

So ... Uhh ... About the Bible

CafeChurch — Marty Sampson Topic 2

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y2E4-0nHsk4>

Marty Sampson

- Written songs for Hillsong since 1999
- Close friends with Joel Houston — son of Hillsong senior Pastor Brian Houston
- Songs:
 - 'God is Great'
 - 'You are my world'
 - 'My Best Friend'
 - 'Now that You're Near'
 - 'King of Majesty'
 - 'Better than Life'
 - 'To the Ends of the Earth'
 - 'God He Reigns' (title track of 2005 album)
 - 'Tell the World'
 - 'I believe'
 - 'Saviour King' (title track of 2007 album)

Marty Sampson's Questions

- 1) Leaders fail and no one talks about it
- 2) There are contradictions in the Bible
- 3) How can God send people to Hell just because they don't believe?
- 4) Science keeps piercing the truth of all religions
- 5) I want "genuine" truth. Not the "I just believe it" kind of truth.
- 6) Miracles are very rare

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The Bible: a quick refresher

(1) Hebrew Bible / Old Testament

Written mostly in Hebrew

Mostly collected together during the Babylonian exile (6th century BCE) from older texts written over hundreds of years

(2) New Testament

Written mostly in Greek

Collected from texts written from ~40CE to the end of the first century

Most first century Jews read the Greek translation of the Bible (the LXX)

Quotations of the Hebrew Bible in the New Testament come primarily from the LXX

Books in the Bible weren't decided by any one council of person, but emerged over time

13 Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, 14and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. 15While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, 16but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. 17And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. 18Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' 19He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, 20and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him.

21But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. 22Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, 23and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. 24Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.' 25Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! 26Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' 27Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. (Luke 24.13-24)

What have you been told the Bible
is?

What words describe how you feel
about the Bible?

Things People Say about the Bible

“Word of God”

Infallible

Inerrant

Basic Instructions Before Leaving
Earth

Answers life’s questions

Perfect and True

Foundation of Faith

Uncertainty

“It’s ... Complicated”

Contradictory

Guilty

Fairy tale / legends

Literal vs. Figurative

“Word of God” / “Word of the Lord”

- Old Testament / Hebrew Bible
- Referred mainly to revelations from God, particularly prophetic revelations. Not the Scriptures themselves.

- New Testament
- Book of Acts: refers back to the teachings of Jesus, and “the Gospel”
- Epistles / letters: refers to “the Gospel”
- Opening to John’s Gospel: Jesus is the Word (*Logos*) of God
 - Which reworks Wisdom traditions from Proverbs 8 about creation, and uses language of Stoicism (*Logos* — the rationality or order of the world)

“Scripture”

- A term only used in the New Testament; Hebrew Bible / Old Testament refers to “*Torah*” or “Law”
- Jesus always refers to his own Scriptures: the Hebrew Bible / Old Testament
- Other New Testament texts refer to the Hebrew Bible / Old Testament: the New Testament hadn’t been written yet ...

“All scripture (is) inspired by God and is (also) useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness ...” 2 Timothy 3.16

How relevant do you think the Bible
still is?

How should we use the Bible?

How the Bible developed

- Books that reflected the received teaching, ways of praying and established worship practices of early churches were used more often



- Books that were used more often shaped the teaching, prayer, and worship shaped how early churches understood Christianity

How the Bible came to be, and how it was used

- Over time as the teachings, structure, and worship practices of the church became more established (through things like the Council of Nicea, the creeds, and the establishment of bishops, etc.) the canonical list of books in the Bible became more stable and unified, leading to the collection of texts we call the Bible today
- The Bible, and its use in a variety of ways, was only one part of how the early Church came to understand God, Jesus, and Christianity
- There still exists some disagreement about which books should be in the Bible, but basically the Bible is one of the few things that holds Christians together across our many divisions and disagreements: a sort of “common language”

The Bible is a collection of texts we use to help us know and encounter

Jesus more:

- in our lives
- in the world
- in dialogue with other Christians

