

# A Church Positive About The Bible

By Bill Denton

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Everybody complains about negative attitudes

1. We're in the political season in which all the candidates complain about efforts by their opponents to portray them in the most negative terms, all while doing the very same thing to their opponent
2. It's not uncommon for churches to sound pretty negative
  - a. we are against sin
  - b. we are against false religion
  - c. we are against Satan and all who follow him
  - d. for a long time, I think people in the community have probably known us best by what we don't believe in than what we do believe
3. We can end up sounding much like negative politicians, or much like the many others who become locked into negativity

### B. It's important that we, as well as others, know that we're positive about some Things

1. In the next few Sundays, I want to speak about some of those things, about which we must be positive
2. We must positively believe some things, and the attitude we display about those things needs to be positive as well
  - a. it will encourage us
  - b. it will convince others
  - c. it will put the right emphasis on things that will build our faith

### C. Today, I want to talk about the Bible

1. We need to be positive about the Bible
2. "The Bible is alive, it speaks to me; it has feet, it runs after me; it has hands, it lays hold on me."  
Martin Luther

## **I. WE NEED TO BE POSITIVE ABOUT THE BIBLE BECAUSE SO MANY PEOPLE ARE NEGATIVE ABOUT IT**

### **A. Unbelievers have many negative things to say about the Bible**

1. One reason is that they are unbelievers – they simply do not believe in the God of the Bible, or in Jesus Christ, or in those things taught in the Bible
2. Unbelievers cannot accept the teaching of the Bible to be true and remain unbelievers – inherent in the problem of unbelief is the necessity to discredit the Bible
3. The sad thing is that so many Christians end up sounding a lot like the unbelievers

### **B. Here's a list of things unbelievers often say about the Bible**

1. The Bible is just an excellent piece of literature
  - a. the KJV is especially revered for its strong poetic expression
  - b. but if this is all the Bible is, then it is also a piece of false literature since it claims to be much more
2. The Bible is uninspired
  - a. inspiration means "God-breathed," so by denying inspiration people are saying that the Bible isn't a divine book, with its origin in God
  - b. but if that's the case, then the Bible is of human origin and thus it is on par with any and every other book written
3. The Bible is outdated
  - a. individual parts of the Bible range from a couple to several thousand years in age, thus its message must be old and unfit for our modern world
  - b. if that's the case, then the Bible is relegated to dead-letter status, rather than a living, dynamic work that still speaks to human hearts
4. The Bible may be inspired, but we need more than the Bible
  - a. basically, this makes the Bible insufficient
  - b. if this is true, then it establishes the case for adding human wisdom or philosophy, modern religious thought, or anything else
5. The Bible can't be understood
  - a. everyone agrees that there are difficult passages, but the vast majority of the Bible isn't difficult at all
  - b. Mark Twain once said that it wasn't that part of the Bible he didn't understand that gave him trouble, instead it was that part of the Bible he did understand
6. The Bible doesn't fit modern thinking
  - a. we would probably agree with this, but usually it's a problem with people deciding how things ought to be, then reading the Bible
  - b. we must learn how to fit our thinking to the Bible rather than the other way around
7. A person can accept what he wants Bible and leave the rest
  - a. if that's true, then who gets to decide? Everyone?
  - b. why have a Bible at all if we just get to do whatever we think is right?

## II. IT'S TIME WE GET POSITIVE ABOUT THE BIBLE

### A. 2 Tim 3:16-17

16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. (NAU)

#### 1. Ps 19:7-9

7 The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. 8 The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. 9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether. (NAU)

- a. law of the Lord is perfect – restoring the soul
- b. testimony of the Lord is sure – making wise the simple
- c. precepts of the Lord are right – rejoicing the heart
- d. commandment of the Lord is pure – enlightening the eyes
- e. fear of the Lord is clean – enduring forever
- f. judgments of the Lord are true – righteous altogether

2. John MacArthur -- Now let me say it as simply as I can. When it comes to spiritual life, when it comes to a person's relationship to God, the Bible is all that is necessary for proper instruction to make the man of God complete and capable of every good work. It is not the Bible plus anything. And that is why we are so committed to the systematic ongoing teaching of God's Word, because of what it does.

3. Do you want to be complete and mature as a human being? Then the Bible will help you, and in fact, is all you need in order to become all that you can humanly be.

### B. John 8:32

32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." (NAU)

1. Free from bondage to sin, and so we are able to experience a different kind of life
2. Free from the guilt and penalty of sin, and so we are able to experience an unguilty conscience and avoid the punishment that sin brings
3. We are free from the faulty thinking and problem-causing behavior creates havoc out of people's lives
4. We are free to overcome human corruption, and become that which God intended for us to be

### C. Mt 4:4

4 But He answered and said, "It is written, "MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'" (NAU)

1. This was Jesus' answer to the Devil when tempted by him to turn stones into bread
2. Jesus understood something that we need to comprehend as well
  - a. the ultimate source of life for humans beings is God's word – all of it
  - b. the Bible tell us what we need to know in order to truly live

#### D. Jn 6:68

68 Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life. (NAU)

1. To whom shall we go (if not to the Lord, and if not through his word, the Bible?)
  - a. shall we go to some other religious leader, when they are only human and thus come with the same needs as we ourselves?
  - b. shall we go to some secular philosopher, who rejects anything divine, and has nothing to offer except that which relates to this life only?
  - c. shall we go to some political leader, some social leader, some teacher, some mystical guru, or some other person, all of whom may from time to time say things that are reasonable, even good, but in the end have no answer to the most difficult questions of life and death?
2. Or shall we go to the Lord, who speaks to us by his word?
  - a. from whom we receive information that is decidedly unhuman in origin, but rather is information from the Creator himself
  - b. from whom we receive information that not only addresses the living of life now, on this earth, in this fleshly body, but also addresses matters of eternity?
  - c. the decision about which one we will go to as the source of what we really need to know ought not be that difficult

#### E. Acts 17:11

11 Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily {to see} whether these things were so. (NAU)

1. We hear a lot today about Christians being closed-minded, prejudiced, and unwilling to consider alternative ways of thinking
  - a. that accusation is flatly false, if we're talking about Christians who understand the Bible
  - b. not only that, but if you want to meet some truly closed-minded, prejudiced people who are most unwilling to consider alternative ways of thinking, then try to get people to seriously consider studying the Bible and accepting its truths
2. These Bereans are in the Bible to set an example for us on how to deal with God's word
  - a. scripture encourages the idea of examination with an open mind and heart
  - b. scripture encourages the idea of an impartial search for truth
  - c. the Bereans understood the value of time-tested, verified and accepted scripture – that it is the standard by which truth is to be judged
  - d. the Bible, through the Bereans, show us that it takes a daily examination of God's word in order to properly and completely comprehend the truth

#### F. Jas 1:22

22 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. (NAU)

1. Hearing the word of God is preparatory to the doing of God's will
  - a. you can read the Bible, hear sermons, sit through Bible classes, listen to tapes of lectures, on and on
  - b. but until a person begins to practice that which he or she learns, they haven't yet understood what the Bible is all about
2. Therefore, the Bible is a book about the living of life
  - a. read the Bible, study it, learn it, only if you're interested in knowing how to live your life
  - b. the Bible was never meant to become merely an academic exercise, but rather it was meant to shape and sculpt the behavior of our lives
  - c. we ought to get excited about that because it's as if the Creator sent us an "owners manual" so that we could know how to properly operate ourselves

G. There many other things about the Bible that make it essential that we get positive about it, And make it a real and productive part of our lives

### III. SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

A. Read your Bible daily – just read it, hearing the words, taking in the information

B. Study your Bible regularly – examine what it says, connect various teachings, understand How it is laid out, what it says about specific topics, how it communicates God's will through Human history and lives

C. Bring your Bible to class and to worship assemblies – use it when teachers discuss various Passages, or when preachers proclaim it

D. Memorize passages – this is how Jesus dealt with Satan's temptations, and it is how you will Bring to mind in the needed moment, that which the Bible teaches

E. Mark up your Bible with notes, word definitions, connections to other passages, color-coded Helps and other things that assist you in understanding what it teaches

F. Perhaps most importantly of all, get positive about the Bible

1. As a believer, understand that this is God's message to you about your life, how it works best, what his will is for you, and what you need to do to make life the best it can be
2. Speak positively about the Bible to others, even when they seem to reject it, or scoff at it, or seem uninterested
3. Let's determine together that we will be known as a people of the book

## CONCLUSION

### A. Consider these statements:

1. A Bible that's falling apart probably belongs to someone who isn't.  
Christian Johnson
2. A new world will arise out of the religious mists when we approach our Bible with the idea that it is . . . a book which is now speaking.  
A. W. Tozer
3. As in paradise, God walks in the Holy Scriptures, seeking man.  
Saint Ambrose
4. Born in the East and clothed in Oriental form and imagery, the Bible walks the ways of all the world with familiar feet and enters land after land to find its own everywhere. It has learned to speak in hundreds of languages to the heart of man. It comes into the palace to tell the monarch that he is a servant of the Most High, and into the cottage to assure the peasant that he is a son of God. Children listen to its stories with wonder and delight, and wise men ponder them as parables of life.  
Henry Van Dyke
5. Do you know a book that you are willing to put under your head for a pillow when you are dying? Very well; that is the book you want to study when you are living. There is only one such book in the world.  
Joseph Cook
6. "The Bible is a letter from God with our personal address on it."  
Søren Kierkegaard

### B. Invitation