

301: Systematic Theology

Week 1 - Bible: Reliability + Authority

Systematic theology -

John 8:31-32

“If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, **32** and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

Belief → Identity → Actions

Worldview/Theology → Anthropology → Sociology/Ethics

Bart Ehrman

the Bible is filled with discrepancies and contradictions...the Bible has books and claimed to be written by people who didn't really write them...the Bible shows that in fact some of the earliest teachings of Jesus aren't what became the standard doctrine of Christianity...Doctrines like the divinity of Christ and the Trinity, these were later formulations that weren't the teachings of Jesus.¹

Test #1 – _____

Jesus

Apostles

Eyewitnesses in the Bible

Prophecies

¹ “Bart Ehrman” The Colbert Report. April 9, 2009. <<http://www.cc.com/video-clips/lywaay/the-colbert-report-bart-ehrman>>

Test #2 –
We don't have the original copies.

<u>AUTHOR</u>	<u>DATE WRITTEN</u>	<u>EARLIEST COPY</u>	<u>TIME SPAN</u>	<u>NUMBER OF COPIES</u>	<u>ACCURACY²</u>
Homer	Ca. 850 BC	–	–	643	95%
Herodotus	Ca. 450 BC	ca. AD 900	About 1,350 years	8	Not enough copies to reconstruct the original.
Euripedes	Ca. 440 BC	ca. AD 1100	About 1,500 years	9	
Thucydides	Ca. 420 BC	ca. AD 900	About 1,300 years	8	
Plato	Ca. 380 BC	ca. AD 900	About 1,300 years	7	
Aristotle	Ca. 350 BC	ca. AD 1100	About 1,400 years	5	
Caesar	Ca. 60 BC	ca. AD 900	About 950 years	10	
Catullus	Ca. 50 BC	ca. AD 1500	About 1,600 years	3	
Livy	Ca. 10 BC	–	–	20	
Tacitus	Ca. AD 100	ca. AD 1100	About 1,000 years	20	
New Test.	Ca. AD 60	ca. AD 130	About 100 years	About 14,000	

Test #3 –

Test #4 –

² Taken directly from Ken Boa's "I'm Glad You Asked" page 78

The doctrine of inspiration:

Alternative non-biblical views:

- **Dictation Theory - Divine agency, little human agency**
- **Limited Inspiration - Human agency, little divine agency**

1. God inspired the writing of Scripture....

2 Timothy 3:16

16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.

2. ...through human authors.

Luke 1:1-4

Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.

2 Peter 1:21

Prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 3:7

Therefore, as the **Holy Spirit** says, “Today, if you hear his voice

Hebrews 4:7

again he appoints a certain day, “Today,” saying **through David** so long afterward, in the words already quoted, “Today, if you hear his voice...”

2 Peter 3:16

count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, **16** as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.

Sola Scriptura:

Inerrancy:

Analogy of faith:

GROUP DISCUSSION

- Why did you sign up for the class? What are you hoping to learn/grow in?
- What stood out to you from the lesson? Anything new?
- Where have you seen examples (either cultural or personal) of a low-view of Scripture?
- Are there topics/passages of the Bible that you find yourself resisting? Why is that?

CASE STUDIES

How would you handle each of the following scenarios? What are the possible theological beliefs behind their statements/actions?

- At group night during the Sermon Discussion portion, you read through a passage out loud and take some time unpacking it together. One person says they don't like the passage. After asking for follow-up, they said they don't like the way the biblical author stated something.
- During Engage the Heart portion, you ask how everyone's doing abiding with Jesus (meditating on the Bible and prayer). One person in your group says they haven't spent time meditating on the Bible in months.

VERSE TO REMEMBER

2 Timothy 3:16-17

16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, **17** that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

["The Making of the Bible" lecture by Tim Mackie](#)

[Systematic Theology by Wayne Grudem](#)

[The Big Book of Bible Difficulties by Norman Geisler](#)

[The Bible in Translation by Bruce Metzger](#)