

A Word Perfect Faith For An Imperfect World

2 Timothy 3:1-5, 14-17

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[Dr. McKinley, message, A Word Perfect Faith For An Imperfect World]

Jesus Christ is Lord! [Amen!] There is One Mediator the Bible tells us in the book of Timothy, One Mediator between God and man and it is the Man Christ Jesus and it is this Jesus that we proclaim to you today from the Word of God. If you have the Bible in your hand I want you to take it and I want you to open it to the book of 2nd Timothy chapter 3. If you need a Bible there's one there in the pew rack, available for you, I hope you'll take it and join us this morning because you're going to need your Bible and I think you're going to enjoy following with us as we seek to a..., look together at the Word of God and what it says for us today.

Well, I think by now all of you have become well aware and well acquainted with a 97-year-old Highland Park resident [pause for congregation laughter] who drives herself to the beauty shop every week. On Monday, she was driven away in the back of a police car, handcuffed, booked into jail and of course ultimately became the subject of a very high profile national story. At the end of the week she actually made a trip to New York and appeared on the Today Show. [more laughter] Dolly Kelton said, "The whole ordeal made her mad." And then she said, listen to this, "They just called and asked me to New York and I hadn't been in a real long time so I didn't wanna miss the opportunity." Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! [more laughter] You know everybody loves a sensational story, especially one that displays authority being used with absurdity and opinions abound and debates stir over the officers in Highland Park handling of this particular matter. Jacqueline Ford, a writer for The Dallas Morning News said it this way:

"It's like Barney Fife hauling Aunt Bea down to the lock-up for double parking outside Emmits Fix-It Shop." [pause for congregation laughter]

Every day, every day we are made aware of the imperfections of our world and of our efforts to find balance in the rule of law. On the one hand every one of us wants to live in a society where there is a sense of order, where there is safety and consistency and equality. But on the other hand we do not wanna live at a day or a time where we have profiling or presumption or politically incorrect judgments made and so the result is we so try to equalize everyone and have a one-size-fits-all policy that we struggle with what is right and what is wrong. In the world in which we live today Christians are often seen as the Highland Park Police

Department. We're seen as a group of people who want to live by the Book, and obviously there was a police officer in the line of duty this week who simply did what the book said that he was to do. But Christians are often seen like these police officers, living in a day and a time where we have a rulebook that is irreverent and outdated and that fails to meet the context and the criteria of all the complex life situations in which we live. And so just as the Highland Park Police Department took their policy in advisement and under review, many today want to say that this Book is outmoded and outdated and simply it's a policy manual that needs to be reviewed. There are many in our world who simply say that we live in a day where rules just get in the way and that anyone who would ever assert that there's any absolute standard of truth or any absolute a..., pa...procedural mender for behavior that somehow that is a..., to be debunked in our world. And so what we see in Highland Park as a small and even humorous situation, as the rule of law and as the needs of a particular woman are found to be in contrast, we find that this debate is something that goes far beyond Highland Park. In fact what we find today is that in the courts, in the schools, in the local communities, on the television networks all across America there's a great turmoil between the establishment and the enforcement of standards and the big debate is really this; are there really standards for life that can be found and applied to all life situations or do we just live in a whole group of situations that we just try to make the best of every situation. Well, this debate is not a new debate. In fact you will find it interesting that the commentator whose writing we read today and whose article we're going to digest today, a scholar, a teacher, a wonderful man whose life gives us insight to the 1st Century world, looks forward and speaks of this day and of this time in which we are living and he gives us some incredible insight. Let's read together beginning in 2nd Timothy chapter 3 and verse 1, 2nd Timothy chapter 3 and verse 1, Paul says:

¹But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: ²For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, ⁴traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

Paul said you're gonna live in a day and a time where everything is in opposition, where there is a debate over standards if there are any at all. For every man simply lives and does what is right in his own eyes. For religion will be talked about, but it will simply be seen as the opinion of each individual person and where there is no ultimate rule of law, but simply the reality that all people live in equalized lifestyles. Paul said that's the day you're going to live in. He said, but I have a word for you and today if you are a follower of Jesus Christ there is a word for you for living in this world in which we live and it begins in verse 14. 2nd Timothy 3 and verse 14:

¹⁴But you must continue in the things that you have learned and been

assured of, knowing that from whom you have learned them, ¹⁵and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Paul said while you are living in this imperfect world you have a word perfect faith and this word perfect faith is sufficient and this word perfect faith is adequate to give you the standards that you need and the desecration that you need to know how to live life in the way that which it was intended to be lived and to live it in a way in which it will be fulfilling and satisfactory in every way. *A Word Perfect Faith For An Imperfect World*. Now if we're going to live out this faith that Paul speaks of and if we are to live it out in the context of a world that is constantly in tension and in clash over issues of authority and issues of standard and issues a..., that abound around us then there's several things that we're gonna have to see and know and understand about this word perfect faith. And the first and the most important is the issue of...

AUTHORITY: and Paul makes it very clear that we have a measurable standard in a world of speculation. We live in a world that is filled with speculation. But Paul says in this world you have a standard and he talks about it here when he said you're to continue in what you have learned and been assured of, knowing of whom you have learned it. Now if we look back just a few pages we can see in 2nd Timothy chapter 1 in verse 5, that Timothy had learned his faith from his ~~mother Lois and his grandmother Eunice or should I say it the other way,~~ grandmother Lois and mother Eunice. And he had learned it from his family, that from childhood he had known the Scriptures that were able to make him wise unto salvation. Paul went in and highlighted and underscored the fact that Timothy had been given a source of authority and we have a source of authority that we have received, not only from the traditions of men, but and authority that has been passed to us from generation to generation. The Book that you hold in your hand today, it is the Word of God and it is a foundation for life in a world that is filled with speculation. That's why we believe and preach the Bible here at our church. I'm so thrilled to share with you that last week, speaking of childhood, listen to me we had 6th grade and under, 4,760 something boys and girls here on our campus last weekend as we had a big children's day at Prestonwood. Over 2,000 of those were pre-schoolers and do you know why we make a big deal out of children here at Prestonwood? Because we want, from childhood, for boys and girls to grow up knowing and understanding that there is an authority, there is a standard; there is a structure upon which they can build their lives. You see ladies and gentlemen it is just absurd to think that we have standards of measure in every realm of life except when it comes to morality and spirituality.

Think about it for just a minute. We're sitting in an incredible building this morning. But for this building to be here and for us to be in it and for it to be habitable there had to be a collaboration between architects, engineers and specific construction workers to bring together all of the

parts according to specifications so that the design of this facility would be one that would be safe to inhabit and to enjoy. We can't imagine that people would just get together, take material, slap something up and say here it is, because in the world of architecture, in the world of engineering, in the world of building and construction there are specific measurables that keep us from speculation and disaster.

The same is true in the world of medicine. You go to see a doctor, a physician, a surgeon, you are involved with some form of a..., of medical technician and there you find that they use a process of technology and medicine, chemistry that ultimately aid and enhance the well-being of your body. They don't simply just take a random assortment of chemicals and say go try this. Heh! But when you take a pill, when you take some form of medication, you are believing that it had been studied and prescribed and there is precision to that specific dosage of medicine for the specific need of your body.

The same is true in the world of finance. We have bankers and financiers and those who help to manage the economy and the money and the markets and every day we're dependent upon electronic measurables that help to maintain account balances and transfers, a..., expenditures and debits on an account. We can't imagine that we would simply live in a world where we just had one big pot of money and everybody just dug what they want too. There's a standard of measure, it's true in the financial world, it's true in the medical and physical world, it's true in the word of building and construction and yet when we come to the world of morality, when we come to the world of spirituality we have a whole group of people that wanna say wait, heh, you're standards are good for you, they're not good for me. No, a world, a society, a church, a family, a community, a nation cannot exist without a common standard of measures and that's why we have police and that's why we have law and that's why we seek order in our world because we do not despise authority, we understand that we begin with the issue of authority and Paul said to Timothy, Timothy I want you to know that you have a standard of measure that is not simply speculation.

...it is the Holy Scriptures that are able to make you wise unto salvation in Jesus Christ.

Why has God given us this Book? So that we will constantly find ourselves falling below the rules? No! So that the rules will demonstrate our need for a Savior. But there's a second issue that he addresses and it's not only the issue of authority it is the issue of..

AUTHENTICITY: This word perfect faith in this imperfect world is built upon a standard of measure that is authentic. And what Paul says to Timothy is not only is there the issue of authority that you have a measurable standard in the world of speculation, but he says this document, this Book that I point you to, is a Book that is a reliable source in a world of skepticism. He said Timothy you can depend on this Book and on this record. It is reliable and here he says it in 2nd Timothy 3 and verse 16:

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,...

It's one of the most all encompassing and one of the most significant statements and assertions that we find in all of the Bible, that this Book is not just a book, it is the Book that gives us revelation of who God is and what God is like. And yet we live in a world that says hey, I believe in God, I just don't believe in the Bible. Well, help me for just a moment. How can it in any way be reasonable to affirm the existence of a God when you deny the Book that tells us who He is and what He's like? It doesn't make sense because that is what this Book is all about. Now, last week after our pastor preached his message on the DaVincie Code I had a wonderful believer, a young man who's a part of our ministry and his wife stop me and say, you know one of the things that's most challenging for me in my life and in my work is that as I seek to share Christ with people around me I find that one of the most common things that happens is that people look at me and they say, "Well you talk about the Bible, how do you even know that we can believe the Bible? Who even knows that the Bible is true?" And he said to me, he said, "David how do I respond to that?" Well could I just give all of us a word of advice today and would it not be just my word of advice but simply the example of Jesus. Do you know that Jesus often answered questions with questions rather than with answers? Instead of just saying, oh here's the answer, Jesus would return a question with a question. And could I simply say to you that the greatest thing you can say when somebody says to you, how do you even know that the Bible is true, is that the best way to respond is to say, "Would you really like to know?" You see many people are willing to just throw up smoke screens of skepticism because they believe if they can just throw a little bit of cold water on a Christian that a Christian's gonna go, "Well, I just believe its the Bible." No, there is a basis for what we believe ladies and gentlemen. This source is a reliable source and this morning I think that it is of the utmost importance that we understand that what we hold in our hand is not simply some collection of myth and legend and stories that have been passed down through history and antiquity, but this is a Book that is certifiable and verifiable as the authentic record of God's revelation of Himself to us.

Josh McDowell in his book, *Beyond Belief* said it very well, he said:

"If the Bible is God's instruction manual for living our roadmap to heaven and the main means by which we get to know God, then it becomes extremely important to know whether it's reliable."

I agree with him. And so how can you know that this Book is reliable? Well let me just give you a very basic structure of suggestion today as to reasons that we believe in the authenticity and the reliability of Scripture.

The first of these is an argument from internal evidence and the other 4 are external evidence. But I wanna give you 5 basic reasons that I believe the Bible and I'm gonna use the word basic, B-A-S-I-C, that won't surprise

many of you that I'm gonna use an acrostic to help you to learn this and to remember this today. Now the first of these is an argument of internal evidence and that is that we have to begin with the...

BIBLE'S OWN TESTIMONY AND THE SENSE OF THE BIBLE'S UNITY. Now let's just be honest here this morning, let's be honest and admit that we are holding and reading from a Book that makes certain claims and we have to be honest with ourselves about the claims. The claim of this Book, is that this Book is the Word of God. And if you're gonna hold this Book and you're gonna use this Book then nothing is more dishonest then to say that I believe in God but I don't believe in the Book. In fact there's nothing worse than religion wrapped in the liberal shroud of dishonesty and unbelief. You see, we have to be true to the Book and the Book in and of itself claims to have a supernatural origin. It says all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. Now what does that mean? Does that mean that there were just people along the way who randomly one night were sitting under the stars and said, oh I have an idea I think I'll write something down; kinda like somebody writes a song or writes a poem. No! When the Bible says all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, the word inspiration is the word "*theopneustos*" in the Greek, which means God breathed and literally that this Book was breathed of God. Yes, it was breathed into human personality, human time, human history, human culture, but 40 different authors, over the period of 1500 years, wrote 66 different books in 3 different languages and yet for all of the different variances of background God saw to it and super intended, subset in time, in history, in space, in culture, in personality that this Book would come together as one Book with one testimony and a united message and it is clear He is Lord. All of the Bible is about Jesus Christ, from Genesis to Revelation. As you heard in that song just a minute ago, It's all about the testimony of Jesus and the miracle of the Bible is that it shows the commonality of authorship through a diversity of different penmanship's because it is a Book that was uniquely and distinctively breathed of God. That's why the Bible says again concerning itself knowing this, 2nd Peter chapter 1: [verse 20-21]

²⁰knowing this, that no prophecy of Scripture is given for any private interpretation, ²¹for prophecy never came by the will of man...mm...by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

You see the Bible says that the Holy Spirit moved and worked, God breathed and He breathed out His Word and time and space is a disclosure of Himself. It's a revelation of His character that He is a God who is true, a God who is righteous, a God who is just, a God who has a character of perfection and when we as a church speak of what we believe about the Bible, saying that we believe that this Book is God breathed, we believe in the verbal plenary, every word is breathed of God in it's original manuscripts, we are simply saying that we believe that this Book is a perfect Book, based on it's own testimony and the unity that we see in it's message and in it's truth. Therefore for us inerrancy is not a theory about the Bible it's the very teaching of the Bible itself. It is one Book with one message, from one source and it is the very Word of God and of

this Book God Himself says in Isaiah 40: [verse 8]

"The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God abides forever."

And not only did He breath the Book into life, but He has spoken it as a Book that is indestructible. No other book, no other document in all of history has faced the opposition, the attack and the effort to destroy it as has the Book that we hold in our hand today, the Word of God.

In 300 AD Following the time and the life of Christ all the way up until that early part of the 4th Century there was great opposition to those who preached the message of Christ and those who believed the Bible. Diocletian who was one of the greats of the Roman Empire sought to purge Christians and the Christian cult and sect out of the empire and so great was his opposition to the Christian groups and the destruction of Christian Scriptures that he ultimately erected a column in 303 that said:

Extinguo Nomina Christianorum

It literally meant the name of Christians has been extinguished. He thought he had done the world a favor. But within less than 10 years of the time of Diocletian, Constantine and his armies began to march and it wasn't long until ultimately Christianity and the faith that we speak of this morning was affirmed and confirmed as the official sanctioned religion of Rome. In fact today you're hard-pressed to get most people to name the names of very many Roman Emperors and yet people name their children Paul and James and Matthew as followers of Jesus Christ. History has completely stood with the test of time and the truth of this Word. In the ~~late a., 18th Century or the early 18th Century~~, Voltaire was a French philosopher and Voltaire had said that as an atheist and a humanist that he would hold up the Bible in public and he said:

"In 100 years there will not be one person who will believe this book."

But Voltaire went the way of all mankind, he died, and 40 years after the death of Voltaire the Geneva Bible Society was publishing Bibles in the house that he lived in and distributing them all over Europe.

Thomas Paine, one of the revolutionaries as a part of the early American Revolution once stood and said:

"Five years from now there will not be a Bible in America. I've gone through the Bible with an ax and cut down all of its trees."

His age of reason made him think that he had out-reasoned God, but ladies and gentlemen this morning we are sitting in one of the largest churches in America with 100's of copies of Bibles and we are here as a testimony to the faith that this Book is reliable and true based on its testimony and based on its voracity. I simply say that to you to say that there is a reason to believe this Book and its testimony about itself and its unity

are things that we cannot overcome and they add to its reliability. I wanna suggest to you this morning that maybe a small group of us decided that we wanted to go to one of the major university campuses in America and to speak to the head of the English department. We go to that university and we engage that English professor and we simply go and say, you know, we want you to know that we are here to express opposition to the fact that Homer ever wrote the Iliad that is attributed to him. That professor would say, this is one of the greatest pieces of literature from antiquity, that Homer's Iliad is without question one of the finest documents that we have. And yet is we were to begin to discuss the issue of Homer's Iliad we would find that Homer who lived in 900 BC has the earliest copies of Im...Iliad going back to about 400 BC, so there's a 500 year gap between the time of Homer and the significance of the works that have surfaced in his name. In fact, to be exact, there are 643 manuscripts that date back to 400 BC. Now by all honest means that is a substantial record of antiquity. But could I share with you this morning what the record is on the Bible? There are 643 manuscripts of the Homer's Iliad dating back to 400 BC, 500 years after his lifetime. But there are 24,000 manuscripts of the New Testament dating back to within 25 years of the apostles who wrote the documents that we hold in our hands. Ladies and gentlemen I simply say to you that there is no other book in history that by testimony, by antiquity and by unity does what the Bible does in terms of standing the test of time, of culture, of language. And yet it all comes together with one unfailing message, the message of Jesus Christ. I believe in the Bible because of the Bible's own testimony and unity but secondly I believe in the Bible because of the...

A R**C**H**E**OL**O**G**I**C**A**L **E**V**I**D**E**N**C****E** **O**F **T**H**E** **B**I**B**L**E**. Prior to the 19th Century there were many gaps, gaps and points of debate over the different people groups and cultures that had lived in days gone by. Many people would laugh and would rebuff the idea of the Bible as being historically true because there were no records from antiquity of the fact that a man like Abraham ever lived or that certain cultures and peoples were around. But interestingly enough as the spade of the archeologist has been turning now, in a significant fashion in research, over the last 100 years we have learned much more then we ever imagined about the ancient world and about the voracity and the truth of the Bible. With the discovery of the Moray tablets, the city of Ur that was ~~atribuled~~...attributed to be the homeland of Abraham, Ur of the Chaldees was found and discovered and a significant amount of information about Abraham. Again with the efforts of modern archeological research there was great debate, especially a 100 years ago about some of the people groups that were mentioned in the Old Testament. One of those in particular were the Hittites. They're mentioned 40 times in the book of Joshua and so smug scholars said, because there is no other record of archeology that the Hittites ever existed, this is just some fabrication, some story out of the Bible, some myth and legend that's been passed down. Now you do remember the Hittites, right, you remember that in the book of Joshua it talked about the Canaanites and the Jebusites and the Hittites and the chigger-bites, you remember all of those don't you? [pause for congregation laughter] But do you know that in ~~1896, excuse me~~ 1892, A. H. Sace identified the people known as the Hittites and wrote a

book entitled, *The Story Of A Forgotten Empire*. In 1906 Hugo Vinkler identified the capital city of the Hittites and listen to me, today you can get a doctorate in Hittite studies at the University of Chicago. You see ladies and gentlemen time has not diminished the voracity of the Bible, it has only time and time again proven the voracity of the Bible. And then, of course, this week heh, all over the news, what did we hear once again? Noah's Ark, they've now not only speculated that it's on top of Mount Ararat, but now there're satellites where they're trying to search and to see if indeed they can pinpoint the location for an expedition this summer and between July 15th and August 15th there's gonna be an expedition to try to determine is the object that has been identified beneath the a..., the surface of the ice and the snow at the top of Mount Ararat in modern day Turkey, whether or not that is indeed Noah's Ark. Now, I don't know, I don't have any idea and I'm certainly not going to risk anything on where that may be, but what I will tell you, is if they do find it or if they do say so, it only again serves to say the geography of the Bible is very specific. You see ladies and gentlemen it's important for us to understand that archeology time and time again has given us reinforcement of the Bible. Dr. Nelson Glueck said this:

"No archeological discovery has ever controverted a biblical reference. Scores of archeological findings have been made which confirm clear outline or in exact detail historical statements in the Bible. And by the same token proper evaluation of biblical descriptions have led to amazing discoveries."

Did you know that a little over 100 years ago there was a great dispute about whether or not there was even any oil in the Middle East? We were trying with the industrialization of the world to discover where we would find fossil fuels and petroleum products. But there was a man who was a part of an organization who was a devoted Christian. This man was reading his Bible and one day he read in the book of Exodus about something that happened when Moses' mother prepared an ark and that she sealed that ark with pitch. Well as that man in that company thought about pitch and tar and the products that would have to be petroleum related products he had an idea that maybe in Egypt and somewhere in the Middle East they could find oil. So he led his company, The Standard Oil Company, to begin drilling in the Middle East. And guess what? What we know today is that there is no more fossil rich portion of the world than the Middle East. Isn't it interesting that time and time again biblical archeology only demonstrates the truth of this Book? But not only is there fact of the Bible's own testimony in unity and the archeology of the Bible, a..., there's the issue of...

S **CIENTIFIC ACCURACY**, the Bible is not a book of science. Hear me say that clearly. But wherever the Bible speaks about science it always speaks with consistency and it always speaks with accuracy. It is a Book that can be believed because of the way that it describes it. Just look at this little chart that I've brought today.

The Bible describes the earth as being a round earth in Isaiah 40 [verse 22].

The Bible speaks of there being innumerable stars. What have we learned even in our day with a..., exploration into space that the further we go and the deeper we look we just continue to find an innumerable level of stars. How could those of the early days, of the ancient times have even known? There have been many calculation, many estimations as to the numbers of stars recorded by scientist of old. But the Bible simply says it's innumerable. [Jeremiah 33:25]

The Bible speaks of the weight of winds in the book of Job [28:25]. And yet every day we understand something about barometric pressures in our weather reporting.

The Bible speaks of the earth as being suspended upon nothing [Job 26:7]. And we know that it was not uncommon in the ancient days with mythology and legends to believe that the earth was sitting on the back of a turtle floating in a cosmic sea.

The Bible speaks of the invisible building blocks, [Hebrews 11:3] of life in everything that is here. And of course our molecular biology has given us the ability to understand that what we see comes from the things that we don't see.

The Bible tells us that life is in the blood [Leviticus 17:11]. And some of the forefathers in the American Revolution and the early American life were bled to death as a medical procedure.

And the Bible tells us of intelligent design. I don't know if you're aware, but Darwinism is in trouble as a scholarly science. Oh you probably don't know about it because of the fact that we have given 100 years of purporting the idea that we all came from lower life forms and slime into these very complex creatures that we are today. But with the explosion of molecular biology and the development of highly technical microscopes what we have learned is that the single smallest elements of life, rather than being simply single cell forms are very highly complex designs, systems that work together. And today intelligent design is moving very rapidly to overthrow everything that has been said over the last 100 plus years and has been taught as doctrine to our children in schools, to say that evolution is the source of human life. I'm not talking about Christians, I'm talking about scientists who do not today affirm God, but who ultimately have to come to terms that it is illogical to try to create massive complexity and progression apart from something that is much more complex in design at the beginning. Now why does this matter? Because while people like Dan Brown write books that say that there's been a conser...spiricy in the church that has hidden documents and kept them out of the Bible, I wanna know who's gonna speak to the universities and to the scholarship and to the tenured professors who have been promoting a lie and destroying the lives of our children and our families. It is a lie and the evidence is on our side ladies and gentlemen. It's not on the side of a godless world system. And so all I'm saying to you is that what we believe is we believe something that is based on fact and evidence, not

just something this is fi...fictional and mythological. The next issue is the..

I **TEGRITY OF PROPHECY AND OF HISTORY.** The distinctive quality of the Bible is prophecy. The Bible is filled with predictions, predictions of things that would happen in the future, things that were beyond the control of men and of their times when they were written. Heh, we live in a world where we've had all kinds of interesting predictions. Thomas Watson, the chairman of IBM in 1943 said:

"I think there's a world market for maybe 5 computers."

[pause for slight congregation laughter] Decca recording company said:

"We don't like their sound and guitar music is on its way out."

That was when they rejected The Beatles in 1962. Lord Calvin, president of the Royal Society in 1895 said:

"Heavier than air flying machines will never be possible."

~~And Louis Pasteur...~~ and it was Pierre Pasha, professor of philosophy at Toulouse in 1872 who said:

"Louis Pasteur's theory of germs is ridiculous fiction."

Isn't it amazing how many times we have to revise our perspective, our prophecies fall short. But did you know ladies and gentlemen that this Book, is a book this is filled with prophecy and has been verified again and again ~~through oee...~~through archeology and accuracy over and over in history. Of course of all the prophecies of the Bible none are as significant or strategic as the prophecies concerning Jesus Christ. There are 300 specific prophecies about the coming of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament, 20 of which are filled...fulfilled in the final 24 hours of His life and ministry. The writings of Confucius, the Buddhists, the Koran, none of these books have prophecies. There is a prophecy in the Koran that Mohammad would one day return to Mecca, but it was a self-fulfilling prophecy. But for Jesus Christ there are 100's of prophecies that were beyond anyone's ability to bring in formulation of fulfillment. Look at the little list that I brought with me today to share with you. A list of prophecies concerning Jesus Christ:

That He would be born of a virgin. [Isaiah 7:14]

That He would be born in Bethlehem. [Micah 5:2]

That He would be a descendent of Abraham.

That He would be of the tribe of Judah of the divinic lineage.

That He would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver.

Crucified with...with thieves.

His side would be pierced.

His visage would be marred.

And that He would rise on the 3rd day.

Now let me just remind you, there were for many years those who said, yeah that cult of Christians in the 1st Century went back and adjusted the text of the Old Testament to look as though these prophecies were fulfilled. Well that was all fine and dandy until 1947 and with the discovery of The Dead Sea Scrolls ~~for the caves...scrolls~~ from the caves of Qumran we found an entire Old Testament text dating to 150 years before the time of Christ. All I'm saying to you ladies and gentlemen is there is evidence, there is a lot of evidence and a lot of evidence that needs to be affirmed and ultimately needs to be proclaimed. How did this happen? Holy men spoke as they were moved of the Holy Spirit. So what are the evidences of the Bible? Number one, the Bible's testimony and unity, the archeological evidence, the scientific accuracy, the integrity of prophecy and history being fulfilled together and then finally...

C HANGED LIVES, people whose lives have been changed because of the testimony of this Book and stepping out by faith on the evidence. Every generation has it's skeptics and people who would say that this is just a myth, but the reality is that this Book and its testimony has changed history, has changed lives and more good has been done in the name of Jesus than through any other thing, any other source, any other personality in history, because Jesus Christ changes lives.

Dr. Simon Greenleaf, who is best know for his being ~~the named~~...the name associated with the Law School at Harvard University, was challenged by his students to study the evidences for the resurrection of Jesus. And this brilliant mind and incredible lawyer came back and said this:

"There's not a single unbiased juror in the world who would ever look at the evidence of the resurrection and deny it."

Dr. Simon Greenleaf became a Christian and he said the Bible is not mythology; it is as it was meant to be read. You see brilliant people, simple people, rich people, poor people, people from every tribe and tongue have turned to find the power of this Book. This Book changes lives and it's one of the basic reasons that I believe in the Bible.

Well, I've said a lot of things and I know there's been a lot that's come to you this morning. But I've dealt with 2 issues, #1 the issue of authority a standard, #2 the issue of authenticity that it is reliable. But let me just close by talking very briefly about the matter of...

ADEQUACY, because I love the fact that here in Timothy it says that:

This Book has been given for doctrine, for reproof, correction and training and righteousness that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished for every good work.

You need applicable guidelines for all life's situations and the wonder of the Bible is that it is a standard on the one hand. But if all you see it as is a rulebook you missed it. It's not just a book of rules, it's an incredible book of principles and this Book has given us the standard so that we would have the specifications to make life work. And if you'll just simply open your Bible you'll be amazed to discover the wisdom of the Bible. The Bible tells us a lot of things about how to live life:

How to live with significance.

How to make marriage work.

How to manage money.

How to have success in relationships.

How to balance your emotions.

How to deal with conflict.

How to handle adversity.

How to be a person of influence.

How to be a courageous parent.

How to be physical fit...physically fit.

How to have a dynamic sex life.

Some of you are goin that's in the Bible? Heh, yeah, it was God's idea, did you not know that. [pause for congregation laughter]

How to handle the home.

How to have job satisfaction...make decisions...deal with doubt...develop good habits...understand heaven and hell...know how the world ends and ultimately how to know God.

This Book is a miracle Book. It is *A Word Perfect Faith For An Imperfect World* and I am so thankful today for the power of the Word of God. But may I just very simply say to you this morning, that while there are many reasons to believe the Book, reasons will never ultimately take you to God, because God demands a different standard and His standard is faith. He gives us evidence for our faith, believing is not just some leap in the dark out into nothingness. He has given us evidence. But the way that we

know God is by faith. That's why Paul said to Timothy:

You have been given the Holy Scriptures that make you wise unto salvation and faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.

So what does the Word of God tell us? God created us. Sin corrupted us. Jesus came and died in order that He might redeem us from the curse of sin and that anyone who calls upon the name of Jesus Christ will be saved, will be changed, will be transformed by the Word of God. Have you made that discovery in your life? Have you called upon the name of the Lord? Have you been swallowed up in doubts and uncertainty, when what you need to do is to quit feeding doubt, but you need to feed your faith based on firm evidence and you need to let Jesus Christ change your life.