

Many people professing to be Christians today believe the Bible is useful but incomplete and needs to be supplemented by their own teachings and writings. But is this the case? Is it possible that the Bible completely equips us?

THE BIBLE'S SCRIPTURES GIVE ALL WE NEED

The Bible completely equips Christians because it is the only divinely inspired writing. **“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17)** the Bible is complete in itself, and needs no supplementation. Nothing needs to be read into it.

BIBLICAL SUPPLEMENTATION NOT NEEDED

“Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar.” (Proverbs 30:5-6)

The Bible is perfect because it is God's Word and does not need to be supplemented.



“Do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

” (1 Jn 4:1)

“I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll. And if anyone takes words away from this scroll of prophecy, God will take away from that person any share in the tree of life and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll.” (Revelation 22:18-19) Adding to or subtracting anything from the Bible is condemned by God.

Commentaries in harmony with what the Bible actually says are fine, but nothing written by humans is equal to the scriptures.

“Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.”

(John 17:17) The Bible is God's Word.

THE INSPIRED WRITERS

“Remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold.” (Jude 17) The word of the apostles was authoritative. The New Testament was written by four apostles directly chosen by Jesus, namely, Matthew, John, Peter and Paul. Four other close associates of the apostles also wrote the New Testament.

- **1 Corinthians 15:7** - “Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.” Jesus appeared to James.
- **Acts 15:13** - “James spoke...”
- **Acts 15:19** - “It is my judgment...”
- **Acts 15:22** - “Then the apostles and elders... decided....” James was the spokesman.
- **Acts 21:18** - “Paul and the rest of us went to see James, and all the elders were present.” James was the leader of the important Jerusalem church.
- **Galatians 1:19** - “I saw none of the other apostles - only James, the Lord's brother.”
- **Galatians 2:9** - “James, Cephas and John, those esteemed as pillars.”

James had status as a “virtual” apostle. Therefore, God used James to write a New Testament book.

“Only Luke is with me.” (2 Timothy 4:11) Luke was a close associate of Paul and stayed with him until the end.

“The church in Babylon, also chosen, sends you greetings, as does Mark, my son.” (1 Peter 5: 13) Mark was a close associate of Peter, apparently his secretary writing the book of Mark.

“Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James.” (Jude 1) Although Jude at first did not believe (**John 7:5; Mark 3:21**), he is one of Jesus brothers who was there at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost day. Jude had status along with apostles and the Lord's brothers and Cephas as a long-time, prominent Christian in the early church. Especially his close relationship with his brother James who was the leader of the early Church for sometime gave him status to write this canonical letter.

ALL 31,000 SCRIPTURES CONFIRMED BY END OF 1ST CENTURY

“He said to them, ‘This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.’” (Luke 24:44) Jesus accepted the three major divisions of the Old Testament and the books they contained (22 the way the Jews counted them; 39 the way we today count them).

“For the Scripture says... ‘The worker deserves his wages.’” (1 Timothy 5:18) Paul apparently quotes from **Luke 10:7** which says “...for the worker deserves his wages.” This quote gives scriptural status, or acknowledges the scriptural status of Luke's writings, namely volume 1 – **Luke**, and volume 2 – **Acts**.

“Just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which is ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction. (2 Peter 3:15-16) This gives scriptural status to all 14 of Paul's letters, by placing them as having equal status with the Hebrew Scriptures.

“Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people. ” (Jude 3) This body of truth, or faith, contained

in the Bible was delivered once for all time, being completed by around 100 CE.

DO WE NEED ANYTHING BEYOND THE 66 BIBLE BOOKS?

“Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”

(John 20:30-31) Yes, Jesus did many other things that are not recorded in John, or the Bible as a whole. But the point is that we have all we need in the Bible itself for salvation and a relationship with God through Christ.

THE 66 BIBLE BOOKS ARE THE GOLD STANDARD

“Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.” (1 John 4:1) All ideas, teachings, doctrines, traditions, etc. should be measured or compared to the Bible as the standard of truth.

“Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” (2 Peter 1:20-21) God's Holy Spirit guided the writings of the Bible.

“Do not go beyond what is written in Scripture.” (1 Corinthians 4:6 GWT) We are not to go beyond what is written in the Bible.

WHAT ABOUT OTHER SACRED WRITINGS BEYOND THE BIBLE'S 66 BOOKS?

“I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel - which is really no

gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God's curse!" (Galatians 1:6-9) Anyone preaching or teaching another gospel, or a different gospel is accursed.

"For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the Spirit you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough." (2 Corinthians 11:4) No different Jesus, or nothing different about Jesus should be taught or preached, than what is in the Bible.

"The word of the Lord endures forever.' And this is the word that was preached to you." (1 Peter 1:24-25) God has made sure that his word, the Bible has been preserved accurately, and completely equips us.

"The words of the Lord are flawless, like silver purified in a crucible, like gold refined seven times." (Psalm 12:6) God's perfect words in the Bible completely equips us and doesn't need to be supplemented.

"They worship Me in vain, teaching as doctrines the commands of men. Disregarding the command of God, you keep the tradition of men.' He also said to them, 'You completely invalidate God's command in order to maintain your tradition! ... You revoke God's word by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many other similar things.'" (Mark 7:7-9, 13 HCSB) Human ideas, traditions, doctrines, etc. which conflict with the body of truth contained in the Bible are excluded from the Bible. Similarly, all such can and should be compared to the Bible, which is the standard by which to judge all things, because the Bible completely equips us.

“Anyone who is so ‘progressive’ as not to remain in the teaching of the Christ does not have God; whoever remains in the teaching has the Father and the Son.” (2 John 9 NAB) “Progressing” beyond what the Bible teaches is dangerous and condemned. There is no more revelation than what is contained in the Bible, because the Bible completely equips us.

“We ask you, brothers and sisters, not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by the teaching allegedly from us - whether by a prophecy or by word of mouth or by letter - asserting that the day of the Lord has come. Don’t let anyone deceive you.” (2 Thessalonians 2:1-3) There were writings circulating even as early as the first century that were spreading false information. To make matters worse, some of these purported to be written by church leaders, such as the apostles. Christians then, and now, were warned to reject these.

CONCLUSION

So as we can see, the Bible completely equips us and does not need to be supplemented. While sermons, commentary and other writings about the Bible can be good and helpful to Christians, when they “go beyond what is written” (1 Cor 4:6) and introduce new teachings and ideas contrary to the Scriptures, they can be harmful. By comparing teachings to what is written in the Bible, Christians can identify and avoid these false teachings.

All scriptures quoted from New International Version (NIV) unless otherwise noted