

PRE-PROOF BIBLE STUDY

Hebrews 11:6 – Faith is necessary to please God. *What is faith?*

Give example of Indiana Jones and the Holy Grail – cliff walls with cup on rock ledge out of reach. Indiana Jones took a blind step and landed on invisible (due to lighting) rock bridge. When he got back to solid ground, he threw dirt into the air, which when it settled, allowed him to view bridge. *Shouldn't he have tested first before he leapt?* God's definition of faith is not a blind leap, but is *based on solid proof*.

Give example of airplane pilots – Lady Be Good (World War II bomber) took off in North Africa to drop payload of bombs over Naples, Italy. Never returned to home base, but flew past and perished in Sahara Desert because there was a strong tail wind that caused pilots to question validity of instrument recordings (pilots didn't think that they could possibly be back as soon as instruments said they were, so they figured instruments had gotten jammed by enemy aircraft) – cannot fly a plane by “feel” or “instinct,” but must have a visual override (instruments) that always is accurate. In the same way, our faith must be *more than a feeling*, it must be *based on logic* which doesn't change.

As we approach this Bible study, our *goal is to establish a faith that is tested, logical, and proven to be true*.

Matthew 7:24-27 – Storms of life will always come, *are you able to stand?* It depends on your foundation. Foundations aren't flashy – no one shows them off when they parade you through their house, but they are the most important part of the house. In the same way, the only way that we can withstand the trials of our life is if the foundation is rock solid. *The goal of our Bible study is to lay a solid foundation based on truth, so that the framework of our lives will stand not only for this life, but for eternity.*

Matthew 11:28-30 – This life is a long journey, an endurance-testing mountain trek. Jesus knows that we get tired and need help. However, His statement seems like a paradox as He says that we must take His yoke in order to get rest.

Give example of mountain hike – Satan offers an empty backpack, while Christ offers a 90-lb pack. If you choose Satan's, he throws rocks in the pack with every step you take, thus making this “easy” load heavier each day. The pack Christ offers is filled with essentials to complete the journey – tent, sleeping bag, food, etc. As you travel, you use many of the provisions, and the load gets lighter with each step.

Another example is that of cash vs. credit cards. Christ tells you of the upfront cost associated with eternal life, but He delivers His promised rest. Satan offers a credit card to buy all the “easy” things you wish, but neglects to speak of the fine print of accruing interest.

The goal of our Bible study is to prove that God's Word is true, so that we can have complete confidence that Jesus delivers what He promises when we follow Him.

(At this juncture, you may wish to jump into the next section of THE TEST. If you prefer, further establish that God wants us to approach from a logical perspective. Isaiah 1:18 – Come, let us *reason* together. John 1:1 – In the beginning was the *Word* – the Greek for Word is “logos,” from which we derive the word logic. The Bible is God's logical communication to man. Give example of building a fire – either use lots of paper and gas without kindling (high flames, but dies quickly – emotional faith) or lots of kindling with a little paper and a spark (starts slowly, but can then be built however big you want it – reasoned faith).

THE TEST

Isaiah 41:21-23 – Let’s have a day in court, bring everything to the table. ***Truth doesn’t fear examination.*** These verses say that anyone claiming to be God (or any book claiming to be His inspired word) had better be able to do two things: 1) Recount past history and get it right, and 2) Proclaim the future and make it happen.

There are 4 major books which claim to be God’s inspired word. Can you name any of them? Bible (Christians), Book of Mormon (Mormons), Vedas (Hindus), Koran (Moslems). Let’s apply this test to each of these books to determine if any of them are from God. 1) Vedas (sacred writings of the Hindus) claims that the world is held on the back of a giant turtle (in some places) or giant elephant (in other places). This is obvious mythology that fails the test of getting past history right. 2) Book of Mormon (fastest growing religion in America) claims that there was another testament of Jesus Christ for the peoples of the American continents. Despite the fact that the continents of America have been sparsely (lightly) populated throughout the centuries, there is not one piece of archaeological evidence to support the places or peoples spoken of in the Book of Mormon. We find that we can discard this book simply on the basis of the first test of accurate history. 3) Koran (holy book of Islam) holds the teachings of Mohammed, whom the Moslems hold as the Prophet. While this book is largely a book of doctrine, there are some contradictions within it, ensuring that it cannot be the inspired word of God. (e.g. in most places, it says that the world was created in 6 days, while it implies that it was 8 days in another place). However, the Koran completely fails the second test of Isaiah 41 as there are no prophecies to be able to test. 4) Bible (Christian source of God’s Word) was written by 40 different writers over a period of approximately 2000 years. The claim from the Bible is that it is inspired by God and reveals His plan to man. Our next series of studies are dedicated to putting the Bible to the test under the conditions of Isaiah 41. ***Is the Bible accurate when tested from external means? How does it fare in the arenas of archaeology, science, and history? Even more importantly, as we examine it internally, does it prove a Master Designer who has foretold the future and brought it about before the eyes of mankind?***

Isaiah 66:1-2 – God is not looking for a physical house, but He is searching for a place to dwell. God is looking for one who trembles at His word. ***The goal of “Proof that the Bible is the Word of God” is to establish the absolute authority of the Scriptures that we may turn to them as the final answer to all of life’s questions.***