

## Tested Faith

**2 Timothy 3:15–17; 2 Peter 1:21; Hebrews 4:12**

**Is our Scriptural foundation reliable? We believe the Bible can be trusted because it can be tested.**

Scripture claims to be God-breathed, given through the work of God’s Spirit, living and powerful, and used by God to bring people to faith (James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23–25; Romans 10:17).

### 1 Tested in its transmission

Do we have what was originally \_\_\_\_\_? Examine three kinds of manuscript evidence.

- Quantity — How \_\_\_\_\_ manuscript witnesses are available for comparison? The lesson compares the New Testament with Homer, Caesar, and Josephus.
- Consistency — How do the copies \_\_\_\_\_ or differ? Ordinary differences include spelling, word order, and omitted or repeated words. More significant variants also exist and should not be ignored.
- Proximity — How \_\_\_\_\_ are the surviving copies to the time of the original writing? Earlier witnesses help us investigate the transmission of the text.

The large number of manuscript witnesses allows comparison and helps make copying differences visible.

Important distinction: Confidence that we know what the authors wrote does not, by itself, establish that everything they wrote is true. “A perfectly preserved error is still an error.”

### Notes

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# READY APOLOGETICS WEEKEND

KNOW WHAT YOU BELIEVE AND HOW TO ANSWER

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## 2 Tested in its narration

When Scripture describes people, places, and events, does outside evidence agree? Its claims concern the \_\_\_\_\_ world and can be investigated.

- Pontius Pilate — The Pilate Stone names him as prefect of Judea.
- Hezekiah — A royal seal, the water tunnel (2 Chronicles 32:30), and Assyrian records provide evidence connected with his reign.
- Belshazzar — Records identifying his relationship to Nabonidus help explain the setting of Daniel’s account and the offer of third place in the kingdom.
- Places — The Pool of Siloam and Magdala illustrate how archaeology helps us see the world described in Scripture.

## 3 Tested in its prophecies

Can the Bible be trusted when it speaks about the \_\_\_\_\_? The lesson highlights three prophecies fulfilled in Christ.

- The Messiah would be \_\_\_\_\_ in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2).
- The price of betrayal — Thirty pieces of \_\_\_\_\_ (Zechariah 11:12–13).
- Born of a \_\_\_\_\_ — The promised Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14).

These lines of evidence give substantial reason to take Scripture’s claims seriously. No single argument, standing alone, forces someone to believe the Bible is inspired.

**What will I do with what God has said?**

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