



**SUNDAY FEBRUARY 20<sup>TH</sup>**

**WEEK THREE – GET TRUTH.**

**Scripture: 2 Peter 1:16-21.**

This is week three of our series “Collide”.  
Let’s recap – we first laid the foundation by standing firm on the word of God; then we talked about the first thing God desires

out of our lives – to be transformed.

Has your bookmark moved lately in your Bible?

Our reading today is a strong statement on the inspiration of Scripture. Peter affirms that the Old Testament prophets wrote God’s messages. The prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit. The scriptures did not come from the creative work of the prophet’s own invention or interpretation.

God inspired the writers so their message is authentic and reliable. God used the talents, education and cultural background of each writer (they were not mindless robots) and God co-operated with the writers in such a way to ensure that the message He intended was faithfully communicated in the very words they wrote.

I am sure many of us today have felt God’s hand move us to say or write something down – He continues to inspire our lives through the Holy Spirit. Peter tells us to pay attention to God’s Word and devote our thoughts to it.

**Why is that? Because God’s Word is the surest source of truth.**

How do we know that the Bible is the surest source of truth?

**I will cover 4 points: Witness testimony; Fulfilled prophecies; The test of time and a Light that shines in the dark.**

### **1. Witness Testimony**

The Bible provides many examples from witnesses to who Jesus was - God's Son. Today's reading is just one example.

Peter, James and John went up to the mountain with Jesus and suddenly they were blinded by a brilliant light and they saw Jesus in all His glory on the Mount of Transfiguration. And standing with Him were Elijah and Moses.

How would you have reacted to that? If you were on your own maybe you would have concluded that "it was all in your mind."

Three people saw this vision, Peter, James and John. They heard the voice of God say: "this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" and they saw Jesus in all of His glory.

This vision was clear proof of who Jesus was and life after death showing both Elijah and Moses standing with Him.

This reinforced everything that Peter had experienced with being a follower of Jesus. A very powerful experience.

**But where does that leave us who have had no vision and heard no voice?**

Peter tells us that God has given us something better than experience – the Word of God. The point that Peter is making is this – we can have greater confidence in the word of God than what our eyes can see and what our ears can hear.

So we may not see a vision or hear God's voice, but God has given us all we will ever need – His Word in the Bible.

If you had a vision you may not remember it clearly or if you heard a voice you may not recall it correctly but God's word remains. It is there for us in black and white.

From Genesis to Revelation we have God's complete once-for-all-story of redemption and salvation.

## **2. Prophecies**

Many of us would like to know what is in our future, what is going to happen – wouldn't we?

It is hard to predict the future isn't us. Here are just two of the World's Worst predications:

- In 1939 the New York times said the problem of TV was that people had to glue their eyes to a screen and that the average person would not have time for it.
- In 1911 at the launch of the Titanic, an employee of the White Star Line proudly said – not even God Himself could sink this ship. Less than a year later 1500 died as a result of that boastful attitude.

We don't know what is going to happen tomorrow, but God sees the end from the beginning. And He has revealed it in His Word. God has provided all that we need – His plans for us throughout the Bible as His prophecies are fulfilled and continue to be fulfilled.

There are over 350 Old Testament prophecies that Jesus has fulfilled when He was on earth?

Here are a few examples:

- In 1000 BC Psalm 2:7 prophesied that the Messiah would be the Son of God. This was fulfilled in Matthew 3:17 when Jesus came up out of the water after being baptised by John the Baptist a voice came from heaven saying – this is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.
- In 1000 BC God prophesied to King David the way the Messiah would die. Psalm 22:16 said that the assembly of the wicked has enclosed me and they pierced my hands and my feet.
- In 725 BC Micah 5:2 prophesied that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem – and that was fulfilled.
- In 700 BC Hosea 11:1 prophesied that the Messiah would be called out of Egypt – and this was fulfilled when King Herod sent his soldiers to murder all the baby boys in Bethlehem – and Joseph and Mary fled to Egypt.
- In 520 BC Zechariah 11:12 prophesied that the Messiah would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver – this was fulfilled when Judas accepted the coins for betraying Jesus.

We know that the Bible is the truth, because these and hundreds more Old Testament prophecies have been literally fulfilled.

### **3. God's Word stands the test of time.**

If we step back and look at the whole picture of Christian history, we can see there is no such thing as a particular Christian culture or Christian civilization. Yes, it began as a Jewish movement but as believers moved to other regions and cultures – it spread.

This is in stark contrast to two of the other big religions – Islam and Hinduism. Islam emerged in Saudi Arabia and that remains it's

geographical and cultural centre. Although it has spread it retains its Arabic orientation. The Qur'an is untranslatable into any language other than Arabic.

Hinduism emerged in North India 3000 years ago, making it one of the oldest religions in the world. It's cultural and geographic centre remains in North India. It is hard to imagine it receding in India and emerging say, South Arica.

Christianity is the only faith that is translatable. If we were to investigate, we can see that Christianity has witnessed powerful penetrations into a myriad of cultures and geographical regions. We may then notice that it starts to recede there, only to realise that is has begun to emerge and expand in another region or country.

This is why the Bible is unique and well planned by God. It is not tied to one birthing place but can be translated for all cultures and locations.

#### **4. God's Word is a shining light in our lives.**

Kay said to me the other week that she had experienced a blackout in her place – no lights, no cooling/heating – nothing. And she had to fumble around to find some form of light to move around safely.

Now I am not saying that Kay could have held up her Bible to see the light – but we are told that God's Word is essential light for us in this dark world. It shines in a dark place, shines for our safety, our direction and shows us where to go and where not to go. It shines to take away our fears, to open up new possibilities – God's word is a shining light in our lives.

Among the authors of the 66 books in the Bible are kings, peasants, philosophers, fishermen, physicians, statesmen, scholars and poets –

such diverse backgrounds and you would expect their writings not to form any continuity.

However, the Bible had a divine editor, the Holy Spirit who guided the writers so that all they wrote would not only harmonise with what had been previously revealed but also with what was yet to be revealed.

Christianity is on the move around the world, making a seismic change. Christianity is the only belief system that is theologically translatable – that is, can be and has been translated into many world languages to suit all cultures.

Unlike the Qu’ran which is strictly only written in Arabic and Hinduism in the language of North India, Christianity can go all over the globe and reach every person, in their language and to suit their culture.

This is an exciting time for us as Christians, as God’s plan for all creation is moving closer towards the return of King Jesus.