

(Guidelines) in What Way Is the Bible Unique

by J. Vernon McGee

The Bible is a unique book with dual authorship, communicating God's word to humanity through human authors.

Duration: 14:05

Scripture: 2 Timothy 3:16, Genesis 1:1, Psalm 119:105, Matthew 6:33, John 4:6, Romans 8:23, 1 Corinthians 2:13

Topics: "Biblical Authority", "Divine Inspiration"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of interpreting the Bible correctly. They acknowledge that there are many different interpretations of the Bible, but express the hope that there will be perfect agreement in God's presence. The speaker describes the Bible as a book that can communicate a life to its readers and can lead them to become children of God. They also highlight the dual nature of the Bible, as both a divine and human book, comparing it to Jesus who was both God and man. The speaker concludes by encouraging the audience to read the Bible and appreciate its uniqueness and thrilling story.

Transcript

Now, today, I would like to talk to you about the Bible and the type of book that it is. The Bible is, in many ways, a most unusual book. And it's a most unusual book in that it has a dual authorship.

In other words, God is the author of the Bible, and in another sense, men are the authors of the Bible. The Bible was written, actually, by about 40 authors over a period of approximately 1,500 years. Some of these men never even heard of the others, and there was no collusion of the 40.

Two or three of them could have gotten together, but the others could never have. And yet, they have presented a book that has the most marvelous continuity of any book that has ever been written. And there is a collusion here, and that's the collusion of the Holy Spirit.

And when you say dual authorship, somebody says, you mean to tell me that the Holy Spirit is the author and that these men are the authors also? I mean exactly that. I mean that the Bible is a God-human book, a God-man book. And in many senses, the Bible is very much like the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

You see, He came to this earth and became incarnate. He was both God and man. And John put it in this simple way.

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. And you know, you can almost say that about the Bible. The Bible became flesh and dwelt among us.

And It on the Divine Side is a book that we're going to talk about that, and I hope I can get my foot in the door. There are four things on the divine side, on God's side. It's a God book, and that is revelation, inspiration, illumination, and interpretation.

I want to talk about those four. And by the way, somebody's saying this is getting to be rather complicated. May I say the notes that we have on guidelines for studying the Bible are available, and they are the first ones that are being sent out.

If you'd like to have the full copy now, but these messages I'm giving are in print and will be sent out to those today that are listening, if you'd like to have them. Now, on the divine side, we want to talk about revelation, inspiration, illumination, and interpretation. Now, on the other side, the human side, and it's a very human book.

May I say it was written by man from all walks of life. There was the prince and the pauper. There was the very highly intellectual and then very simple man.

Actually, Dr. Luke writes almost classical Greek in a period when the Koinade Greek was popular. And did you know that his Greek is marvelous? But I have news for you. Simon Peter wrote some Greek also.

He's not so good, if you want to know the truth. But did you know that God used both of them? God the Holy Spirit used both of these men. And that has to do with inspiration.

Now, that means that God was able to use these men without destroying their personality. And he let them express exactly their thoughts, their feelings. And you'll find they all did.

And yet, through that method, the Spirit of God was able to overrule in such a way that God said exactly what he wanted to say. And that's the wonder of this book, the Bible. That's the reason that it's a human book.

It's like my Lord that walked down here and grew weary and sat down at a well. And he talked with people down here and communicated with them. This is a book that communicates.

I want to talk a little about that too, by the way, next time. I hear today that you've got to come down to the level of the hippie or the level of the group today that are immoral and that you have to enter into that. I don't agree with that at all.

This is a book that talks to man in all walks of life. And the thing that has thrilled us about this through the Bible program is this, that there is a professor in the University of Ohio that never misses one of these programs. There is another professor in a university in the south that encourages all of the faculty to listen to the program.

And did you know that there are men that are working right here in Los Angeles, right down here on the wharf? They don't speak very good English. In fact, some of them barely speak it. They understand it and they listen to the program.

One man has written in. He said, I don't write very well. I just don't quite, not able to express myself.

And all you'd have to do would be to read his letter to agree with him. And may I say to you, the college professor and the man that is not even have an eighth grade education, they all get the message when this book speaks. And then they talk about the generation gap.

I'm amazed today that there are young people that are listening right south of us down at San Diego at a college right now. If you're listening to this program around the noon hour, there's a group down there that meet every day to listen to the program. And some argue about it.

Some disagree, but they listen. May I say to you, the word of God communicates, friends. It'll get through to you.

We have children that listen to it. We hear from them. And then we have retired people.

May I say to you, friends, the Bible knows nothing about a generation gap. It speaks to mankind today. The Bible as it is, a man as they are.

How important that is. It's a God book. I hold in my hand right now a book that's supernatural.

And in this book, God says 2,500 times, God said, the Lord has said, thus saith the Lord. He's made it very clear that he's speaking through this book. And if you have a blood-tipped ear, you'll hear him, my friend.

May I say to you, this is a God book. But it's a man book, a human book. The book I have before me here, it's pretty well worn.

To begin with, it's a very human book, if you all know. I got it marked up here. And it's a translation.

It's not really the original at all. If it was the original, I couldn't read it. It's put in a language that I can understand.

And we're going to talk about some of these versions, I suppose we'll get around to that next time. But the point I'm trying to make today, friends, is that this is a book that on one side is a God book. This is a book that can communicate a life to you.

And that today that you can even become a child of God, begotten not by corruptible seed, but by incorruptible, the Word of God that liveth and abideth forever. And then on the other side, it's a very human book. It talks to you about your aches and pains and your groanings.

And Paul says, we that are in this body, we do groan. And I'm at the age right now where I find out I do groan, friends, and I'm for being scriptural. I do a lot of groaning.

My wife tells me sometimes you ought not to groan. I said, I'm being scriptural. The Bible says that we groan in these bodies.

And I'm going to groan. This is a human book, friends, but it's a God book. Yet there's no book to compare to it.

Why in the world do you read these little old paperbacks these silly things? I watched the other day a person over in the Hawaiian Islands sitting on a hotel reading one of these dirty little filthy paperback books and out before it was the gorgeous tropical scenery. Why read these books when you got the Bible,

friends? And it's a thriller. It's a thrilling story.

By the way, if you're not on the Bible bus, get on right now. Write in and ask for the notes and outlines. Let us hear from you.

We'd like to take you along because right now in a few days we'll be beginning in the book of Genesis. Now, I said last time that the Bible is a most unique book. No book to compare to it in many ways, but this way primarily.

It is a book of dual authorship. And what we mean by that is that there is the divine side and the human side of the Bible. On the divine side, this is God's book.

He's communicated to man. He's spoken here and he's got through his entire word. So much so that if God had anything else to say that he hadn't said in the Bible, well, he's already said it.

And if God spoke out of heaven right now, he'd just repeat himself because he said all that he wants to say to this generation. And by the way, he didn't learn anything when he read the morning paper. And when man went to the moon, he didn't discover anything that God didn't already know when he gave us the word of God.

And you know, friends, it doesn't look to me like man discovered very much up there either. And it's a pretty expensive trip just to get a sack of rocks to bring back, by the way. And I'll be perfectly willing to go out here on the desert and get them a whole wagon load of rocks and sell them lots cheaper than that.

And I think they're very much the same. You see, it's the same God that created this universe that we are in today. May I say to you that that's a thrilling day in which to live, by the way.

So that God has communicated with man. And that book is the Bible. That's the divine side.

But it's a human book. God used about 40 authors over a period of 1,500 years. Each one spoke expressing his own feelings in his own generation.

He had his limitations. He made his mistake. Poor old Moses made mistakes.

But when Moses was writing the Pentateuch, somehow or another, there's no mistakes that got in there. The interesting thing is that I read in seminary many years ago a little book called *The Mistakes of Moses*. I always thought that whoever that author was, their book ought to be called *The Mistake of the Author* because his mistake was writing on the mistakes of Moses.

Now, today, I'd like to develop these four subjects in reference to the Bible. That is, revelation, second, inspiration, and third, illumination, and fourth, interpretation. Now, revelation means that God hath spoken and that God has communicated to man.

Inspiration guarantees the revelation of God. And illumination has to do with the Spirit of God being the teacher and not this poor preacher here in Los Angeles. If the Spirit of God does not communicate to you, I can't communicate to you.

But the Spirit of God can. And since he wrote the Bible and we give it out, I find out he'll communicate. And that's the wonder of it.

That's the glory of it, friends. And then the fourth is interpretation. And here's where we all pull each other's hair.

Really, the problem is not that the Bible teaches many, many things. The problem is there are many, many people that are interpreting the Bible. Unfortunately, they all don't interpret it my way.

I wish they did, but they don't. And we'll just have to go along with them and be patient with them because when we all get into his presence, there'll be perfect agreement then. Now we see through a glass darkly, then face to face.

I'll be changed, you'll be changed, and we both will be made right. Someone has said there's always three viewpoints, your viewpoint, my viewpoint, and the correct viewpoint. We'll get the correct one someday.

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