



Sermon Notes

Topic: Biblical Contradictions

Bible Passage: (Multiple Verses listed below)

Preacher: Ps Sam Toms

Date: Sunday 23rd November 2025

Study Guide Overview

The Bible stands alone in history as a book both fully divine and fully human—written across 1,500 years by kings, prophets, poets, fishermen, and doctors, yet carrying one unified, consistent message of God’s rescue and restoration. It is inspired (“God-breathed”), historically reliable, textually preserved with extraordinary accuracy, confirmed by archaeology, validated by outside historians, and uniquely marked by fulfilled prophecy. While wrapped in culture, language, and ancient perspectives, its message remains without error in what God intended to communicate. Far from contradicting itself, Scripture reveals its depth when we understand its context, genres, and purpose. The Bible makes sense of the world, of humanity, and of our deepest longings in a way nothing else can—diagnosing the human heart and offering the only coherent hope-filled narrative. If this really is God’s Word, then the question is no longer “*Can I trust the Bible?*” but rather, “*Will I allow the Bible to shape my life?*”

Small Group Questions/Discussions

“CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?” — DIGGING DEEPER

1. WELCOME / OPENER

Icebreaker questions:

- What’s your earliest memory of hearing or reading the Bible?
- Have you ever struggled to trust or understand a part of Scripture? Share one example (if you’re comfortable).

2. READ TOGETHER — FOUNDATIONAL SCRIPTURES

Have different people read each passage aloud:

2 Timothy 3:16–17 | Hebrews 4:12 | James 1:22–25 | Psalm 19:7–11 | John 17:17 | Isaiah 40:8

Discussion:

1. What do these passages claim about the Bible’s **origin**?
2. What do they claim about its **effect** on us?
3. Which of these descriptions feels most real in your life right now? Which feels distant?



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3. RELIABILITY OF SCRIPTURE — TALK IT OUT

A. Textual Preservation - Read: Isaiah 40:8

- **Thought:** The Dead Sea Scrolls proved that the Old Testament we hold today is virtually identical to manuscripts over **1,000 years older**, showing God's astonishing preservation.
- **Discuss:** How does this shape your trust in Scripture?

B. Historical Reliability - Read: Luke 1:1–4

- **Thought:** Luke claims to write a carefully researched historical account. Early historians like Josephus and Tacitus confirm key details about Jesus.
- **Discuss:** Why is it important that the Bible is grounded in history and eyewitness testimony?

C. Unity of Scripture - Read: Luke 24:27

- **Thought:** Jesus taught that all Scripture points to Him.

66 books, 40 authors, 3 continents, 1500 years — **one story**.

- **Discuss:** What does the unity of Scripture suggest about its divine authorship?

D. Fulfilled Prophecy - Read: Micah 5:2, Isaiah 53, Psalm 22

- **Thought:** 300+ prophecies fulfilled in Jesus. Mathematically impossible without divine orchestration.
- **Discuss:** How does fulfilled prophecy build confidence in the Bible?

4. WHY THE BIBLE MAKES SENSE OF LIFE - Read: Romans 3:23, Ecclesiastes 3:11, Matthew 5:6

- **Thought:** The Bible explains: Why we long for justice | Why we struggle morally | Why beauty moves us | Why suffering breaks us | Why worship feels natural | Why hope refuses to die
- **Discuss:** In what way has Scripture helped you make sense of your own life or world?

5. THE BIBLE AS A MIRROR — PERSONAL APPLICATION - Read: James 1:23–25

- **Thought:** People resist Scripture because it shows us *ourselves*. It comforts, but it also confronts.
- **Discuss:** What's one area of your life where the Bible is currently challenging or correcting you?



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6. THE CHALLENGE: ENGAGE SCRIPTURE REGULARLY - The “Power of 4” — The Research

The Centre for Bible Engagement found:

- People who engage the Bible **4+ times per week** show **massive, measurable life change**.
- Reading less than 4 times produces almost *no significant difference* from those who rarely read the Bible.
- At 4+, rates of destructive behaviours drop dramatically:
 - 59% less pornography use
 - 40% less bitterness
 - 30% less loneliness
 - Higher joy, stronger faith, deeper purpose
- People engaging the Bible 4+ times are **228% more likely to share their faith** and **strongly more likely to disciple others**.

Discussion:

- Why do you think the leap happens at “4+” rather than 1–3?
- What rhythm of weekly engagement feels realistic but still meaningful for you?

7. PRACTICAL TOOLS

A. Get a good study Bible (NIV Study Bible, ESV Study Bible, CSB Study Bible).

B. Use the “3R Method”:

- Read → Reflect → Respond

C. Pair Scripture with prayer.

D. Don’t read for information — read for revelation.

PRAYER TIME

Pray over:

- A renewed hunger for God’s Word
- Courage to obey what God reveals
- A heart that listens, learns, and lives transformed