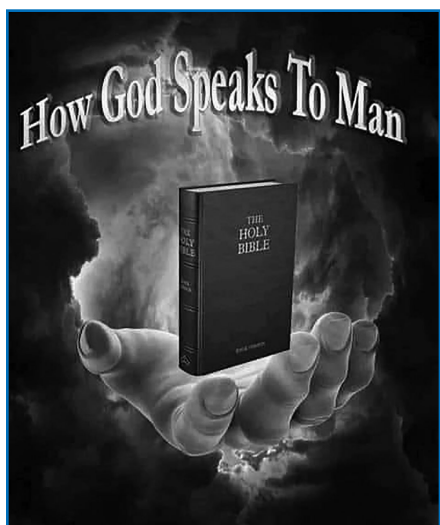


# STREAMS of Life

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE INCARCERATED

## Affirmation of the Bible as the Word of God By Del Burkholder

I continue my writing series on the attributes of the Bible, this newsletter we look at proofs of the Bible being God's communication to mankind.



### The Bible is Canon

The definition of Canon is a general law, rule, principle, or criterion by which something is judged. From this definition the Bible is Canon in the fact that it is rule or law of truth that everything must be measured against.

#### A. The Bible as doctrine

The Bible instructs us to mediate on God's word, instruct others in it, and to teach our children. Examples are found in 2 Timothy 3:15-17, and Psalms 1:1-3, Joshua 1:8,

God's Word has been used to teach morality for centuries through the core of the Mosaic Law. An example is in Exodus 20:1-17. Jesus affirmed this law in Mathew 22:34-40, and Jesus also taught morality in Mark 7:21-23. Paul emphasized morality through his writings (1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Romans 1:19-31) and left a model of structure for how the church should operate (1 Timothy 3:1-7). In fact, some of the problems Paul faced in the early church with how to handle sin and restoration of those sinners serve as examples that church leaders use today in handling these matters (1

Corinthians 5:1-13 and 2 Corinthians 2:1-11).

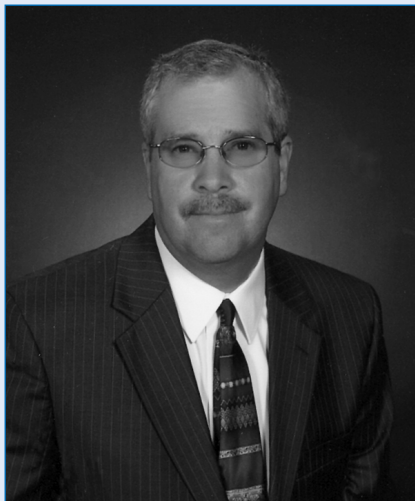
I marvel how the Bible is such a tested and reliable tool and able to handle all church matters even 2,000 years later. There has been a lot of changes in history in 2,000 years, but the Bible is unchanging and forever useful in our lives.

#### B. The Bible went through a thorough vetting process

We have looked previously at the testimony of church fathers on the Holy Scripture and how each book was carefully vetted by the fathers. To make the canon of Scripture, the fathers had a strict vetting process to make scripture valid. Below is a chart done by Paul Little in his book, *Know What You Believe*, describing some of the inspiration processes they used.

HOW WRITERS WERE INSPIRED	
<u>Method</u>	<u>Events</u>
1. God described directly to the writer	The creation of the universe and human race (Gen. 1-2)
2. Writers actually witnessed	The Resurrection and Jesus' miracles (John 20:3-9)
3. Copied from other texts handed down from eyewitnesses	The creation of Luke's gospel (Luke 1:1-4)
4. God spoke directly to the prophets	"This is what the Lord says" (Jer. 30:1-2)

## Being Connected to a Local Church By Del Burkholder



Del Burkholder

A frequent question our ministry often gets is, “How can an ex-inmate become involved in prison ministry or ministry in general?” Whether an ex-inmate can return to a prison to minister or teach varies from state to state. In Pennsylvania, it is not impossible, but usually they need to be out of prison for several years and have the right recommendations.

Over the years, I’ve seen ex-inmates called to the ministry. Some I did not expect and are doing quite well. On the flip side, I have also seen many fizzle out and end badly. One of the very successful ex-inmates that I have been close to and who touched thousands is Jim Newsom. Jim’s abilities as a Bible Teacher and writer are very evident and bares more than just a prison testimony. He achieved Biblical education and was mentored by outstanding leaders in the Body of Christ. Jim worked hard as a communicator and writer to achieve his well-deserved place of over 50 years as a teacher, after serving time in prison.

One of the questions we ask at SFPM/Streams of Life to ex-inmates wanting to get involved in ministry is if they are part of a local church. Surprisingly and sadly, many do not regularly attend a local church. We realize it is often difficult for former inmates to try to blend into a church body and the uncomfortableness that comes with that, but there is need for accountability and mentorship and a church body is proof of one way of doing this. In fact, Hebrews 10:25 commands it. *Not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.* (NIV)

I know there are some churches out there today that are not following God’s direction, but there are still many that hold Jesus Christ and His Word high. They may not be as exciting as the prison church that inmates are used to attending. There may be things ex-inmates do not like with their worship style, but there are no perfect churches. They are made up of people that fail just as we have failed in our past. Just being a productive worshipper or participant in a local church provides a healthy benefit to anyone’s Christian walk.

### The Need for Submission

*Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.* James 4:7

Submission is mentioned often in the Bible. Usually, it is from the Greek word *Hupotasso* as it is translated submit here in James, and it comes from a military term to “arrange in order.”

Any ministry that a person does should be under the affirmation of the body of Christ. If you are doing the work of the Holy Spirit, others will acknowledge and see that this work is from God and not from man. Individuals should be able to work in the unity of the overall church body of believers. Psalms 133 says that we should be together in unity.

As I have served under submission and accountability, there have been times when people that advised me did not always agree with some of my plans. I did not always like their criticism at the time, but later I knew that their criticism came from a right heart and often spoke truth into me.

We have been set free through the Blood of Jesus Christ, but as Paul writes we also need to be under subjection as a servant of God. *For though I am free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.* 1 Corinthians 9:19

In prison ministry, the chaplain will question a volunteer’s motive to find out if an individual can work in unity with the overall goal of training men & women in Christ at that institution. We had one chaplain, Al Huber, who used to refer to people that would not want to work within the overall structure of the Christian department as “Lone Ranger Christians.” To make a successful prison ministry you must be part of teambuilding in the Body of Christ.

In conclusion my writing is not to discourage but encourage those of you who are being released from prison. Connect with a local church, be part of what they have for you, and allow the Holy Spirit to minister to your heart.

Till we meet again,  
Del Burkholder

## The Bible testifies of itself for verification

We have already stated twice the powerful verses of 2 Peter 1:20- 21 and 2 Timothy 3:16, but also verses such as 1 Corinthians 10:11, Hebrews 4:12, Revelation 3:6, Psalms 78:1, Psalms 49:1- 2 and Joshua 1:8 all command us that the Word of God is to be obeyed.

The Church through the ages from the Early Church Fathers to the Vatican to the Reformation has acknowledged the Bible as an authoritative document of God's Word to the human race.

## Secular and other witness of the Bible

### A. Science does not discredit the Bible

In a Bible college course I took, a professor stated the Bible is not a science textbook. However, there is not a disagreement between the Bible and science when it discusses scientific matters, either.

One of the accusations against the science of the Bible is Joshua 10:11-14 where the sun and the moon were commanded to stand still in the valley of Aijalon where the Israelites were fighting. The science community is quick to point out that it is the earth that rotates the sun and not vice versa. This is true, but couldn't an Almighty God have enough ability to stop the entire solar system? Or even the Milky Way Galaxy or entire Universe? Creation Scientist Henry Morris writes:

<sup>2</sup>"It seems clear that the earth stopped rotating on its axis, and the moon also stopped its motion about the earth. This might even mean that the entire solar system stopped its various motions for a day."

Something that I have taught over the years is the Bible verses evolution and I believe to teach that from a Biblical perspective I need to know what the evolutionists believe. I have done my best to study evolution from their angle. I read a powerful article by an adamant and educated evolutionist about arguments commonly used by evolutionist against the Bible that they should stop using because they are not valid. An example would be where there may be some mistranslations by King James writers in 1611AD based on Hebrew words for animals and whales which sometime could be fish or dragon and bats maybe should have been bird in some places. As I stated before, science does not disprove the Bible and I credit this secular evolutionist for using reason in this instance.

There are many areas that can be scientifically questioned when it comes to the Bible. Even though the Bible is God-inspired, it is put in writing by men living thousands of years ago as events are seen through their eyes and knowledge. An example of this is that the Bible taught a flat earth theory, right? Wrong! Civilizations through the centuries imagined a flat earth where ships would drop off the edge at a certain point, but all the way back at 700 B.C. God had revealed the earth was a sphere to the prophet Isaiah.

*It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in. Isaiah 40:22*

### B. Archeology Confirms the Bible

In the 1800's anti-Biblical archeologists commonly wrote how Belshazzar, the king of Babylon in Daniel chapter five, never existed as an actual person because there was never any archeological evidence for his existence. History records the Babylonian King at this time was Nabonidus. He was documented in secular writings as the king during the takeover by the Medes and Persians and thus Belshazzar had to be a mythical character invented by the Bible. But in <sup>3</sup>1853 they excavated the actual wall of the building where MENE, TEKEL, and PERES was written on the wall in Daniel 5:5-9. They found that Belshazzar was indeed the king at the time and that Cyrus the Great diverted the waterway and brought his troops into the city to take it. Also, Nabonidus was Belshazzar's father and co-ruler, but Nabonidus spent most of his time outside of the city fighting the Medes and the Persians.

Archaeology has also historically given testament to a long list of Biblical kings and pharaohs including David and the majority of the kings of Israel. <sup>4</sup>Biblical Archaeology Review compiled a nice list of kings of Israel and surrounding areas that at one-time history had only known through the Bible, but archaeology has since confirmed.

<sup>2</sup>Henry M. Morris, *Science and The Bible*, Moody Press, Chicago Ill. 1986,29

<sup>3</sup>Henry H. Halley, *Halley's Bible Handbook*, Zondervan Pub. House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1965, pg 344

<sup>4</sup>Mykytiuk Lawrence, *Archeology confirms 50 Real People in the Bible*, Biblical Archaeology Review, Washington D.C. March/April 2014

# The Passing of our Chaplain Tyrone Hightower

On December 23, 2022, Support for Prison Ministries Chaplain Tyrone Hightower passed into the waiting arms of Jesus. Tyrone, alongside his wife Vernell of 29 years and 5 months, had been serving at Lancaster County Prison since 2010 on a part-time basis. Tyrone retired at the beginning of the 2020 COVID outbreak. Several months later he became ill and struggled with several health issues which ultimately led to his passing. In his young years, Tyrone was involved with the city drug scene and first met his wife at the Liberty Medical Center where she was ministering with a church group. After becoming saved, Tyrone kept attending services and after a year of persistent attempts to try to court Vernell she finally agreed to a date. They were married within 4 months!



Tyrone & Vernell Hightower

He started his business, Hightower Construction, in Baltimore. He also gained a Bible education from Baltimore School of the Bible. He and Vernell started Transforming Power Ministries in 2007 which included rescue missions and prisons in Baltimore. They ministered in York rescue missions and prisons frequently and then became regulars at Lancaster Prison with SFPM.

Tyrone's personality would light up a room when he walked in. He was a giver of the resources God blessed him with and sometimes paid rent for those in need. He had a heart for the lost, and when a former inmate failed and went back to prison, he was there to show them the love of Jesus. He would tell men getting out of prison, "If you can't find a job, start your own business." One young man took his advice after prison and started a barbershop, which Tyrone helped him get started. On opening day Tyrone anointed that barbershop with oil. That man is still successful in his walk with the Lord and cutting hair today.

Tyrone's Mission verse was Jeremiah 33: 3 "Call onto Me and I will show you what you know not." Tyrone answered the call to the fullest in presenting the Gospel to those hurting and those in prison. Please keep his widow, Vernell, in your prayers. As his life ended, we can say, "Well done, good and faithful servant!" Till we meet again.

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**Affirmation of the Bible as the Word of God** Continued from page 3

## C. Prophecy confirms the Bible

Ezekiel 34:11-16 tells us there would be a regathering of Israel.

"I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them to their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the streams, and in all the inhabited places of the land. **Ezekiel 34:13**

Many think this is direct prophecy that refers to the forming of the 1948 Nation of Israel again. Other verses that form this idea: are Ezekiel 11:17, 20:34, and 28:25, Isaiah 11:11- 12, Jeremiah 23: 3-8, and Micah 2:12.

Regarding Jesus, there are well over 300 prophecies of His coming, who He would be, what He would do, and where He came from. While I could not give the miracles of proven prophecy justice in this short section, I encourage the Bible student to do more study in this matter as it will confirm the authenticity of the Bible

## Streams of Life Newsletter: Newsletter Specifically for the Incarcerated

**Publishing & Design:** Bock Creative • **Prison Director:** Del Burkholder  
**Prison Teacher:** Delmar Weaver • **Contributor:** Jim Newsom

### Support for Prison Ministries

DBA Streams of Life is operated by a Board of Directors that oversees all operations of its 501(c) 3 Nonprofit.

**Board Chairman:** Ken Martin, • **Treasurer:** Ken Haller

### To contact Streams of Life Prison Ministry

PO Box 727, Brownstown, PA 17508 • 717.859.5519 • [sfpm@dejazzd.com](mailto:sfpm@dejazzd.com)

[www.SupportForPrisonMinistries.com](http://www.SupportForPrisonMinistries.com)