

## — Our Pastors Speak —



### FUNDAMENTALS OF THE FAITH

#### The Bible—Book of God

by Rev. B. C. Cochrane

"What shall we say about your faith in the Bible?" asked a clergyman of a dying man who had been a powerful political figure. "The Bible?" replied the man, raising himself in bed, "the Bible — take that away and there is nothing left."

"What is the secret of England's superiority among the nations?" asked an ambassador to the Royal Court of Queen Victoria. Placing her hand upon the Bible, the Queen replied: "Go tell your Prince that this is the secret of England's political greatness".

Fundamental to the fundamentals of our Faith, is the doctrine of the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures. This great truth is basic to our beliefs. It gives the Gospel its distinctive note of authority, its dynamic power unto salvation.

If a strong and steadfast belief in the Bible as the Word of God is lacking among us or lost to us, the Church and the nation will be left devoid of spiritual guidance, spiritual grace, and spiritual greatness. Without this foundation on which to build, the labour and toil of the workman is vain, for if "the pillars of the State are falling, what can a good man do?" (Moffatt's translation of Psalm, 11:3).

The design of this writing then is to "burnish up" the ancient and honourable doctrine of the inspiration of the Scriptures. We reverently lift the sacred volume from the dust and dirt into which it has been trampled by the critic and the skeptic, and present it with unquestioning faith as the very Word of God. Receiving it from the hands of those who have loved and defended it through the centuries of Church history, we offer it on the basis of its own claim, viz: "The prophecy came not in old time (at any time), marginal reading) by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"; and, "ALL scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness . . .", 1 Peter 2:21; 2 Timothy 3:16.

The Miraculous Survival of the Bible is testimony of its Divine origin and character. Through the centuries this Book has been bitterly assailed by evil men and influences, intent upon its destruction. Men of intellectual genius, lacking a corresponding degree of spiritual enlightenment, have scoffed at the idea of the Bible being the Word of God, have argued long and skilfully against it with the purpose of destroying the faith of those who believed in the Book; but long after the voices of these critics are silent in death and their theories are discarded by learned men of succeeding generations, the Bible continues its gracious ministry to an ever-enlarging host of people. An English geologist informs us: "In the year 1806 the French Institute enumerated no less than 80 geological theories which were hostile to the scriptures, but not one of these theories is held to-day". The circulation of the Bible has been stubbornly opposed by the largest religious sects and ruthless warfare has been waged against it. Huge bonfires have been fed by copies

of the Word, and those who have been responsible for translating and publishing it have been opposed, harrassed, and persecuted even to death. But in spite of the weighty argument of its learned critics and the vicious assaults of its powerful foes, the Bible has survived every effort designed to destroy it, and to-day occupies a place of unrivalled prominence and popularity in the library of the world. This Book has done more to keep printing presses active than any other publication of history; it is now circulated in more than a thousand languages and dialects; and with a total circulation in all lands and languages reaching millions beyond computation, it is to-day's "best seller", more desired and more in demand than ever.

The Marvelous Appeal of the Bible further testifies of the super-natural character of this Book. The appeal of the Bible is universal and perpetual. Presented in any language, it is dearly beloved by believers, learned and unlearned, being read and re-read with relish and delight. With most books, one reading is sufficient; a limited number can be read a second time with pleasure; while fewer still will be read more than twice with interest. But we read the Bible through again and again with renewed interest and pleasure. In this Garden the flowers are always blooming with fresh beauty, and new fragrance fills the air each time we revisit it. Here is a mine of truth that will yield gems more precious with each diligent search. Those who know it best, love it best. Those who are most familiar with it delight most in it. John Wesley who preached more than twenty thousand sermons from the Word, who was an ardent and diligent student of scripture for more than 70 years, exclaimed: "Oh, give me that Book! At any price, give me the Book of God! I have IT; here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be a man of one Book!"

The Mighty Influence of the Bible is eloquent witness of its Divine nature. "This collection of books has taken such hold upon the world as has no other", said Theodore Parker. "The literature of Greece, which goes up like incense from that land of temple and heroic deeds, has not half the influence of this Book. It is woven into the literature of the scholar and colours the talk of the street". Lord Macaulay said that if everything else in our language should perish, the King James version of the Bible "would suffice to show the whole extent of the beauty and power of the English tongue". Said Francis Bacon: "There never was found in any age of the world either religion or law that did so highly exalt the public good as the Bible". Looking upon the family Bible as he lay dying, Andrew Jackson, 7th. president of United States, said: to a friend: "That Book sir, is the Rock on which this Republic rests". But greatest, and most significant of all, is the influence the Bible has had on the lives of individuals. John Selden, an illustrious lawyer of England, wrote: "I have surveyed most of the learning that is among the sons of men, yet I can recall nothing in them on which to rest my soul save one from the sacred scriptures". Said William Wilberforce, renowned British Statesman: "I never knew happiness until I found Christ as my Saviour. Read the Bible! Read the Bible! Through all the perplexities and distresses I never read any other book, I never want any other".

In these days of world crises, it is timely that we reaffirm and reiterate our strong belief in the Bible as the inspired Word of God, the "only infallible rule of faith and practice", the fundamental of fundamentals of the Christian Faith!

Do not pray for easy lives! Pray to be stronger men. Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers, pray for powers equal to your tasks. Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle, but you shall be a miracle.

—Philip Brooks