

## BUSINESS AND THE RELIABILITY OF THE BIBLE

By Rick Boxx

The vision of the organization I direct, Unconventional Business Network, is to see one million business leaders modeling biblical principles in their workplaces. Therefore, trust in the authority and reliability of the Bible is foundational. Recently while interviewing a job candidate, I asked the applicant about her view of the Bible. She told me, “I believe the Bible is inspired by God, but certainly not all true.”

Since trust in the value and veracity of biblical teachings is at the heart of what we do, the applicant’s response was a deal breaker for me. We read in 2 Timothy 3;16, “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.” Either every word of the Bible is true, or we put ourselves in the place of God by overruling some of His Word. Let me unpack an acronym to help you trust in the relevance and practical application of the Bible.

Hank Hanegraaff, president of the Christian Research Institute, uses the acronym “MAPS” to underscore confidence in the Bible’s reliability. The letters stand for Maps, Archaeology, Prophecy, and Statistics.

**M stands for Manuscripts.** Years ago, I visited the site of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The process the scribes used to copy God’s Word was impressive. If they made any mistake, they immediately burned the scroll. Historians gauge the veracity of a manuscript according to the volume of manuscripts and the time span between the originals and earliest manuscripts. The Bible has stronger support than those of classical writers like Homer, Tacitus, or Aristotle. Psalm 19:9 says, “The rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether.” Historical manuscript evidence overwhelmingly proves the reliability of God’s Word.

**A stands for Archaeology.** Hanegraaff tells the story of a biblical skeptic named Sir William Ramsay. Trained as an archaeologist, Ramsay set out to disprove the historical reliability of the book of Luke. Ironically, Ramsay became a Christian as – one after another — the historical statements presented in Luke were proved accurate through archaeology and the scientific method. Over the years, skeptical archaeologists have been proven wrong when they have disputed the Bible. Wondering whether God’s Word is trustworthy and true? Just ask archaeologists who have tried to prove otherwise.

**P stands for Prophecy.** Among the Bible’s most remarkable attributes are predictions made hundreds of years before they came true. Before Jesus’ birth, prophets made over 50 predictions about the Messiah. He fulfilled them all, including the Savior would be born to a virgin in Bethlehem and the Messiah would be crucified. No other book can make such claims.

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In Deuteronomy 18:19 God declares, "I myself will call to account anyone who does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name."

**S stands for Statistics.** A professor named Peter Stoner worked with 600 students to calculate the probability of just eight prophecies of Jesus Christ being fulfilled. The result is 1 in 10,036. Considering that He fulfilled more than 40 other prophecies, that makes those odds astronomically impossible that they all could have been fulfilled by one individual if not valid. Statistics prove the Bible's reliability.

God's Word has proven itself to be reliable. We can trust that it is not only factual, but also that its wisdom and principles are more than sufficient for guiding us in our daily work responsibilities and challenges.

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### Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. If someone were to ask you about your view of the Bible, its authority and reliability, how would you respond? Explain your answer.
2. Why do you think it matters that the ancient manuscripts that comprise the original texts for the Bible have been verified as authentic, as well as archaeological findings that confirm statements of fact in the Bible?
3. Predictions are made all the time. Some of them prove to be true, others turn out to be false. What are your thoughts about the 55 Old Testament prophecies – predictions – looking ahead to the Messiah that all were fulfilled by Jesus Christ? Do you think all of them combined could have come true in the life of one person by chance or coincidence? Why or why not?
4. As Mr. Boxx asserts, the manuscripts, archaeology, prophecies, and statistics all point to the authenticity and genuineness of the Bible as the inspired Word of God. But why do you think that is significant if we are to consider and apply biblical teachings and principles for guiding how we conduct ourselves in the workplace?

#### NOTE:

*If you have a Bible and would like to read more, consider the following passages:*

Psalm 119:9-11, 33-36; Ephesians 6:17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20-21

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