragement to those of our faith.

[3 : 51] There's many words here and sometimes we don't understand the meaning of these words or the purpose. And I pray that you would make my words clear. And that you would engage the hearers of this message.

Both heart and mind with an understanding of what I'm saying. And that they would see the implications for this knowledge in their own lives. So God, we just thank you for this opportunity to come together and worship you on this wonderful, beautiful Sunday morning.

And God's people said, Amen. Amen. So if you just read along with me, it simply states the Bible. Throughout history, God has revealed himself in a variety of ways.

And God has preserved the substance of this revelation in the Bible. When we say the Bible, we say we mean the 66 books of the Old Testament and the New Testament.

These books were written by divinely chosen authors as they were prompted and guided by the Spirit of God. Although those writers were genuine authors and in most cases not just secretaries taking dictation, the work of the Spirit was so complete that everything written in the biblical books taught the truth without any errors.

[5 : 16] Strictly speaking, this inerrancy of the Bible applies to its books as originally written. But we can be confident that we have the original text of the Bible in the copies and translations we possess today because God has preserved those writings.

In any attempt to define what we ought to believe or how we ought to live, only the Bible can be used as a final authority.

Traditional interpretations of the Bible and confessions of faith are useful guides, but they are always open to correction based on further study of the Bible.

Any cooperation with others who profess to be Christians must be based on a shared commitment to the unique authority and complete truthfulness of the Bible.

And we have those scriptures that are included for your reference. So anybody who comes and wants to know what our church is all about, this is how it begins. We start out with what our final authority is, and it is the Bible.

[6 : 30] It doesn't say BK's words, BK's ideas, the elders' aspirations for you. It simply states the authority is God's word and God's word alone.

So I want to ask you guys a few questions. This past weekend, we were blessed to host a family parenting conference. Can I ask with a show of hands who was there?

Who had an opportunity? Great, a majority of you were blessed by being there. How many of you, with a show of raising hands, would say you benefited from the conference?

A great number of you as well. I know many of you have stated very positive comments to me about the conference. The question is, what made it good?

Was it Chris's opinions that made it good? Was it, did he show some kind of life hacks that would help you discipline your kids better?

[7 : 30] Yes, no? No, right? Or would it be fair to say it was the wisdom that Chris taught from the word of God?

I think we could all say that it was biblical, correct? It was interesting that when Chris did give his advice, he was clear to say, this isn't what God says.

This is just his advice on certain particular issues. But he was clear that where he was deriving his information from was the Bible.

I know some of you have stated that how good, righteous, and helpful it is to know your Bible.

And I can say, if you weren't here and you missed the conference, perhaps you're saying, I'm not ready to talk about family, you're single or whatnot. I would still encourage you to have an opportunity to listen.

[8 : 30] Especially if you could say, if there was only one session you'd listen to, which one would you guys recommend? Here's the hint. Which one? The first session, right? Because he dug into Genesis chapter 1, which was really interesting.

Because he demonstrated that there is no problem of today. And listen, there's a lot of problems going on today. We live in a crazy world, but God actually addresses a lot of those problems right from Genesis chapter 1.

If we get Genesis chapter 1 correct, we smooth out a lot of the baggage of our lives. Do we not? So it was very valuable to us in that way.

Now let me ask you another question. And this is a little bit of a deeper question. How many of you would like to know how to parent your children as Chris taught you?

A couple of hands. Perhaps some of you who've already parented children that are out of house could say you wish you would have had the wisdom that Chris gave us to parent your children.

[9 : 51] But what's really interesting to remember about Chris is that he's a normal guy. Well, he's kind of abnormal. He's an accountant by trade, right? But like you, he's just a normal guy who attends a church, who serves in his church, but he relies on one sole authority for truth.

And that is God's Word, the Bible. So if there was one thing that you could draw from the conference, if you could be like Chris, remember that old be like Michael Jordan, you could wear his shoes, right?

Be like Mike. If you could be like Chris, what would you do? Study God's Word. The knowledge that he had is the same knowledge that's open to you.

The same wisdom that he professed is the same wisdom you have access to, which is simply just knowing, reading, studying your Bible.

It's interesting that so many of us have this book, which authors say the value is of more riches than gold and silver combined.

[11 : 11] We just keep it on a bedside table or perhaps in a coffee table or maybe it just exists on an app on our phone that we look at when times are tough.

And then we wonder why we're so inclined to make foolish decisions in our lives. No matter how many times we say we love Jesus, our lives are marked with foolishness.

I want to make it clear that the Bible states that there are two forms of revelation. By the word revelation I mean the act of God whereby God discloses to man what would otherwise be unknown.

That there's two forms of revelation that exist. The first form is what we call is natural revelation or some people call it general revelation.

This is God revealing himself to man through creation or through our own consciences. In fact, the book of Romans 118, let me read this text for you.

[12 : 31] It says, For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

For what can be known about God is plain to them because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world.

And the things that have been made, so they are without excuse. To boil it all down, what Paul is saying here is that there is no such thing as an atheist in this world.

To be an atheist is to deny or to suppress the truth which you clearly understand.

Why? Because the truth is really all around us. And it's plain to see. All you have to do is open your eyes, open your ears to the existence of this world around us.

[13 : 52] The majestic mountains, the incredible bodies of water which flow so wonderfully. Even the study of air, water, how the atmosphere of this world works.

The perfect distance the earth is from the sun. The perfect size of the moon in relation to our earth which controls the tides and the seasons of life are all in perfect placement.

It has clearly been designed. There was a great meme that I saw a couple of weeks ago. And everybody, you know, we're living in a day and age of AI, automatic or what is it?

Artificial intelligence. Robots. And these guys are bragging about how great this robot that they've made in. And of course, it's plugged into a powerhouse.

And these guys are like, look at how smart we are. And I guess this robot can jump and balance in a way that no other robot can. And then there's a picture of a man.

[15 : 01] And it's see-through in all the capillaries and how our bodies are fed by the food and how we draw energy from the sun, all these things. One, we rejoice.

Look at man has made this robot. And then there's us who's so much more intricate and amazing. And look what happened by chance.

Right? Over billions, billions and more billions of years of so many lightning strikes hitting a pond on some world where we don't even know how that pond started.

We crawled out as a fish. And here we are today.

It's crazy what knowledge men will suppress. Our bodies are wonderfully designed.

[16 : 01] They are not by accident. It tells us that there is someone greater than us. Even the robot has to ask himself, how did I get here?

And so do we, as man, ask, how did I get here? And then the second question is, as the robot would ask, what is my purpose?

What have I been created for? So God reveals himself naturally through creation. The second way he does it is through our conscience.

Our conscience. Romans 2.14.15 says, for when Gentiles, and it said, who did not have the law, by nature, do what the law requires.

That means the Gentiles are in opposition to the Jews, which was the nation of Israel who God had given them the Old Testament to know, which taught them how to live.

[17 : 15] There was a group of people who were completely irreligious, but knew that murdering was wrong. They knew that sleeping with your neighbor's wife was wrong.

They knew that lying was wrong. They knew that cheating was wrong. That stealing at the marketplace was wrong. Even though they had no law that stated that, they knew in their hearts that something was wrong.

And what Paul continues to say, it says, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law.

See, they show that the work of the law is written on their hearts. It's already been pre-programmed into our DNA.

Okay. While their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them.

[18 : 24] It's why everybody knows that stealing is wrong. Lying is wrong. Killing is evil. Adultery is evil. Cheating is evil. Now, some people will try to argue that these things are, while recognized are bad, are actually culturally learned.

However, if you're familiar with the study of anthropology, it clearly states that that is wrong on every count. In every nation, every culture that has ever existed, there is always an existence of a God, because their conscience is a law unto themselves, and they ultimately try to appease the God who they know they've offended.

Sometimes they'll make it out of rocks. They'll make them out of wood. Or they'll worship a volcano. But within that design, they know their conscience has done something wrong, and they want to make up for their offense.

And those cultures, which try to do away with the idea of sin or evil, who embrace the idea of being permissive of everything and everyone, is ultimately doomed to destruction.

It is why I can clearly say that our culture is clearly on a highway to hell. The government, the culture, tries to be more permissive and in their ideas more loving, but it just brings about more destruction.

[20 : 10] Not just to people's soul, but to their minds and bodies as well. Well, there is a reason why there is an epidemic of mental health issues today.

It was interesting, a conversation that I had with a police officer that I got to know while living in Victoria, because several times at our church, our church would be attacked, and several times he had that Sunday morning shift where he'd have to come and deal with someone who had a mental issue that Sunday.

And I knew he ended up being from Ontario, where I was from, and I simply asked him, what is the difference between policing in Ontario to policing here in Victoria? And he simply said, all I know is that every single shift, I have to go to the mental hospital.

Whereas in Ontario, it happens sometimes, sometimes, but here in Victoria, and I just asked him a simple question, why do you think that is? And he just simply said, they allow everything here.

There's no such thing as right or wrong. Everything's right. And people who ultimately know that things are wrong, try to do something right, but they're just, their senses, their minds, their conscience, cannot deal with it.

[21 : 30] You see, this is the thing about natural revelation. Natural revelation gives evidence that God exists, but it does not reveal how to make peace with the God that you know that exists.

You with me? Natural revelation points to a God that clearly exists, his eternal power, his divine attributes, but it does not tell us how to make good with that God.

How to have peace. The Bible clearly teaches that creation reveals that God is indeed a God of power.

Amen? And he is of a divine nature, meaning he is not like us. And we know that at some point in our lives, we will have to deal with the designer and ask him, what is our purpose?

You see, this has been the story of mankind from the very beginning. How do I fix my relationship with the creator that my conscience tells me that I have offended?

[22 : 54] That's all that natural revelation does. But then we have this thing called special revelation. Special revelation.

And that revelation, the fact that we need to hear directly from God. God has to intervene in our lives with a message that teaches us about him.

We can't come up with that on our own. We need God. We need to know exactly what God would have of us. Natural revelation does not explain how to get right with God.

How do I atone for my sins? I know I have sins. I know I've broken the laws. As my conscience clears me, tell me, tells me this.

But how do I atone? And this is where special revelation comes in. Special revelation is God revealing himself to man through miracles, through signs, through dreams, through visions, and sometimes even appearing as a man in tangible form, which we call theophanies.

[24 : 08] And we learn about these through the words of the prophets. And ultimately, we learn this truth through Jesus Christ, who is known as the living word, whose whole life and every teaching reveal that he is indeed the son of God.

And through the written words of the Bible. Here's a question for you. Does God still use those ways to reveal his will to man today?

If you remember, we talk about miracles and signs. We saw that when we studied the life of Christ. How did God, Jesus Christ, prove that he was God?

Did miracles, right? To say that, to prove that his words were indeed true. What do you think caused Moses to believe in God?

If you remember, it was the burning bush. It was a story. He just, the bush was burning, but was not consumed. And then we saw the miracles that Moses did in Egypt.

[25 : 16] And then ultimately parting the ocean so that God's people could be free. You would see these miracles, and you would believe. Then ultimately, we know about Joseph.

God brought truth to him through these dreams. He knew what God wanted for him. You see, when we read the Old Testament, we see that this is how God communicated with either Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Daniel, and the prophets.

However, eventually in Hebrews 1, the writer tells us, long ago, at many times, in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets.

So at the beginning of God calling his people, there was these signs, these miracles, and these dreams. And then eventually, God brought prophets, men who could proclaim the word of God.

But in those last days, he has spoken to us by his son. In the last days being, when Jesus Christ came, ultimate truth would come through Jesus, whom he appointed, the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

[26 : 37] You see, the ultimate way God brings truth, living truth to us, is through Jesus Christ. It is through the New Testament, which teaches us about Jesus.

We have the New Testament, which informs us of Jesus, that there's a point where we do not need God to intervene anymore. We have everything that he wants us to know.

That's why he even tells us how this world is going to shake out. We already know the ending. You see, what special revelation provides for us through the Bible goes beyond natural revelation.

The Bible is sufficient to lead one to an understanding of God and how man can be made right with God. To put another way, the Bible tells us how to live in peace with our Creator.

And the biggest contrast of all is that natural revelation will indeed fade away.

[27 : 50] But as the Bible attests in Isaiah, Matthew, Mark, 1 Peter, and Luke, heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will endure forever.

Nature, as wonderful as it is, is still marred in sin. That's why we have hurricanes that destroy and earthquakes and storms that kill and maim.

But God's Word is holy and perfect. To put another way, natural revelation condemns, special revelation brings hope.

So take a look at your Bibles to 2 Timothy 3.16. 2 Timothy 3.16. This is one of the references that we have on our website, and it's one of the clearest passages we have in regards to the Word of God.

This, we believe, is the final book that the Apostle Paul would write to us. And it kind of gives us a summary summary of what God's Word is.

[29 : 04] Simply says, all Scripture, not some Scripture, not just old Scripture, but new Scripture, says all Scripture, and Scripture is meaning the words of God, is breathed out by God, and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man or woman of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

I find that word complete to be a compelling word, to know that there is a way, an instruction that teaches us to be complete, to be equipped for every good work.

In there, we have a purpose that we've been given by God to do these good works. And yet, it's telling us that the text gives us everything to do so.

That ultimately, the Bible teaches us to live a life that is indeed pleasing to God. The Bible teaches us, it instructs us.

The idea of reproof, it reveals what is true, what is not true. That's why sometimes we're reading our Bibles and we're confronted with something about ourselves that we know is wrong.

[30 : 28] And in that, the Bible corrects us and ultimately gives us training in righteousness. Here's my question to you.

How many of you want to be taught more, who want to know more truth or more of God's righteousness? The idea is to know more of God's Word.

That's what Chris was teaching us over the weekend. When you, the more knowledge you have of God's Word, there's more wisdom to pull to direct your life.

Now, let me tell you about the Bible. The Bible is actually a pretty incredible book. The book was written over a period of 1,600 years, from about 1440 B.C.

all the way to 100 A.D. In that time, the Bible has over 40 different authors. And these 40 different authors wrote 66 different books.

[31 : 35] 39 in the Old Testament, 27 in the New Testament. These books were written in three different languages. We know primary Hebrew, Greek, but there's also sections of our Bible that were written in Aramaic.

And what's interesting, in a book that was written over 1,600 years, 40 different authors, there is one coherent message.

There's no contradictions. The story meshes wonderfully together. Let me give you a quick road map through your Bibles.

As I stated, there's 39 books in your Old Testament. It's divided between three different types of books. 17 are historical. If you read the historical books, you will have a chronological story of what happened before Jesus.

There's also five books which are poetic books like Psalms or Proverbs or Ecclesiastes. They give us wisdom. And then there's 17 prophetic books.

[32 : 49] And those are the books that kind of gum people up when we read because they're not in chronological order. So often you have to know who the book is prophesying to, what part of history.

Because like I said, there's a 1,600 year history in that time frame. If you begin with Genesis, the first 11 chapters of Genesis covers creation, covers when God called Adam and Eve in Genesis 1 and 2.

And Genesis 3 teaches us how evil entered into the world. Genesis 4 to chapters 11 explain the plight of man without God.

And it is horrible. Chapter 11 ends with this flood and we believe that flood to be around 2300 B.C.

And then around 2000 B.C. in Genesis 12, we begin to read the story of Abraham. Abraham, a man God calls to a people that he wants to be a holy nation, the Jews.

[34 : 05] This is where we read about the Abrahamic covenant. And at that time, they lived as tribes within the land of Israel. And if you read the rest of Genesis, you're going to read characters such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.

Men called by God, yet still marred by the sin of Adam and Eve. There's a period of 400 years of being in Egypt as slaves.

And then Moses arrives on the scene at around 1446 B.C. And when you read the next four books, beginning with Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, it's God shifting that the people of God don't exist so much as tribes anymore, but as a nation.

And he starts to give them laws and how to live religiously and how to worship him. He's laying down the foundation of all governments at that point.

And then obviously we go into Joshua and Judges where God allows the Israel to return to the promised land.

[35 : 21] Then we read about the rise of the kings, King Saul, King David, King Solomon, and eventually destruction in 600 B.C.

And then finally in Malachi, which is around 400 B.C., God goes silent, but he prophesies by a man who will bring priests whose name is Jesus Christ.

Our New Testament is made up of five historical books, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts. We learn about the central figure through those first four books of Jesus Christ.

Then we see the birth of the church in the book of Acts. The New Testament then gives us what's called 21 doctrinal books. And what that is, those are books that teach us how to live in the Lord's way.

And then we have one final book, which is the book of Revelation, which is a prophetic book. And this is the last times that we live in. You see, thinking right about the Bible is absolutely fundamental and essential because it identifies the only true source of truth.

[36 : 36] Not just to Christians, but to everyone around the world. It's kind of funny. If you know who Martin Luther is, do you guys know who Martin Luther is? He's the father of the Reformation.

He was this monk in Germany. And he had questions how the Catholic church was working. And he ended up unwittingly beginning the Protestant faith.

So our faith comes in around 1540. I think it's around 1540, somewhere around there. And the reason is he started to say that the Catholic church had other sources of truth.

He noted that not only did they say the Bible was true, but he knew that they placed truth in what was called sacred traditions. That they also placed truth in reason and philosophy.

And he saw them placing truth in man's experience. But more specifically, there was this truth that was coming from popes. But what he noticed was, in how they were developing truth, there was contradictions.

[37 : 45] And he was saying, if God is perfect, how could there be contradictions? How could these men be saying they speak for God, but are contradicting what the Bible says?

Which led to this famous quote when he was being investigated or interrogated. I don't know which one it was. But he simply said, unless I am convinced by the testimony of scriptures or by clear reason, for he says, for I do not trust either in the Pope or the councils alone.

Since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves, he says, I am bound by the scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the word of God.

That's what started off the Reformation. We don't want popes, we want truth to be declared. And that's when it started, this foundation of, it was called sola scriptura.

And what that means is, scripture alone is what tells us what God would have for us. The fact is, the Bible itself appeals to itself claiming to be the very word of God.

[39 : 10] In the Old Testament, the prophets prophesied before the kings and the people of old, and they often stated, the Lord said, the Lord has spoken.

That was their authority. They didn't say themselves. It's interesting, in the first book of the Old Testament, begins in Genesis 1, 3, it says, and God said, let there be light.

And in the last book of the Old Testament, Malachi 7, it says, and you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day when I act, says the Lord of hosts.

You see, that phrase, word of God, appears over 40 times in the New Testament. And when they use it, it equates with the Old Testament as well.

The Gospels refer to Jesus' words as the words of God. The Apostles, when they began to preach in the book of Acts, they referred to God's word as the word of God.

[40 : 24] The good news, the gospel, is the word of God. What's interesting is how does the Bible define the word of God?

Does it refer to the word of God as some advice, some wisdom, some tales of your ancestors? The Bible defines the word of God as righteous, trustworthy, true, faithful, unchangeable, eternal, light, and pure.

The word of God claims that it is without error, and it is infallible. If you notice that text that Carl read to us this morning in Psalm 19, the ultimate text of understanding God's word is actually Psalm 119, but Psalm 19, and let me just read you some points.

Psalm 19, 7, it says, the law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. What that tells you is God's word transforms hearts. God's word transfers hearts.

Number two, it says, the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. So not only does it change hearts, it makes wise the simple. And then it follows that up with the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart.

[41 : 57] So not only does it revive the soul, not only does it bring you wisdom, but when you live a wise life, what do you have? A joyful life, right?

When you know you're walking right with God, no matter what circumstance or situation you're in, there is joy. And why it says the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

You see truth. You know what are lies and what are truth. So as part of this study, I want to look at four areas.

We're going to look at in the next week, the inspiration of Scripture, the authority of Scripture, the inerrancy of Scripture, and the perseverance or preservation of Scripture.

You will all note in your handout that those are all reflected in our affirmation of faith. Before I end this morning, I want to answer three very common questions that people ask about the Bible.

[43 : 12] The first is, how do we know that the books in the Bible we use are actually the right books? We've got 66 books. Well, should there be 68?

Maybe there should be 58. Maybe there should be 40. Maybe there should be 80. What about the Apocrypha? If you grew up Catholic, you know there's an extra 14 books. I'm going to answer that question briefly for you today.

The second question that I want to answer for you is, how do we know that the words are actually correct in the Bible? How do we know we have?

So this Bible that I'm opening today and I'm reading for you are the actual words that were spoken to God when they first took down the original copies?

And the third question that I want to answer is, how do we know what translation to use? Or what's the differences in the translation? Have you guys ever asked that question who come from a church background?

[44 : 09] You ever had that question? It's been in my head, right? We use the ESV. Why are we using the ESV? Maybe you want to use a King James version, some other version. So I'm going to give you a couple of quick answers.

The first one is, I want to talk to you about what's called the transmission process. That is how we got the Bible. The Bible teaches that the words were authored through the power of the Holy Spirit.

We're going to cover this more next week under the inspiration, but it's not like everything that Paul wrote because he was a really good Christian guy, they said, wow, man, that's so much wisdom there, that's got to go in the Bible.

We know that's not true because Paul actually wrote a lot, but we don't have all of his writings. The Bible teaches, and like I said, we're going to get into next week, is that they were inspired and led by the Holy Spirit.

That's why we have such incredible continuity over 1600 years, 40 different authors, 66 different books. But what they do is they write a single copy.

[45 : 18] So the disciple would have this copy. So let's just take, for example, the Gospel of Mark. The Gospel of Mark, we know were the eyewitnesses account of the Apostle Peter.

So Peter's telling Mark his story, Mark's writing it out. Now, we need this copy in Rome. But before they would do that, they'd make other copies of that letter.

So let's just say one copy goes to Rome, and then maybe another one happens to come to Canada at that time, and another one goes to the United States, and I don't know, the other one goes to Egypt.

So when all of a sudden they're in Canada, hey, we all got the Gospel of Mark, let's make copies of this to send it around the rest of Canada. But all of a sudden, you know, because we're Canadian, instead of spelling honour, H-O-N-O-R, we're Canadians.

We start to add use to it, right? Like, where the people live, they start to make these corrections or amendations to the text that they're using.

[46 : 24] Of course, the version went to the states, and they kept using ain't. You know, you ain't supposed to steal. You ain't. So that one didn't really go very far. But why I'm telling you this, so it goes to all the different regions of the world.

And through that, we have these literally thousands of copies, all right? There's more copies, which are called manuscripts of the Bible, than any other book from antiquity.

Like, it's not even close. And we know the authors of the New Testament wrote within a hundred years of Jesus Christ, often within 50 to 60 years.

So it's close to that time. Here's a question. Do you guys believe in Caesar, the emperor of Rome? You guys familiar with him?

How many people wrote about Caesar? One. Of his exploits. And it happened years, centuries after.

[47 : 32] But we base that on fact, that it was history, even though it happened years. But the New Testament, there's thousands upon thousands of copies. So how do we know we got it right? Well, what researchers and really smart people do, they were able, they can track, let's just say, we'll call them families.

So the one letter that came to Canada, that became the Canadian family. But there was the one to Rome, that was the Roman family. So these different families. And you could look at all the letters and they were able to trace, just through the words, where it eventually came from.

And they're able to construct all the words of the original. Because we do not have the original manuscript that the Bible was written on. It has been deteriorated.

It no longer exists. So we just, we rely on copies of copies. But through the studying of copies of copies, we can pretty much come to a point where there's about only one paragraph of words that we're unsure of.

And of that paragraph, there's not a single word or thought that has any doctrinal implications. That's pretty incredible. So that is through this transmission process.

[48 : 54] So, you know, it's like the Canadian copy always bugs me. Because everywhere in the world, it spells center. C-E-N-T-E-R. And for some reason, we get the R and the E backwards.

I don't know. We don't spell danger that way, but we spell center. I don't know. Anyway, pet peeve number five for me. So, just through that incredible study, we're able to get a pretty accurate rendition.

So when people say, how do we know we actually have the exact words? Yeah, we're pretty close. 99.9% sure. just through that study because we have those families of the text that exists from the around the world.

So this kind of leads me to Bible translations. As you all know, the big book on the block was the King James Version written a long time ago.

and they had certain manuscripts available to them and those are the manuscripts they used to correct. This English Standard Version actually uses a set of manuscripts from a different family than the King James family.

[50 : 10] The King James believed that the more manuscripts you had, that had to be the closest to the truth, if you know what I mean.

They had like 20,000 copies of the Roman first letter of Mark. But the ESV is actually based off an Egyptian copy.

And the reason there's less manuscripts, but we're able to trace that family being closer to the time of writing. So, and essentially it is the oldest manuscript.

And that the people who translated our ESV Bible, that's the original manuscripts they derive from. So, so you have revised Standard Version. So you have these New American Standard Versions.

There's these different versions there. Now, some of the versions, what they do is they translate word for word. And they give you, so we get words in there. We, we, you don't really know what it means.

[51 : 09] Whereas you have a version, say the NIV or the message. Message is a little bit different. There's other versions out there. The Living Bible, they translate thought for thought.

So they read this, the Lord is my shepherd. And they ask the question, well, people in Canada don't know what shepherds are anymore. So we need to come up with another word that, you know, the Lord is my farmer or something like that.

It's just the idea, right? Of someone who tended. So that's how they do it. Whereas I prefer a word for word. And then we have to work at what that word is. Because how many, I grew up when, when you said something was bad, you knew what he meant, right?

But now I'm with my kids and they say, man, something is bad. Okay. Are you saying that's good or is it bad? Right? We gotta, you gotta tell me. Because communication changes rapidly over time.

So if we have the original and we know what it meant in that age, I can communicate to you what it meant back then. You with me? It's like idioms.

[52 : 15] It's raining cats and dogs. You go to Quebec and you say that and they think you're drunk or something, right? Like, what does that mean? They just, they don't use that idiom.

So you have to, and there are idioms in the Bible and you gotta figure out what those really mean. So that's why we have these different translations out there.

It doesn't mean there's confusion within the Christian community about what the Word of God says. We all believe in what the Word of God says, but there's just different ways to communicate it to us.

The last question I want to answer you this morning is how do we know we have all the right books? How do we know that these are truly the 66 books of the Bible?

How many people grew up Catholic? Okay, just a few of you? All right. But if you were like me and you grew up in a Catholic church, you noticed there was this part called the Apocrypha.

[53 : 14] And there was these 14 other books that were included in our Bible. And I remember that's one of the first questions when I opened up a Protestant Bible. There was less books.

What gives? You know, these guys must be really sinful, horrible people to be cutting out God's Word, but that's not really true. The Apocrypha was written between 200 B.C. and 100 A.D.

And at no point in history, especially from the Old Testament, did the Jews ever consider the books of the Apocrypha to be authoritative in any way.

The biggest reason why is they're wrong a lot of the times. They're wrong on history. They don't corroborate with the rest of the books of the Bible. We already got, like I said, 66 books that are all perfectly jiving with one another.

There's a word you don't hear a lot of, eh? But the Apocrypha books aren't really fitting. And they're also contradicting who Jesus was.

[54 : 17] There's horrible things that they say about Jesus, like Jesus is bumped over by these kids, so he blinds them all out of anger. And then the city's got to come and tell Mary and Joseph that they got to stop Jesus from doing those kind of things because it scares everybody.

And there's another story about him making clay birds and then he makes them into real and they all fly away, right? Just there's these far-fetched ideas. But there is some history. And the one books, the two books that I think are the best would be the first and second Maccabees because that describes the Jewish revolt of 175 to 135 BC.

So anyway. But what's interesting is that those books were never considered to be part of the Bible until a pope in 1546 said that they were considered tradition.

So our Bible, as we're going to understand, was codified in around 325 to 350 AD. When I say that codified, I'll explain it in a moment.

You guys heard the movie The Da Vinci Code? Had Tom Hanks. This guy named Dan Brown wrote this book and it became an international bestseller. And I remember at that point, everybody's asking me about it.

[55 : 37] And in that book, it's telling the tale that there's another secret gospel. And the reason the gospel is not in the Bible because it said that Mary Magdalene got married to Jesus and they had a kid.

Okay. So they're saying that's the truth. So this kid existed in the whole Da Vinci Code story is trying to figure out the line of Jesus. Okay.

So some people started, like I remember being on the train and some woman believing what this book said was true. And how can you say that? And I'm like, there is nobody in history who believed that book was true.

Nobody. First of all, it was written hundreds of years after Jesus Christ, but it clearly contradicted everything else that people who walked the earth and knew Jesus knew.

So what happens is in the New Testament, people knew the real Bible books by three different criterias. One, it was either written by an apostle or under an apostle's prophetic authorship.

[56 : 43] So the people who accredited were known to have walked with Christ and they knew what these were good godly men who were indeed inspired. Like I said, they were known men who were authenticated apostles or authenticated by the apostles.

So the gospel of Mark is an example. Mark wasn't an apostle, but it was Peter's words who was an apostle. Number two, there has to be consistent doctrinal agreement with existing scripture.

That's why we have the saying, scripture interprets scripture. So you take the books all coincide, so there was perfectly assimilation. And then three, the third reason is that there was universal acceptance by the church that these books were indeed the word of God.

And why do I say that? Because these books were known to be true long before the book was canonized. And what I mean by canonized, so when they got together and basically all the Christian bishops and pastors came together and they had this thing and they said, all right, we're going to codify this book.

And people thought or think that they were just choosing their favorite books. That's not what they were doing. They were just affirming what the church already knew was true for over 300, for three centuries, that these were indeed.

[58 : 11] And the reason they did it is because some Yahoo would show up with, hey, I got Barnabas's letters and those must be scriptural too, right?

It would come from Turkey. So they just finally said, you know what? We're going to get rid of all that problem. These are the only ones. That's it. And that's kind of why we have our Bible. So if you want more details on that, please see Dave.

He'd love to spend six to eight hours with you explaining all the ins and outs of this. All right. Is that okay?

We're just kind of getting into a little bit of an introduction. Do you guys all know all that kind of stuff, right? All right. If you don't, praise God, you're learning a little bit about why we at this Squamish Baptist Church put our authority in God's word.

That's a little bit of the background. There's nothing mysterious. So anything that seems mysterious, ask questions. There's a truth. There's a story. There's a reason these things exist. And we want you to be completely confident.

[59 : 15] Because I know when I was in university, I went through a phase of maybe these books were wrong. Maybe like the way it was written about, you know what confused me?

It's in the text that it said there was 500 witnesses. So if you would have told me, if you were evangelizing to me and said, you know, over 500 people saw Jesus Christ, I'd go, no, no, it's nonsense. It was only four.

So how can you say there was 500? But don't forget, it was written in the New Testament. And this was the challenge to people. They knew who those 500 people were. They were able to go.

So that's why the apostles were saying, if you don't believe me, go talk to these people. So that evidence was demonstrated to be true because it was right there for all the people. It wasn't like a guy who was writing 600 years later who said 500 people saw Jesus.

No, no, no. This was a guy who was writing it, investigating the people who were right there at the time. And many of these people went on to die for their faith. They lived in light of this.

[60 : 19] And that's why the church eventually explodes around the world. That's why we know this truth today. Let's pray. Holy Heavenly Father, we just thank you for not only the natural revelation that you bring us, which displays your awesome power and your divine attributes, but it reveals to us that there is indeed a God who reigns supreme and that we must reconcile with at some point because even in our consciences, we know we've broken God's law.

And we give you ultimate praise for Jesus Christ, who is the living word, that you gave us this special revelation. You called these prophets, these men, to write down what you said, that you tasked Moses to give us the story of Genesis so we would know our beginning.

We know how the earth was created, how mankind happened, how sin entered this world. That ever since that point, you've been driving us, our history have been driving us to the point of Jesus Christ who would redeem us of our sins.

And our New Testament includes not only the teachings of Jesus, but your teachings of fathers on how we should live, not only before you, but how to live with one another, how to live with our wives, how to live with our husbands, how to live at peace with our children, with our neighbors, our employers.

All those roots of wisdom are found in your word. Even going back to Genesis, we learned that we were created in your image.

[62 : 11] That says something. There's a purpose to us that as we were created in your image, there is a purpose in us to glorify you in our lives.

And every single person sitting here today knows the answer to that. Am I glorifying God? Yes or no by how we live?

Father, it's a wonderful purpose that you have given to us in how we raise our kids, how to teach them your truth. We live in a world that even says today there is no truth.

Two plus two equals five. It's insanity. And people are going to get hurt by this. Lives are going to be lost for false truths.

How can an engineer build a bridge if he doesn't believe in math? It's insanity. We send our kids to school.

[63 : 21] We're telling our little boys they're not boys, that they're girls. And you can change everything if you don't tell your parents and go to a doctor all the while you're only five or six years old.

Destroy your body now. The truth of the matter is those are the ways of Satan who seeks to destroy the soul and the flesh.

Father, I pray that you would give our voice strength that truth would resound so clearly to a world which doesn't even understand what the word truth means anymore.

And Father, I pray that we would never be ashamed that it is God's word that we follow, our creator. The world will come against us but let us not feel shame but understand that what we offer to this world is true freedom.

True freedom from the bondage of sin. True freedom from insanity. True freedom from being enslaved to a culture which seeks to destroy and disrupt.

[64 : 46] So God, we thank you for your word. We thank you for how you've led us here to squamish and to understand your truth. We pray that the eyes of the saints would open up to a deeper and longing desire to know your truth in all that it says.

In your name we pray. Amen.