

AMERICA'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE BIBLE

Introduction – With the expansion of cable TV channels and the Internet, the average person is being exposed to more information critical of the Bible's accuracy. If you do not believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God, then you do not care what it teaches. We need to become better equipped to answer reasonable skepticism of the Bible. Even those who trust the Bible are only skimming and selectively reading the contents. We must become better prepared to guide interested people in the exploration of what the Bible actual teaches versus religious traditions.

2014 Barna Group Survey on American's Beliefs about the Bible

19% – Bible Engaged – People who read the Bible four or more times a week and believe it is the actual inspired Word of God without errors.

37% – Bible Friendly – People who read the Bible regularly and believe it is the actual inspired Word of God without errors.

25% – Bible Neutral – People who read the Bible some and believe it is the inspired Word of God with errors.

19% – Bible Skeptics – People who rarely or never read the Bible since they consider it just another book of religious teaching written by men with stories and advice.

A. The Bible is the inspired Word of God.

2 Timothy 3:16-4:4

1. This refers specifically to what we call the Old Testament, which Timothy had known since childhood.
2. Like God breathed life into the first man (Genesis 2:7) so the written Word of God is a living creation of God.
3. This Scripture is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in right living and right relationships.
4. We are living in a time when some people will not put up with healthy teaching. Self-centered people select teachers who satisfy their desires. They not only turn away from the truth, but turn aside to myths.
5. We must be equipped to preach God's Word no matter what the situation is in our society.

B. The Bible is the work of the Holy Spirit.

2 Peter 1:16-21

1. The Bible contains eyewitness testimony and is not a cleverly devised story.
2. The Bible is synonymous with “prophetic messages” which are completely reliable. The Bible has passed the test of time, while critics have not.
3. The Bible does not contain men’s interpretation of things since its origin is not in the human will. Instead God has spoken through men carried along by the Holy Spirit.
4. The Bible does not claim to be exact dictation from God like the Koran; instead it is a reliable word from God. It can stand up under scrutiny. The Bible is like the nature of Jesus. It is 100% Divine and 100% human.

C. The New Testament is Scripture like the Old Testament.

2 Peter 3:15-16

1. Outside the gospels, Paul has written over half the remaining New Testament. Paul was given unique wisdom from God.
2. The fact that the Bible is the inspired Word of God does not mean it is all equally easy to understand. The central message is clear, but it also contains more in-depth truths that require study and reflection.
3. One principle to remember in interpreting the Bible is to always consider the context: type of literature, historical and cultural context, and understanding the verses in their specific context in the overall message of each letter or book. This will keep you from misrepresenting or distorting the meaning of the Bible.

Conclusion – We must be prepared to deal with people’s reasonable skepticism. Among the 56% who trust the message of the Bible, many are ignorant of what it actually teaches. We must be prepared to teach those who are willing to examine the Scriptures and their prejudices.

Acts 17:11