

# STREAMS of Life

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE INCARCERATED

## Is the Bible Genuine? By Del Burkholder

### 1. The Bible's Inspiration

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness. **2 Timothy 3:16**

For no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. **2 Peter 1:21**

These two verses are the common verses referred to when speaking of the inspiration of Scripture. We as Christians must base our whole premise on Scripture being the unadulterated Word of God. The Bible, we believe, is correct in all answers we need, whether it is science or meteorology. For example, I often lecture on creation versus evolution and as I was taught at Moody Bible Institute, the Bible is not a science textbook, but there is nothing in science that disagrees with the Bible. I state this as example that we can approach the premises of the Bible being true in all matters.

The Bible was composed by some 40 different authors over 1600 years. In that we often read phrases such as, "Thus says the Lord" (Isaiah 43: 1), "The Word of the Lord that came to Joel" (Joel 1:1), or "The Word of the Lord that came to Hosea" (Hosea 1:1). There are also direct commands to write what He had spoken such as to Moses (Exodus 17:14 and 34:27). In fact, there are over 3,800 times in the Old Testament alone where there are statements such as these that proclaim the Old Testament to be the Word of God<sup>1</sup>.

The New Testament also picks up this theme countless times such as John on the Isle of Patmos (Revelation 1:1,2, 2:1,8,12,18 and 3:1,7,14), or Paul (1 Corinthians 14:37), Peter (2 Peter 3:2), and the writer to the Hebrews (Hebrews 2:1-4).

### 2. The Church fathers rejected the false books.

It seems like people's appetite for heresy has been stroked by secular television with a steady diet of shows about so-called lost books of the Bible. Many shows are based on books that try to explain the missing years of Jesus (ages 12-30) and basically add suppositions to scripture. The shows are based on pseudo books such as the Apocalypse of Peter or the Gospel of Thomas and scores of others. They give us false stories of Jesus as a child making clay pigeons and having them fly away or portray encounters with a person bumping into Jesus and then immediately dying when He looks at them. These books were largely written many years after the Bible and usually by Gnostics who never believed the tenets of the faith. They were disputed by the early church fathers and proclaimed as a forgery. We find that the true books of the Bible and its compilation were carefully vetted by the Church fathers.

### 3. The Bible's New Testament was written with in a few years after Jesus' life.

Unlike most other ancient manuscripts throughout secular history that were wrote hundreds of years after the events actually happened, the New Testament has some manuscripts dated very close to when Jesus lived on earth.

<sup>1</sup>The very first fragment of Scripture that was found was some verses from the Gospel of John (18:31-34, 37-38) on a papyrus manuscript designated P52 and dated as early as 110-125 AD. These dates could bring us within a couple decades of the death of John.

There are other manuscripts from the epistles of Paul called P46 which may actually be from first century; these are still debated.

Major secular and Christian media sources purported in 2012 that there was a papyri found of the Gospel Mark believed to be possibly first century. Early Scripture tells us Paul was writing very close to the time of the happenings of the Gospel. In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul explains when he was

Dear Lord,  
Open my heart to  
Your Word so that  
I can hold tightly  
to its truth.



<sup>1</sup>Thiessen, Henry Clarence, Lectures in Systematic Theology, Wm. Eerdmans Pub. Co, 1989 pg 46

<sup>2</sup>Thiessen, Henry Clarence, Lectures in Systematic Theology, Wm. Eerdmans Pub. Co, 1989 pg 49

<sup>3</sup>Comfort, Phillip, The Origin of the Bible, Tyndale House, Pub. Wheaton Ill. 1992. 179

## A Time of Loss By Del Burkholder



Tammy Burkholder  
September 25, 1963  
till April 3, 2022

Tammy Burkholder

While I like to write encouraging words dealing with prison work, this time I feel led to address to the many friends of Streams of Life a personal note of recent loss in my life. My wife, Tammy, passed away on Sunday, April 3, 2022.

About 6 years ago, Tammy began experiencing very gradual loss of movement. Over the next several years she was diagnosed at Penn Neurology Philadelphia with Multiple Systems Atrophy, a rare and very aggressive version of Parkinsonism, most common in people in their 50's. From that moment forward both Tam and I knew her time on earth was probably limited. It left her almost totally immobilized the last 2 years of life, including forcing her to have her feet elevated to keep from passing out. She handled her approaching fate with courage and never lost her sense of humor. While the disease robbed her ability to have the emotion of crying, it never took away her ability to laugh. Tam and I shared a special bond of closeness in our marriage and all through our marriage every phone call between us always ended with love you or text with Luu. Tammy believed until the end that Jesus could heal her if He chose and if it was in His will. Unfortunately, this was not meant to be in God's plan for her life on earth. Tammy is now forever healed in a City that has no pain or crying as those things have passed away in her life.

I remember hearing a pastor tell the story about how their young son was in a violent car crash. As he and his wife stood by their son's bed as he was slipping away, he looked to his wife and said, "Well now I guess we need to learn how to deal with this affliction in the way we have been telling people to deal with their problems and loss." From the outset of Tammy's illness, I always wanted to show the way a Christian is supposed to balance tragedy with their faith rested on Jesus Christ. Even as a Christian, the loss of my wife hurts really badly.

They always say you don't know how something feels until you experience it yourself. I realize that being in ministry and even doing some funerals, death notices in prison and prison memorial services over the years, I have probably not been as sympathetic in the past as I could have been with what the person is feeling during their time of loss. By personally experiencing this loss I now know what many have felt during the loss of someone very close.

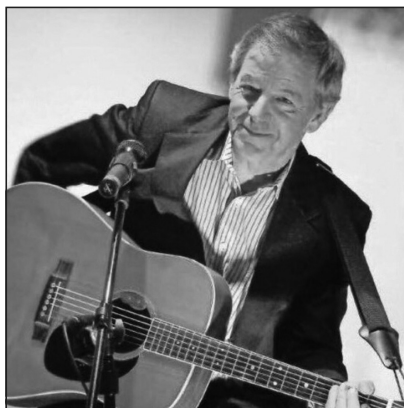
I was touched by the many cards, texts, and encouragement sent my way. I was especially moved by the outpouring from many prisoners and ex-prisoners that I had ministered to over the years throughout this state. They reached out with their condolences during this time of loss.

I want to publicly thank the ministry Board of Directors, and our prison chaplain staff that stood with me when I was unable to function in full capacity as Director. They supported me during this extended time of care giving for Tammy. And thank you to the readers and supporters of Streams of Life that has enabled this ministry to continue moving forward during this time of loss.

### Till we meet again.

*He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away. Revelation 21:4*

## GUEST COLUMNIST: JOHN SCHMID



John Schmid

"I don't even know where my children are."

That was the statement of the female prisoner - we'll call her Sue- to prison volunteer Brenda Duvendeck who was part of the Bill Glass Prison Weekend of Champions in northwest Ohio.

"I think they are in a foster home somewhere."

"I used to keep foster children," said Brenda.

Sue asked her, "Did you ever keep Mark, Linda and Desiree?"

"Yes! Yes, I did!" cried Brenda. "They were at my house several weekends I have my picture on my refrigerator!"

Sue hadn't seen them in six years.

Coincidence? I don't think so. What are the chances of any of the counselors being foster parents and then meeting up with the mother of the very children who had been in her home? It was a divine appointment.

Continued on page 3

writing 1st Corinthians that most of the 500 that had seen Jesus were still alive. That is an example of how recent to the events of Jesus he wrote. *And that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, And that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; 1 Corinthians 15:4-6*

**4. The Bible presents validation through the early church fathers.** <sup>4</sup>Clement of Rome, writing about AD 95, already quoted from Matthew, Luke, Romans, Corinthians, Hebrews, 1 Timothy and 1 Peter in his writings.

- <sup>5</sup>Polycarp – Late first century to mid second century, a disciple of the Apostle of John, who talked to eyewitnesses of Jesus. In his “Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians” quoted Scripture and accounted the actual words of Jesus. Polycarp also quoted Paul, John, and others.
- <sup>6</sup>Irenaeus (AD 130-200), a pupil of Polycarp, quotes most of the New Testament as “Scripture,” calling it the Gospels and the Apostles.
- <sup>7</sup>Tertullian (AD 160-225) by the turn of the third century had used most of New Testament books in his writing with exception of about 4 or 5 of the mostly smaller books.
- <sup>8</sup>The canon of the New Testament, as we know it today, became fixed when Athanasius (AD 297-373), considered “the father of orthodoxy”, listed the books of the New Testament in his thirty-ninth Paschal Letter (AD. 367). Our canon today was also confirmed at a church council held in Carthage in AD 397.

<sup>9</sup>Three criteria were used in recognizing canonicity

- Was a book apostolic in origin?
- Was the book used and recognized by the churches?
- Did the book teach sound doctrine?

The Old Testament was confirmed much earlier, but more recently around 1948 with the finding of the Dead sea scrolls in the Qumran caves, Bible verification of the Old Testament was also confirmed. These books were dated at around second or third century B.C. All the Old Testament was found in these books except for the book of Esther. Esther was probably omitted by the extreme ascetic Jewish sect called the Essenes because it is our only Old Testament book that does not mention the word God. One of the great confidences we can have on the divine protection of Scripture by God is the complete Book of Isaiah was found in the caves dating well before Christ was not only completely intact, but also word for word with the current Hebrew text we have today.

**Summary.** We have seen an example of how a collection or list of sacred books was accepted as genuine. The Bible has been meticulously compiled by many God-inspired authors over many years. <sup>10</sup>The most manuscripts found for a secular literary work is the 643 copies of Homer. The validity of the Bible trumps that with a collection of well over 24,000 New Testament manuscripts. So, our answer to the beginning question is the Bible genuine? The evidence says yes!

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<sup>4</sup>Henry H. Halley, Halley's Bible Handbook, Zondervan Pub. House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1965, 743

<sup>5</sup>J. B. Lightfoot, The Apostolic Fathers, Baker House, Grand Rapids Michigan 1983, 95-99

<sup>6</sup>Henry H. Halley, Halley's Bible Handbook, Zondervan Pub. House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1965, 744

<sup>7</sup>Bruce Metzger, The Canon of the New Testament, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1987, 159 & 160

<sup>8</sup>Paul E. Little, Know What You Believe, Scripture Press Publishing 1999, Chapter One- the Bible

<sup>9</sup>Paul E. Little, Know What You Believe, Scripture Press Publishing 1999, Chapter One- the Bible

<sup>10</sup>Josh McDowell, Evidence That Demands A Verdict, Here's Life Publishers Inc. 1986, pg 39

The heartbreaking situation is the norm rather than the exception in our prison system. Broken lives, ruined homes, shattered dreams, hopeless futures-The very thing that our savior came to remedy.” I came that they might have life and had it abundantly” (John 10:10). For most prisoners, their only hope is Jesus. Actually, for all of us, our only hope is Jesus; we just don't realize it as clearly as Sue and the rest of the inmates do. God was lifted up and so were we.

I haven't heard the rest of the story on Sue, but I have Brenda's phone number and I am anxious and excited to see how God is going to restore this family. Pray for Sue.

Later with the Bill Glass prison ministry I was invited by Jack Murphy to go with him on this weekend and do the singing before he spoke. In five different prisons we did 15 different performances. I would sing, and when Jack got up to speak and give his testimony of 21 years in prison. I would leave and go to the next section of the prison. I would sing until Jack showed up and then I would take off again to another section and start the program.

On Saturday, we did this eight different times! And while we were doing our thing, ate other well-known athletes and world wrecker holders were doing the same thing in other prisons while the several hundred volunteers remain in the prison to talk and answer questions and lead prisoners-and guards-To Christ. I have not heard the final count but several hundred decisions for Christ were recorded during the weekend. Christ was lifted up and so were we!

# Streams of Life Newsletter

Newsletter Specially for the Incarcerated

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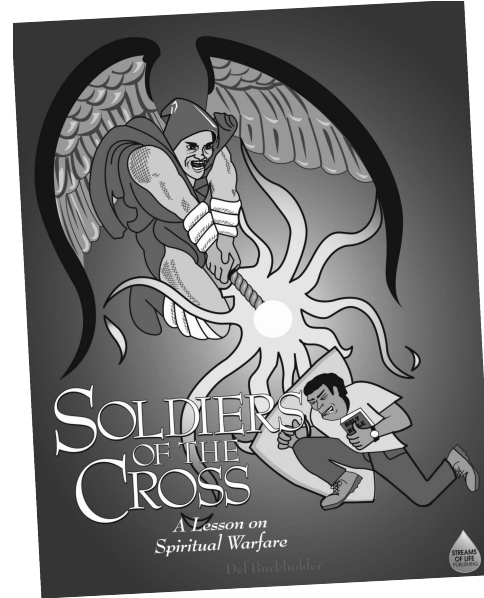
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