The Self-Authenticating Word of God

". . . so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; 20 knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, 21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (2 Peter 1:19-21 NKJ)

In the series of columns on the Authenticity and Authority of the Bible, it is clear that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. It is "God-breathed"; that is, that God has so moved men to write in a manner that the words, the thoughts, the substance, and form were the special utterance of God's mind and will. The Bible reveals the character of the only true and living God, who has revealed not only Himself to all mankind in its pages, but has also shown the true nature of man and his need for a Savior. This Savior of sinners is no other than Jesus Christ. We know this to be true because of the eyewitness accounts given in New Testament records, written by several men under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

The testimony given by these men were authenticated by God Himself in His word, the Bible, which is understood to be self-authenticating. God does this in three different ways, and yet so interrelated that they serve as inseparable parts of the whole. First, it is a record of events that that were either witnessed by the writers themselves, or eyewitness accounts from some reliable sources, which at the time of the writing the events could be denied by other eyewitnesses. Second, the Bible was confirmed by God through the use of signs and miracles. Third, the prophecies written centuries before the actual events prophesied could not have been known in any other way than by God's revealing those future events to the Old Testament writers. But there is also a fourth way, which is perhaps the single most convincing way that the Bible is authenticated. I will consider briefly the first three ways; and then conclude with the fourth way.

The verses quoted above (2 Peter 1:19-21) are taken from a passage that begins with verse 16, which reassures the readers to whom Peter was writing, and to us also, that what was reported were not fairy tales, but were eyewitness accounts concerning "the power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ." The apostle John wrote similarly in his First Epistle, Chapter One, where we see from the first four verses that what was (John and others) declared and written concerning Jesus Christ, the "Word of life," were eyewitness testimonies of what they heard, had seen, and "handled." And then, the apostle Paul challenges the Corinthian believers in Christ to check out whether the claim that Jesus Christ rose from the dead is true, when he wrote in Chapter 15 of his First Epistle, verse 6, "After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep." The apostle here is letting the Corinthians know that they can verify the gospel message by speaking to other eyewitnesses of the events surrounding the death and resurrection of Jesus.
Christ. So we see from these few of many passages testifying to the authenticity of Scripture, as an accurate, inerrant, true account of the truths concerning Jesus Christ. The reassurance as to the authenticity of the Bible is not just in the fact that what was recorded is true, we also have the assurance of Jesus Christ Himself that what was reported in the New Testament is true and accurate, when He said, "... when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you” (John 16:13-14).

What is true of the New Testament is also true of the Old Testament. The accounts recorded of the children of Israel, were either eyewitnesses accounts or accounts that could be verified by some other source. In the historical records from Exodus to Job, these are eyewitness accounts, either written by the person to whom the book refers or written by someone with intimate knowledge of the accounts. There is a reference in 2 Chronicles to other books of history; for example, a book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah and Israel (see 2 Chronicles 25:26). In 1 Chronicles 29:29, the reader is referred to the book of Samuel the seer, the book of Nathan the prophet, and the book of Gad the seer to confirm and supplement what was recorded in Chronicles concerning king David.

There is much more that can be written concerning this subject of the eyewitness account being a way God has authenticated the Biblical record. But this is only one of the ways that demonstrate the self-authentication of the Bible. I will address the other ways that demonstrate the self-authentication of the Bible in future columns.

From the eyewitness accounts of the Bible, we can see that it is true, reliable, and trustworthy account of the revelation of the only true God and His redemption of sinners like you and me. In reliance upon the promises given in this God-breathed word, won’t you this day come to Jesus Christ in repentance of your sins and in true faith in Him and putting your trust in His one atoning sacrifice on the cross for the forgiveness, and by His resurrection obtained for you everlasting life? (John 11:25-16)

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