

Building a Biblical Faith
Lesson 1 – Make Your Faith Sure
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Introduction: Do you have a Biblical faith?

- A. What is faith? What do we have faith in? Are there different kinds of faith?
1. πίστις *pistis* 1) conviction of the truth of anything, belief; in the NT of a conviction or belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervor born of faith and joined with it ..1d) belief with the predominate idea of trust ...2a) the character of one who can be relied on. - Thayer's Lexicon.
 2. Faith is based upon an unseen God. **(1 Pt 1:8-9; Heb 11:27)**
 3. We have faith when we have examined God's truth and then are willing to commit our lives in trust to an unseen God! **(Rom 10:17; Eph 1:13)**
- B. Is your faith sure?
1. When God speaks we can be sure! **(Dan 2:45; Heb 6:19; 2 Pt 1:10)**
 2. βέβαιος, αία, ον (also βλίβαιος) steadfast, firm, sure; (1) literally, of an anchor *secure, firm* (HE 6.19); figuratively, of what can be depended on *reliable, certain, trustworthy* (RO 4.16).
 3. This all comes down to our knowing God and His character.
 4. It also depends upon our feeding and maintaining our faith. **(2 Pt 1:5-8)**

I. We must have firm reasons as to why we believe in God

- A. A Biblical Faith is based upon evidence. **(Heb 11:1; 1 Pet 3:15; John 8:32)**
1. Those who say faith is a "blind leap in the dark" are wrong.
 2. Challenge the student to test the evidence! (Ex. Richard.)
- B. The Apostles established faith by pointing out their eyewitness testimony of the raised Christ. **(Acts 2:32; 3:14-15; 5:30-32; 10:39-43; 13:27-31)**
1. Is this testimony believable?
 2. Many will lie or simply are mistaken when they bear testimony.
 3. On what basis do we *reject* some testimony and *accept* other testimony?
- C. Are the apostles and other writers of the Bible credible?
1. Were the apostles in a position to know the facts? **(1 John 1:1-3)**
 2. Did the apostles have any advantages in lying about the resurrection?
(1 Cor 15:30-32; John 16:1-3)
 3. Are the writings of the apostles historically accurate?
 4. Was there agreement between the numerous witnesses? **(1 Cor 15:1-6)**
- D. Consider the significant facts of their testimony.
1. **Jesus was Dead** - Hear the description of an eyewitness. **(John 19:32-36)**
 2. **The body was placed in a new tomb.** **(Matt 27:60)**
 3. **The tomb was cut out of rock.** **(Matt 27:60)**
 4. **A large stone covered the entrance.** **(Matt 27:60)**
 5. **A Roman seal was placed on the stone.** **(Matt 27:66)**
 6. **A Roman Guard was placed at the tomb.** **(Matt 27:65-66)**
 7. **The tomb was inspected carefully.** **(John 20:3-8; John 20:11)**

E. There is a great question to be answered: **Who Moved the Stone?**

1. Did the **Jews?** (**Matt 27:62-66**)

- a. The Jews were the very ones trying to prevent the resurrection.
- b. If so they had a perfect time to present the body 50 days later!
(**Acts 2:32, 36**)

2. Did the **Romans?**

- a. The Romans would not want to risk their necks for what they would consider as "silly Jewish superstition".
- b. The penalty for a Roman guard's failure was death.
(**Acts 16:26-27; 27:42**)

3. Did the **Disciples?**

- a. This was the best explanation the smartest men among the Jews could come up with. (**Mat 28:11-15**)
- b. If they were asleep, how did they know it was the disciples?
- c. Why did they not arrest the apostles as grave robbers?
- d. Did the apostles give their lives for a lie?
- e. Their account is believable (**Mark 16:9-14**)

4. Who then moved the stone? (**Acts 13:27-31**) (NKJV)

F. Consider the vast evidence of fulfilled prophecy.

1. The words of Christ are recorded. (**Psa 22:1**)
2. The words and actions of His enemies are recorded. (**Psa 22:6-8, 18**)
3. The details of crucifixion are recorded. (**Psa 22:14-17**)
4. How can these things be written over 1000 years before the event and even before crucifixion was invented?

G. Even though this evidence is powerful, it must be received in order to have power in us. (**2 Thess 1:9-10; 1 Thess 2:13**)

II. How other questions are answered from this foundation

A. Why should I believe in the Bible as inspired from God? Do we have the Bible as God gave it? Have men and translators altered the Bible?

1. Establishing the resurrection proves that Jesus is the Son of God. (**Rom 1:3-4**)
2. Jesus taught that the Old Testament was the very words of God! (**Mark 12:36**)
3. He claimed the word of God is without contradiction. (**John 10:34-35**)
4. He identified the known books of the Old Testament. (**Lk 24:44-45**)
5. He was to be the one directing the giving of the New Testament.
(**Jn 14:26, 16:12-13**)

6. He promised that His words would never pass away. (**Mt 24:35**)

7. The Apostles confirm these things! (**Eph 3:3-5; Jude 3**)

B. Has evolution proven there is no God? (**Gen 1:1-2**)

1. Has this theory been proven? Do you really understand it?
2. If you have serious doubts about this then pursue answers!
3. If there is design, there must be a designer! (**Rom 1:20; Psa 19:1-7**)

C. Why should I be concerned about morality? (**Jn 3:19-21; Acts 17:30-31**)

D. Why should I be concerned about what I believe and what church I attend?

1. Jesus was concerned about doctrine and associations.

(Mt 7:15-20; Mt 15:12-13, 16:6, 11)

2. Jesus wanted His followers to take His word seriously! (Jn 12:48-50; 8:28-30)

E. What path should I take in my life?

Conclusion: Make sure you have a foundation that is sure! (Mt 7:21-27)

Jesus and Hermeneutics

Frank Jamerson

The word *hermeneutics* has been generally reserved for college classrooms, but in recent years has become popular with many brethren. It means “the art or science of the interpretation of literature” (Webster). The Greek word “hermeneuo” is defined as, “(cp. Hermes, the name of the pagan god Mercury, who was regarded as the messenger of the gods), denotes to explain, interpret (Eng., hermeneutics)” (W.E. Vine). A strengthened form of it is found in **Luke 24:27**. Jesus “*expounded* to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.” It simply refers to the principles by which we interpret, explain or expound the Scriptures.

Those who are calling for a *new hermeneutic* are saying they do not believe the methods of interpretation we have used are correct. The appeal to precept, example and necessary inference should be discarded and we should look for another way of understanding Biblical authority. Some say we should “study the life of Jesus and do what we feel He would do in the situation.” It seems strange that people who profess to follow Jesus would suggest a standard that He neither suggested nor exemplified. If we are to follow the example of Jesus, surely that would include following His example in how to establish God’s Biblical authority.

In every temptation of Jesus, He appealed to the word of God. When the devil said, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread,” Jesus responded, “It is written Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God” (**Mt. 4:3,4**). When the tempter quoted Scripture (**Ps. 91:11, 12**), Jesus countered by saying, “It is written again, You shall not tempt the Lord your God” (**Mt. 4:7**). To the third temptation, Jesus said, “Away with you Satan! For it is written, You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve” (**Mt. 4:10**). If I understand the example of Jesus, He taught us to act only by the authority of God, to accept everything He said, not just a text out of context. That does not sound like some subjective feeling of what God might want us to do in a certain situation.

Jesus used precepts (commands or statements of fact) when He was asked about the Father’s will. A lawyer wanted to know what to do to inherit eternal life, and Jesus said “What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?” (**Lk. 10:26**). The lawyer quoted God’s words as revealed through Moses, and Jesus said, “You have answered rightly, do this and you will live” (**Lk. 10:28**). When the Pharisees asked Him about divorce, he quoted **Genesis 2:24** and concluded, “Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate” (**Mt. 19:6**). The Pharisees objected to His application of that passage and tried to circumvent it by appealing to what Moses permitted, but Jesus insisted that the statement of **Genesis 2:24** revealed God’s intention for men.

Jesus also appealed to examples in the Old Testament and taught His disciples to follow them. Certain scribes and Pharisees asked Jesus to show them other signs, but He said, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will rise in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and indeed a greater than Solomon is here” (**Mt. 12:39-42**). Jesus used three examples (Jonah, Nineveh, and the Queen of Sheba) to teach them that they needed to listen to His teaching!

After demonstrating humility, in the washing of His disciples’ feet, Jesus said, “If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet” (**Jn. 13:14**). Not only did He give them an example, he commanded them to follow it! Those who say we do not learn from examples are not following the example of Jesus. In fact, even the commands in Scripture come to us through examples.

Jesus also established authority through necessary inference. The Sadducees thought they had Jesus in a dilemma because of the woman who had been married to seven brothers, but Jesus said, “You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven. But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living” (**Mt. 22:29-32**). The example of God speaking to Moses from the burning bush (**Ex. 3:6**), necessarily implied that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob continued to exist, therefore the Sadducees were wrong about their doctrine. Again, at the end of the chapter, Jesus drew a necessary inference from David’s statement, “The Lord said to my Lord, Sit on My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool” (**Mt. 22:44; Ps. 110:1**). He concluded, “If David then calls Him Lord, how is He his Son?” (**Mt. 22:45**). They had no answer, because they could not deny the necessary implication in the Scripture.

Yes, we should follow the example of Jesus, but that should include His example of respect for precept, example and necessary inference. Jesus never told anyone to study the life of Moses and do what he felt Moses would do under your circumstance. He quoted precepts and examples from God’s word and drew necessary conclusions. Those who say we should study the life of Jesus and do what we feel He would do, are not following Jesus.