

LIFE CHANGING POWER

THE LIFE-CHANGING POWER of God and Scripture has changed the world. Objectively measuring the life-changing power of God and Scripture/the Bible in the world might seem impossible, except for an overriding truth. All human knowledge of Christ's life and teachings, and God's ways, truths, plans, purpose and promises for mankind, comes solely and directly or indirectly from Scripture. Thus, everything bearing God's authority and the name of Jesus Christ is inseparably linked to God's inspired Word, Scripture/the Bible. No other book has ever held such universal appeal or produced such lasting effects in billions of faithful disciples in every generation. Even Helen Keller, born blind, deaf and mute, learned God's ways and truths from Scripture:

“the Bible gives me a deep comforting sense that (things seen are temporal, and things unseen are eternal.” –

***Helen Keller**, *The Story of My Life**

Many religious philosophies influence the minds and attitudes of its adherents. In Christ alone, God imparts Spiritual life which transforms the hearts lives and eternal destiny of believers. Without Spiritual life, following commands, performing “good works and religious rituals,” and good intentions are meaningless in the eternal scheme of things.

Everything “Christian” is directly or indirectly influenced by Scripture, although not everything done “in the name of the Lord” is of Christ or Scripture. The things of God rest on the authoritative Word and truth of Scripture/the Bible. Human philosophies and opinions may directly or

indirectly refer to Bible principles, but depend on what “seems right to men,” not on Scripture, sovereign God and Jesus Christ for their authority.

GLOBAL INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY (STATISTICS)

The 2015 International Bulletin of Missionary Research “Status of Global Missions,” observed that the obedience of eleven Christian disciples 2,000 years ago has grown into an astonishing 2.4-billion professing Christians today. ^[#101a] Even after 2,000 years, Christianity is still growing at a rate of 80,000 Christians daily or 30-million new Christians every year! ^[#101] According to a May 2015 Pew Research report, professing Christians comprise about 74 percent of the U.S. population (173 million).

A world population of 7.3-billion people still leaves 5-billion people (two-thirds of the world’s population) “on the wide road leading to destruction” (Matthew 7:13-14). The alarming number on the “wide road” may be even greater than statistics suggest, since Christ clearly taught that not all professing believers are truly His followers.

Barna Research polls report nearly half of all Christians made a personal decision to trust and believe in Jesus Christ before age fourteen (43-percent). Two out of three born-again Christians (64-percent) made that commitment before their eighteenth birthday. Three out of four Christians (77-percent) trusted Christ as their Savior by their twenty-first birthday. Less than one-in-four born-again Christians (23-percent) embraced Christ after their twenty-first birthday ^[#103] These statistics affirm the critical importance of “training up one’s children in the way they should go” (Proverbs 22:6). Ultimately, every parent is accountable for knowing God’s truths and ways and teaching them to their children (Deuteronomy 6:6-9, Ephesians 6:4, 1 Peter 5:8, Proverbs 13:24).

“God has no grandchildren.” No person is a Christian just because their parents were preachers, or because they live in America, believe God exists, or

attend a Christian church. Every true Christian, among the 2.4 billion professing believers, has personally trusted Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. Each one has been directly/indirectly influenced by Scripture and “born again” in God’s Holy Spirit. Their lives have been dramatically changed and influenced by Jesus Christ.

Some professing believers may wear the Christian label, attend church, own Bibles, believe God exists and even agree with Biblical principles, but they are the “tares” in the parable of the wheat and tares (Matthew 13:24-30). True Christians believe God, trust Jesus Christ and are Spiritually “born again” as “new creatures in Christ” (2 Corinthians 5:17). They can no more stop being born again Christians than they can stop breathing.

THE BIBLE HAS CHANGED AMERICAN CULTURE

Every year two million visitors file past the famed Liberty Bell in Philadelphia. As they look at the cracked bell, they read these words: “Proclaim LIBERTY throughout all the Land unto all the Inhabitants thereof.” The inscription comes from Leviticus 25:10. ^[#99]

When presidents of the United States raise their right hand to take the oath of office at their inauguration, they place their left hand on a copy of the Bible. ^[#99] When Martin Luther King Jr. stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., and delivered his famous “I Have a Dream” speech, he said, “We will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.” Those words come directly from Amos 5:24. ^[#99] The Bible is the central and foundational book of American and Western culture.

The Bible has changed Government

Jesus was not a political figure but His Bible teachings have had a greater influence on government than all the politicians who have ever lived. America’s founding fathers were heavily influenced by God and Scripture and sought a

unique balance between church and state, consistent with Bible concepts. In a ten-year study at the University of Houston, researchers examined 15,000 documents from America's founders. They concluded that 34-percent of the founder's quotations came directly from the Bible, the greatest influence by far of any source. [#95]

“Christianity is been highly influential in the organization of our society and government and our laws, economics, politics, laws, economics, politics, arts, calendar, holidays and our moral and cultural priorities.” From the book *What's So Great about Christianity*, Dinesh D'Souza writes, [#95] “None of us today would be what we are if a handful of Jews two thousand years ago had not believed the greatest teacher of all time, and seen Him crucified, dead, buried and resurrected”

Even the very structure of American government is modeled in Scripture. D'Souza goes on to state,

“Christianity enhanced the notion of political and social accountability by providing a new model: that of servant leadership. In ancient Greece and Rome no one would have dreamed of considering political leaders anyone's servants. The job of the leader was to lead. But Christ invented the notion that the way to lead is by serving the needs of others, especially those who are the most needy.”

Christ established this principle in Mark 10:43: “Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant...for even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve.” [#95]

Both criminal and civil laws of the United States have their beginnings in the Bible, as do related practices such as requiring multiple witnesses to crimes. America's laws were established because our founding fathers were Christians and created laws and legal systems based on Biblical principles.

Societies in which Biblical laws and standards have been abandoned or twisted to benefit the rich and powerful have failed and fallen. America's legal systems today seem to be drifting more and more toward political and financially motivated judgments.

THE BIBLE HAS CHANGED LEADERS:

American Presidents and statesmen have spoken about the great influence of the Bible in our government and society:

- “It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible”

George Washington (1732-1799), 1st President

- “I have always said, I always will say, that the studious perusal of the sacred volume will make better citizens, better fathers, and better husbands.”—

Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826), 3rd President

- “So great is my veneration for the Bible, that the earlier my children begin to read it the more confident will be my hopes that they will prove useful citizens to their country and respectable members of society.”—

John Quincy Adams (1767-1848), 6th President

- “From the earliest days of America's history, continuing right up to the present, the Bible has played a prominent role in American life. The principles of God's Word guided the decisions on which this nation built its foundations. Throughout our history our presidents have borne eloquent testimony to that fact: “That Book, sir, is the rock on which our republic rests”

Andrew Jackson (1767-1845), 7th President

- “I believe the Bible is the best gift God has ever given to men. All the good from the Savior of the world is communicated to us through this Book.”

“Take all this Book you can upon reason and the balance upon faith, and you will live and die a better man”

Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865), 16th President

- *“America was born a Christian nation for the purpose of exemplifying to the nations of the world the principles of righteousness found in the Word of God”*

Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924), 28th President

- *“The strength of our country is the strength of its religious convictions. The foundations of our society and our government rest so much on the teachings of the Bible that it would be difficult to support them if faith in these teachings would cease to be practically universal in our country”*

Calvin Coolidge (1872-1933), 30th President

- *“The fundamental basis of this nation’s laws was given to Moses on the Mount. The fundamental basis of our Bill of Rights comes from the teachings we get from Exodus and Saint Matthew, from Isaiah and Saint Paul.... If we don’t have a proper fundamental moral background, we will finally end up with a totalitarian government which does not believe in rights for anybody except the State”*

Harry Truman (1884-1972), 33rd President

- *“Of the many influences that have shaped the United States into a distinctive nation and people, none may be said to be more fundamental and enduring than the Bible”*

Ronald Reagan (1911-2004), 40th President

THE BIBLE CHANGED THE AMERICAN CONSTITUTION:

Although America’s constitutional government is not specifically Christian, almost 50 of the 55 signers were Christians (Orthodox), and the Constitution has its roots firmly planted in Christian doctrines.

- America’s first constitution, The Fundamental Orders of Connecticut, required every aspect be grounded in Scripture. Other state constitutions contained similar requirements.
- The Constitutional system of checks and balances emerged directly from the founders understanding of the Biblical doctrine regarding the sinfulness of men.
- In the Declaration of Independence, the idea that all men are created equal is based on Biblical doctrine.
- America’s “Rule of Law” (versus the authority of men, stems back to the Old Testament’s Ten Commandments.
- The sovereign authority of God (versus the state) is referenced in the Declaration of Independence and in most state constitutions.
- The existence of moral absolutes (a Biblical concept) can be seen in the Declaration of Independence: *“self-evident truths,” “and unalienable rights from the Creator,”*
- The organization of the Judicial, Legislative and Executive branches of government can be found in Isaiah 33:22.
- Fair trials with multiple witnesses is also a Biblical principle.
- The separation of church and state is a Biblical principle recognizing certain limits the “state must not exceed.” Ironically, what was originally intended to avoid state abuse of the church has today been twisted into an excuse to exclude Christianity from the public forum.

THE BIBLE CHANGED STATE CONSTITUTIONS:

The preamble of the constitutions of nearly all 50 states explicitly expresses gratitude for the blessings and goodness of Almighty God. Every preamble also acknowledges that America’s personal, civil, religious and political freedoms depend entirely on God’s continued blessings. Below are over a dozen representative examples of typical state constitution preambles from every part of the United States. Notice that God was mentioned not just in the beginning of America, but as recently as 1956 when Alaska became a state: [#98]

State, Date	The Bible, God and Preambles to America's State Constitutions
ALABAMA 1901	We, the people of the State of Alabama, in order to establish justice, insure domestic tranquility and secure the <u>blessings of liberty</u> to ourselves and our posterity, invoking the <u>favor and guidance of Almighty God</u> , do ordain and establish the following Constitution and form of government for the State of Alabama.
ARIZONA 1912:	We, the people of the State of Arizona, <u>grateful to Almighty God</u> for our liberties, do ordain this Constitution.
ARKANSAS 1874	We, the people of the State of Arkansas, <u>grateful to Almighty God</u> for the privilege of choosing our own forms of government, for our civil and religious liberty, and desiring to perpetuate its blessings and secure the same to ourselves and posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution
CALIFORNIA 1879:	We, the people of the State of California, <u>grateful to Almighty God</u> for our freedom, in order to secure and perpetuate its blessings, do establish this Constitution.
DELAWARE 1897	<u>Through Divine goodness</u> , all men have by nature the <u>rights of worshiping and serving their Creator</u> according to the dictates of their consciences, of enjoying and defending life and liberty, of acquiring and protecting reputation and property, and in general of obtaining objects suitable to their condition,.....

State, Date	The Bible, God and Preambles to America's State Constitutions
FLORIDA 1887	We, the people of the State of Florida, <u>grateful to Almighty God</u> for our constitutional liberty, in order to secure its blessings and to form a more perfect government, insuring domestic tranquility, maintaining public order, and guaranteeing equal civil and political rights to all, do ordain and establish this Constitution.
ILLINOIS 1870	We, the people of the State of Illinois, <u>grateful to Almighty God</u> for the civil, political and religious liberty which He hath so long permitted us to enjoy, <u>and looking to Him for a blessing upon our endeavors</u> to secure and transmit the same unimpaired to succeeding generations...
KANSAS 1863	We, the people of Kansas, <u>grateful to Almighty God</u> for our civil and religious privileges, in order to insure the full enjoyment of our rights as American citizens, do ordain and establish this Constitution of the State of Kansas, with the following boundaries, to wit

State, Date	The Bible, God and Preambles to America's State Constitutions
MAINE 1820 and 1876	We, the people of Maine, in order to establish justice, insure tranquility, provide for our mutual defense, promote our common welfare, and secure to ourselves and our posterity the blessings of liberty, acknowledging with grateful hearts the <u>goodness of the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe</u> in affording us an opportunity, so favorable to the design; and imploring His aid and direction in its accomplishment, do agree to form ourselves into a free and independent State, by the style and title of the State of Maine, and do ordain and establish the following Constitution for the government of the same.
MASSACHUSETTS 1790:	We, therefore, the people of Massachusetts, acknowledging, with grateful hearts, the <u>goodness of the great Legislator of the universe</u> , in affording us, <u>in the course of His providence.....</u> Devoutly <u>imploing His direction</u> in so interesting a design, do agree upon, ordain, and establish the following Declaration of Rights, and Frame of Government, as the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
OHIO 1851	We, the people of the State of Ohio, <u>grateful to Almighty God</u> for our freedom, to secure its blessings and promote our common welfare, do establish this Constitution.

State, Date	The Bible, God and Preambles to America's State Constitutions
OKLAHOMA 1907	Invoking the <u>guidance of Almighty God</u> , in order to secure and perpetuate the blessings of liberty; to secure just and rightful government; to promote our mutual welfare and happiness, we the people of the State of Oklahoma, do ordain and establish this Constitution
TEXAS 1876	Humbly invoking the <u>blessings of Almighty God</u> , the people of the State of Texas, do ordain and establish this Constitution
VIRGINIA 1902:	That <u>religion</u> or the duty which we <u>owe to our Creator</u> , and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence; and, therefore, all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience; and that it is the mutual duty of all to practice <u>Christian forbearance</u> , love and charity towards each .

State, Date	The Bible, God and Preambles to America's State Constitutions
WASHINGTON 1889	We, the people of the State of Washington, <u>grateful to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe</u> for our liberties, do ordain this Constitution.
ALASKA 1956	We the people of Alaska, grateful to God and to those who founded our nation and pioneered this great land, in order to secure and transmit to succeeding generations our heritage of political, civil, and religious liberty within the Union of States, do ordain and establish this constitution for the State of Alaska

The Bible changed Education

The phenomenon of education for the masses has its roots in the Protestant Reformation and efforts to make the Bible available in the language of the common man. The advent of the printing press at about the same time greatly advanced that effort. Many of the world's languages were first written down in a translated Bible to spread the Gospel to the world. In America, the first law to require education of the masses was passed by the Puritans. The law was called "The Old Deluder Satan Act." The act grew out of the Christian belief that Satan gains a foothold in people's lives because of their ignorance of Scripture. [#96]

For the first 200 years in America, children's reading texts emphasized biblical literacy. The emphasis on literacy in colonial America was intense. John Quincy Adams reported in the early 1800s that the illiteracy rate was only 4/10th of 1-percent. In contrast, an estimated 40-million people (14-percent) in America today are functionally illiterate. [#96]

Almost all of the original 126 colleges in colonial America were Christian institutions, founded by Christians. This includes well-known universities

such as Harvard, Princeton and Yale. While the Christian identity of these universities has been largely diluted, the founding statements of many of them still reflect the influence of Scripture and Christianity. (Harvard: *"Let every student be plainly instructed, and earnestly pressed to consider well, the main end of his life and studies is, to know God and Jesus Christ which is eternal life."* [#96])

A key issue in education today is not so much the promotion of Scripture, but ensuring what is taught does not conflict with God's Word. Laws and standards increasingly designed to prevent God and His Word from influencing our society and educational systems often open the doors to the influence of evil. [#98]

The Bible changed Music

Since the earliest colonial settlements, the Bible has played a significant role in the creation and performance of music in America. Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs were imported from Europe and newly created on American shores. Singing schools were established with the expressed purpose of enabling each and every churchgoer to participate fully in religious music-making. [#100] The biblical imagery and language in Christian hymns, in turn, greatly influenced folk music, including African-American spirituals. Beginning in the early 19th century, slaves sang songs of deliverance like "Go Down, Moses" (Exodus 7), "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" (2 Kings 2), and "Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel?" (Daniel 6). [#100]

It is hardly surprising that biblical allusions and quotations would abound in sacred music, Gospel, and the Contemporary Christian Music industry, but the Bible's influence was—and is—not confined to religious circles. Popular songs by mainstream artists in every conceivable style have included references to biblical stories, such as Joseph in country legend Dolly Parton's "Coat of Many Colors" (Genesis 37) and one of the miracles of Jesus in alternative rock band CAKE's "Hem of Your Garment" (Luke 8). [#100]

Other popular musicians directly quote the Bible: "Turn! Turn! Turn!" by the Byrds (written in the 1950s by folksinger Pete Seeger) is drawn from

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, “40” by U2 (from the 1983 album *War*) is a modification of Psalm 40, and “A Light in the Darkened World” by metal/hardcore band Killswitch Engage (released in 2009) quotes Joshua 24:15. Contemporary folk band Mumford and Sons regularly references the Bible in such songs as “Babel” (Genesis 11) and “Awake My Soul” (Psalm 57).[#7-7]

(Music) ... The Christian influence on **music** is seen in cantatas, concertos and symphonies by Christian composers like Handel, Vivaldi, and Bach. They all worked to honor God, as evidenced, for example, by Bach, who signed all his works with *Soli Deo Gloria* (“Solely to the glory of God”). [#96]

The Bible changed Literature [#97]

Literature with a strong Biblical influence has influenced American culture: ‘*The Grapes of Wrath*’ by John Steinbeck, ‘*The Song of Solomon*’ by Toni Morrison, ‘*Moby Dick*’ by Herman Melville, ‘*The Scarlet Letter*’ by Nathaniel Hawthorne. ‘*Uncle Tom’s Cabin*’ by Harriet Beecher Stowe contains almost 100 direct Bible quotations. [#7-4]

Titles of literary works can be regarded as the tip of the iceberg: *The Power and the Glory*. *Measure for Measure*. *The Sun Also Rises*. *East of Eden*. *Absalom, Absalom*. *Evil under the Sun*. Literary scholar T. R. Henn has written that the Bible “becomes one with the Western tradition, because it is its single greatest source.” [#99]

The Christian faith has also influenced literature in such Christian writers such as Dante, Chaucer, Donne, Dostoevsky, Shakespeare, Dickens, Milton, etc. [#96]

An obvious conclusion to be drawn from the centrality of the Bible in literature is that the Bible should be part of every literature curriculum. Northrop Frye, the most influential literary scholar of the second half of the twentieth century, wrote: “The Bible should be taught so early and so thoroughly that it

sinks straight to the bottom of the mind, where everything that comes along later can settle on it.” [#99]

The Bible changed Art [#97]

In America, like the Louvre or the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, you’ll find many paintings whose subjects are inspired by the Bible. [#97] Famous biblical art includes Leonardo Da Vinci’s *Last Supper* and his statue of *David*. The Sistine Chapel in Italy is famous for its ceiling painted by Michelangelo which bursts with beauty from biblical scenes. In the Tate Museum in London, you’ll find engravings by William Blake on the *Book of Job*. Botticelli delights with his painting on the *Adoration of the Magi* at the Galleria degli Uffizi in Florence. The painting of *David with the Head of Goliath* by Caravaggio is also well known. [#97]

The Bible has had a tremendous influence on many of the most prominent artists throughout history, a few of which include: Dali, da Vinci, Bosch, Botticelli, Caravaggio, Delacroix, El Greco, Gauguin, Michelangelo, Poussin, Raphael, Rembrandt, Rubens, Titian, Turner, Van Dyck, Van Gogh, Velázquez, Blake, Spencer, etc. (the list could be readily expanded to include musicians, directors, choreographers, etc.)

PHILOSOPHERS AND TEACHERS INFLUENCE MINDS; GOD CHANGES HEARTS AND LIVES

Each generation has its own influential leaders, thinkers, philosophers and writers who arrive on Earth, expound their ideas and pass-on. In some cases, their words and thoughts impact generations beyond their own: Confucius, Muhammad, Buddha; Aristotle, Plato, Socrates; Mao Zedong, Karl Marx, Abraham Lincoln and others. But a “dead leader” is an oxymoron. The only place one can follow a dead prophet or teacher is to the grave!

Not all chosen paths, regardless of how noble, right or religious they seem to men, lead to God. Imagine asking directions and being told, “Pull-out

onto the main road and then turn-off on whatever road looks good to you.” Most would immediately ask, “But, what if that road does not lead where I want to go?” -- Yet, when it comes to eternal things, many seem content with the notion “any road will do.”

Some attempt to substitute religious activity, good works, or commitment to a “holy Jihad” or Crusade, in place of believing God and trusting Jesus Christ. But Christ came to bring life, not human religions or causes. He has not asked His followers to sacrifice their lives to prove their love and faith, but seeks a personal, intimate, love-based, free-will relationship with His followers. True believers alone are born-again in God’s Holy Spirit and adopted as eternal sons/daughters and ‘joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

THE BIBLE CHANGES LIVES THROUGH OTHER CHRISTIANS

Christ’s Great Commission is for believers to share His Gospel message with all nations (Matthew 28:18-20). None of the six-billion published Bibles or the billions more tracts, commentaries, study guides, spiritual books, videos, CD’s or scripture representations – *had* “legs.” All were made available by believers to others, resulting in billions of personal testimonies of changed lives and renewed minds. Only the power of God working through His inspired Word and the life-changing Gospel of Jesus Christ has ever accomplished anything of this magnitude in the history of mankind.

God’s life-changing power through His inspired Scripture is uniquely evident in Christian outreach organizations alone. Just a few of the thousands of Christian organizations dedicated to Bible distribution and otherwise making the Gospel of Jesus Christ known to billions, include:

Gideons International – has distributed over 2-billion scriptures worldwide. (As a point of reference, that’s six-times the population of the United States). The Gideons are widely known for hotel/motel Bible distribution, where it is estimated that the average Bible passes through 2,300 hands before replacement. But they also distribute the small, pocket-sized Bibles in prisons, hospitals, nursing homes, offices, schools and military installations. The largest percentage of Gideon Bibles are distributed among non-Christians in 200 countries, in keeping with the goal of the Gideons to reach the *lost* with the Gospel of Christ. The new, *free* Gideon Bible App features the New Testament in over 1,000 languages and is available for download worldwide.

God’s plan is to draw mankind unto Himself through His inspired Scripture revelation of His ways, truths, plans, purpose and promises. Testimonies of people who have received and read a Gideon Bible in times of stress, potential suicide and difficulties are renowned worldwide. Upon reading the Bible, countless people have turned from despair to hope and submitted their lives to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. ^[#150]

Campus Crusade for Christ was started in 1951 by Bill Bright ministries. Known today as “Cru,” Campus crusade is passionate about sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the world. Campus Crusade outreach activities largely focus on Bible studies and devotions among students in high schools and colleges, and in athletic organizations, families and military groups. The organization is active in 191 countries and sponsors 2,400 campus ministries engaging more than 82,000 students on U.S. College campuses.

Campus Crusade partners with more than 2,000 churches and organizations to reach America’s poor and reaches out to 12 million people annually through media conferences and locally hosted events. *The Jesus Film*, has been shown in over 1,430 languages in every nation in the world and is responsible for 6.5 billion exposures to the gospel and over 230 million indicated decisions for Christ. The new online Jesus Film has received over 10 million views with many indicated decisions for Christ. Cru’s evangelistic website is translated into 27 languages and has more than 5 million visitors, with 400 indicating decisions to know Christ per day. ^[#151]

American Bible Society. In 2016, the American Bible Society distributed God’s Word to over 42 million people, impacting lives in more than 200 countries with the message of God’s great eternal love. Since its founding in 1816, the organization has led translation efforts in many languages, including six of the world’s most spoken; distributed some six billion Bibles, including more than a million Scripture portions at ground zero following the September 11, 2011, attacks; and assisted hundreds of millions of people in discovering the hope and encouragement of God’s Word.”

American Bible Society’s roots are closely entwined with those of the nation itself. Some of the American Bible Society’s founders were integral to the founding of the United States, such as Elias Boudinot, president of the Continental Congress and the organization’s first president. John Jay, the first chief justice of the Supreme Court and a delegate to the first Continental Congress served as the ministry’s second president. Francis Scott Key, who

wrote the lyrics to the national anthem, became vice president of the ministry a year after its conception until his death. The sixth U.S. President John Quincy Adams also served as an American Bible Society vice president for more than two decades. ^[#152]

Christian Broadcast Network (CBN): Founded in 1961 by Pat Robertson, CBN proclaims the Gospel in 65 languages to 147 countries and territories through evangelistic TV programs, video evangelism, online ministry, and prayer centers. Through CBN offices in more than 20 countries, local Christians are equipped to produce quality media, provide discipleship, and facilitate humanitarian relief in their regions. Networking with local and national ministries and organizations, CBN offices provide a central hub for responding to an area’s needs and sharing the Gospel with millions of people. CBN trains ministers, coordinates evangelistic conferences, produces local TV programs, hosts websites, and gets involved with locals—working together for the cause of Christ. ^[#153]

Billy Graham Evangelistic Association: Founded by Billy Graham in 1950, BGEA exists to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ by every effective means and to equip the church and others to do the same. The organization’s statement of faith starts with: “We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God revealing the love of God to the world.” *1 Thessalonians. 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; John 3:16.*

Today, the BGEA is active in every form of media, broadcasting and internet communications, reaching millions every year with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Billy Graham has preached the good news of God’s love to nearly 215 million people at hundreds of Crusades, missions and evangelistic rallies in North America and around the world. His son, Franklin Graham, has preached more than 180 evangelistic festivals in 37 states and 47 countries since 1989. Will Graham is the third generation of Grahams to proclaim

God's love under the banner of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. Will has spoken to audiences across six continents since beginning his evangelistic ministry in 2006. ^[#154]

Prison Fellowship International: Founded in 1979 by Charles Colson, former aide to President Nixon. Convicted for a Watergate-related offense, Colson served seven months in prison and saw and experienced the difference faith in Jesus makes in people's lives. He became convinced that the real solution to crime is found through spiritual renewal.

When Colson walked into freedom, he had a new mission in life: To reach out to men and women behind bars, and give them the opportunity to turn their lives around through Christ. In 1983, Prison Fellowship International received special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

Prison Fellowship is the largest, most extensive association of national Christian ministries working within the criminal justice field. The ministry engages 1,000 full-time staff and board members, and trains, equips, and mobilizes 45,000 volunteers in 120 countries and territories. ^[#155]

GOD REVEALS HIMSELF IN SCRIPTURE

“Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. ²¹ 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 NIV

God perfectly revealed Himself and His timeless ways, truths, plans, purpose and promises to mankind in Scripture and He is not making any more. God opened the canon of Scripture “In the beginning” (Genesis – creation) and closed it at the completion of His plan for mankind on earth (Revelation). At

the end of Revelation (22:18-21) God added a final warning against anyone who adds or takes away from Scripture.

All Scripture points to God “the Son” in the human form of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4), through whom sinners are reconciled to Himself. Jesus' death satisfied *the just wages of sin* on behalf of believers who will accept it as such. Jesus then raised Himself from the dead, proving he was God – able to forgive sin and impart eternal life.

Throughout the New Testament, eyewitnesses affirmed that Christ raised the dead to life and was Himself resurrected from the grave. Hundreds witnessed Christ as he appeared among them on earth for forty-days following His death and resurrection. Christ ascended into heaven in full view of those watching. Jesus sent His indwelling Holy Spirit to convey Spiritual life to all believers and to empower, guide, and strengthen them in His inspired ways and truths.

God reveals His unchanging character in Scripture. He is patient, loving and full of grace and does not automatically and rightly destroy rebellious sinners. Instead, He gives them a lifetime to believe Him, trust Christ and be saved. However, God will not always contend (strive) with men (Gen. 6:1-5). God accepts those who freely choose to love and believe Him and trust the love, grace and mercy He offers in Jesus Christ. Some find that “too simple” and refuse or ignore God's offer.

God has done everything necessary and possible to draw mankind into a personal, eternal relationship with Himself. Billions are eternally changed because of their faith in the God and Christ of Scripture.

Scripture is God's timeless, ongoing truth standard, by which mankind will ultimately be judged. When Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness, He could have called down legions of angels to banish Satan, or have him locked in chains of darkness. Instead, Jesus invoked the same Scriptures

that are available to all mankind, forcing Satan to flee (Matthew 4:1-11, James 4:7). Jesus also declared, "the very words He spoke (timelessly recorded only in Scripture) would ultimately judge and condemn mankind" (John 12:48, Acts 4:12). Scripture is the standard by which people can reliably distinguish truth from error. In a world filled with ever-shifting truth, moral confusion and strife, it is liberating to have God's unchanging truth standard..

In summation, Scripture/the Bible is the very Word of Almighty God, the creator of the universe and all life. It emanates from the very mind and heart of God and is permanently infused and inspired with God's life-changing power and authority. Scripture lives in God's power and has no parallel in any human thought, force or writing known to mankind.

WHAT OTHERS SAY ABOUT SCRIPTURE'S LIFE-CHANGING POWER

Education is useless without the Bible

- "I believe that the Bible is to be understood and received in the plain and obvious meaning of its passages; for I cannot persuade myself that a book intended for the instruction and conversion of the whole world should cover its true meaning in any such mystery and doubt that none but critics and philosophers can discover it. - Education is useless without the Bible."

Daniel Webster — 1783 – 1852, Statesman and Orator

An intimate knowledge of the Bible is indispensable to an educated man

- "I consider an intimate knowledge of the Bible an indispensable quality of a well educated man."

Dr. Robert Milikin — Nobel Prize Winner, former
President of CIT

God's Word and Truth are indispensable

- "There are some things we cannot dispense with, and among these are God's Word and truth, and those religious influences by which He brings the heart of man into subjection to moral law."

Benjamin Harrison – 23rd President

The Gospel is a living power, not a 'book'

- "The Gospel is not a book; it is a living being, with an action, a power, which invades everything that opposes its extension, behold! It is upon this table: This book, surpassing all others. I never omit to read it, and every day with some pleasure"

Napoleon Bonaparte—French Emperor, 1769-1821

The Bible changes lives by God's power

- “When the child of God looks into the word of God and sees the Son of God, he is changed by the power of God, into the image of God, for the glory of God”

Warren Wiersbe --Theologian, Author, Scholar, Teacher

Scripture allows us to understand God's amazing gifts

- “How blessed and amazing are God's gifts, dear friends Life with immortality, splendor with righteousness, truth with confidence, faith with assurance, self-control with holiness And all these things are within our comprehension.”

Saint Clement of Rome--Church Father - 100 AD

Bible based lives are better lives

- “A Bible that's falling apart usually belongs to someone who isn't.”

Charles Spurgeon--Theologian, Author, Bible Scholar (1834-1892)

People see the Bible 'lived-out' in Christian lives

- “Out of 100 men, one will read the Bible, the other ninety-nine will read the Christian.”

D.L. Moody --Author, Theologian, Evangelist, Publisher – (1837-1899)

The Bible gives light and strength in difficult times

- “In all my perplexities and distresses, the Bible has never failed to give me light and strength”

Robert E. Lee —Confederate General, Statesman; (1807-1870)

The world cannot escape Scripture; It keeps stealing from it

- “Secular humanists of every type may ridicule the Bible, but they cannot escape it; and in their obsession with change, calls for reform, doomsday warnings, and utopian visions, they continue to steal from it.”

Gene Edward Veith, Jr.— Author - ‘Loving God With All Your Mind’

It's impossible to rightly govern without God and the Bible

- “It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible”

George Washington —1st President

The Bible doesn't denigrate the mind.

- “One thing the Bible does not do: it does not denigrate the mind. The Bible is not anti-intellectual. Rather it gives the reason why all of us know what we know, why we can think with some degree of accuracy, and why we fail to think with complete accuracy”

James W. Sire – Author, ‘How to Read Slowly’

The Bible is alive!

- “The Bible is alive, it speaks to me; it has feet, it runs after me; it has hands, it lays hold of me.”

Martin Luther - Reformer, Theologian, Bible Scholar, Teacher, Writer

Faith brings understanding; A lack of faith does not.

- “To those who have faith, no explanation is necessary. To those with no faith, no explanation is possible”

Thomas Aquinas -Theologian (1225-1274), Also known as Saint Thomas

Scripture is alive and reveals the truth and reality of Jesus Christ

- “You accept the historical Jesus?” “Unquestionably! No one can read the Gospels without feeling the actual presence of Jesus. His personality pulsates in every word. No myth is filled with such life.”

Albert Einstein --Scientist, Physicist - 1879-1955;
Theory of Relativity

Only believers can understand the life-changing power of Christ

- “A man can eat his dinner without understanding exactly how food nourishes him. A man can accept what Christ has done without knowing how it works: indeed, he certainly would not know how it works until he has accepted it.”

C.S. Lewis,--Writer, Theologian,1898-1963
Novelist, scholar, broadcaster

Jesus Christ is easily the most dominant figure in history

- “I am an historian, I am not a believer, but I must confess as a historian that this penniless preacher from Nazareth is irrevocably the very center of history. Jesus Christ is easily the most dominant figure in all history.” -**H. G. Wells** – Writer, Historian

We have to ‘grow into’ Scripture

- “We have to grow into Scripture, like a young boy inheriting his older brother’s clothes and flopping around in them, but he gradually builds out and grows up. Perhaps it’s a measure of our maturity when parts of Scripture that we found odd or even repellent suddenly come up in a new light. Our sense is overtaken by a sense of the whole thing, wide, multicolored, and unspeakably powerful”

N.T. Wright - Author, “After You Believe’ - Christian Character Matters’

Jesus divides history

- “We tell our whole timeline by Before Christ (BC) and After Death (AD). The Bible is the most printed book in history. God and Jesus are not only the center of history, but the center of the universe as they are the Creators of it.”

G. Wells - Author, historian