

Is that really in the Bible?

Before we dive in, here are some quick facts about the bible that are really important to know. This is especially helpful when somebody starts talking about the bible as just a book translated into English, or when they claim the bible is a made up story that has been tampered with to fit someone's grand agenda.

The Bible: Did you know?

- Best selling book of all time, 100 million sold each year, in 1,200+ different languages (not just American English Mr. Nye)
- Written over a period of 1,600 years (1,450 B.C. to 100 A.D.).
- Contains 66 books - 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament.
- 40 different authors – Kings, Prophets, Leaders, Followers of Jesus.
- Old Testament Jewish Scribes preserved the documents with pinpoint accuracy down to the letter and syllable.
- The Dead Sea Scrolls, found in 1947, contained 900 documents and the entire book of Isaiah. It proved to be word for word identical with the standard Hebrew Bible in more than 95%+ of the text, with no significant gaps.
- There is no other ancient document copied as much, as reliable, and written as close to the actual events as the New Testament.
 - 24,000 manuscripts copied within the 1st century alone, 99.5% textually pure. Amazing accuracy when comparing these writings.
- It claims to be a historical account and the inspired word of God, not a myth or story.
 - For example, the New Testament is written by eyewitnesses or people that interviewed eyewitnesses, during the lifetimes of the actual events, at a great risk to their own lives.
- Archeology has not been able to refute the people and places in the bible.
- Ancient writers of the time (e.g. Tacitus, Pliny the Younger, Suetonius, Josephus) outside the bible verify, at a minimum, that Jesus was a real person, he claimed to be a deity, he was crucified, died, was buried, his body went missing, after his death many people reported seeing him, and Christianity was spreading wildly.
- Jesus fulfilled over 400 Old Testament prophecies, written hundreds of years before he was born.



BY: DAVID HALSEY

Bill Nye, "The Science Guy", recently debated Ken Ham, CEO of Answers in Genesis, at the Creation Museum. Do you know what he kept calling the bible? "A book translated over 30 generations and interpreted in American English". I suppose there is truth in this statement but the bible has transformed our entire civilization and positively changed the lives of billions of believers. Bill Nye can express his opinion, but I believe his characterization of the bible was a little disrespectful and a "dirty debate tactic".

Here is what you can expect in this month's article. First, I want to give you some facts about the bible so that you can understand its authenticity and how it has stood up to the test of scrutiny, like no other historical document, for 3,500 years.

Then we are going to have a little fun. What does the bible say about, "money is the root of all evil", "God helps those who help themselves", "God hates sin but loves the sinner", "God will not give you more than you can handle", "turning the other cheek", etc.

Are sayings like this even in the bible? You are about to find out!

The Bible in closing

- I like this description of the B.I.B.L.E. - “Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth”. If you study and apply the bible, you will agree:
 - There is incredible unity despite the amount of time and geography it spans.
 - It is meant to be read “contextually”. The Bible is literal, figurative, allegorical, poetic, biographical, and prophetic. It is important to know how it applied then, how it applies now, and most importantly what God’s message is telling YOU.
 - It is vulnerable and honest - many of the characters and stories of the bible are not flattering or impressive, but it speaks truth of God’s love for us and the personal and redeeming relationship he desires.
 - Even though our culture has changed, God has not. He knows everything about us, both then and now. The bible can never be outdated.
 - Asking tough questions and seeking truth is okay. The deeper you go, the more you see how powerful God’s word really is, and your life will change.

1. “God helps those who help themselves”

Is this really in the bible? The answer is no. God actually helps those who can’t help themselves, which describes everyone because it is impossible for us not to sin. We are all broken and need God’s saving grace, if we allow him in. It is believed that this phrase may have come from Aeschylus in the 6th Century BC when he stated “God loves to help him who strives to help himself.” You can also find Ben Franklin coining this phrase in the Poor Richard’s Almanac in 1757.

2. “Cleanliness is next to Godliness”

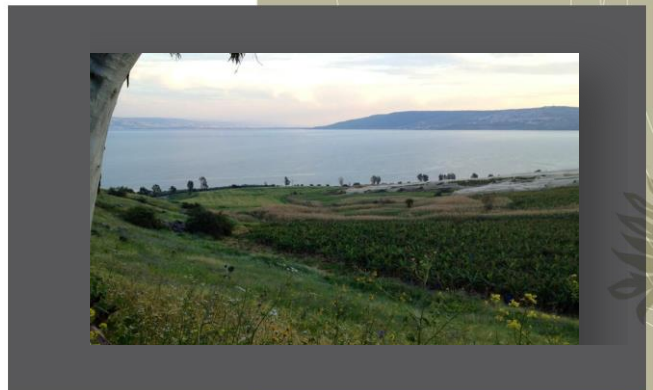
You probably got this one right. It is not in the bible. However, you will find several passages like this in the bible that clearly tell us we should honor and take care of our physical bodies: “*Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;*” (1 Corinthians 6:19). Although this statement does have biblical origins, it was actually John Wesley who gets credit for coining this phrase in a 1778 sermon. So take care of your body but you don’t always need to smell pretty to be Godly.

3. “Turn the other cheek”

This saying is....in the bible!

Jesus said in Matthew 5:30, “*But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also.*”

This is the really interesting part. Back in the days of Jesus, traditionally someone of authority would slap someone else on the right cheek, using the back of their right hand (your clean hand), to assert superiority or dominance over that person. If the person retaliated, it would be a sign of weakness. In other words, a no win scenario because you either back down in weakness or shame yourself by lashing out. So, what Jesus did was create a dilemma for the Jewish discipliner. By turning the other cheek (i.e. presenting your left cheek), you are first of all showing that person you are not a coward. Also, the discipliner now has only two choices; 1) backhand you with their unclean hand (considered very uncool) or, 2) open hand slap you which would be a sign of respect or equality. Only Jesus! I could have never come up with this on my own. In summary, turning the other cheek promotes non-violence but it is by no means a sign of passivity or weakness.



Top Picture: Sermon on the Mount Location between Capernaum and Tiberius near the Sea of Galilee

Bottom Picture: Garden of Gethsemane at the foot of the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem
Taken by: Matt Darnell in 2013

4. "Money is the root of all evil"

This is not in the bible, but it obviously has biblical roots as you can see. *"For the love of money is the root of all evils". It is the love of money that causes the problem, not the money itself. Money doesn't have a moral value all to itself, it is what we do with it that makes the action good, neutral, or evil.*" (1 Timothy 6:10)

It is the "love of money that causes the problem". You can replace money with just about anything here. Timothy Keller in his book "Counterfeit Gods" defined an idol. He stated, *"It is anything more important to you than God, anything that absorbs your heart and imagination more than God, anything you seek to give you what only God can give. A counterfeit god is anything so central and essential to your life that, should you lose it, your life would feel hardly worth living."*

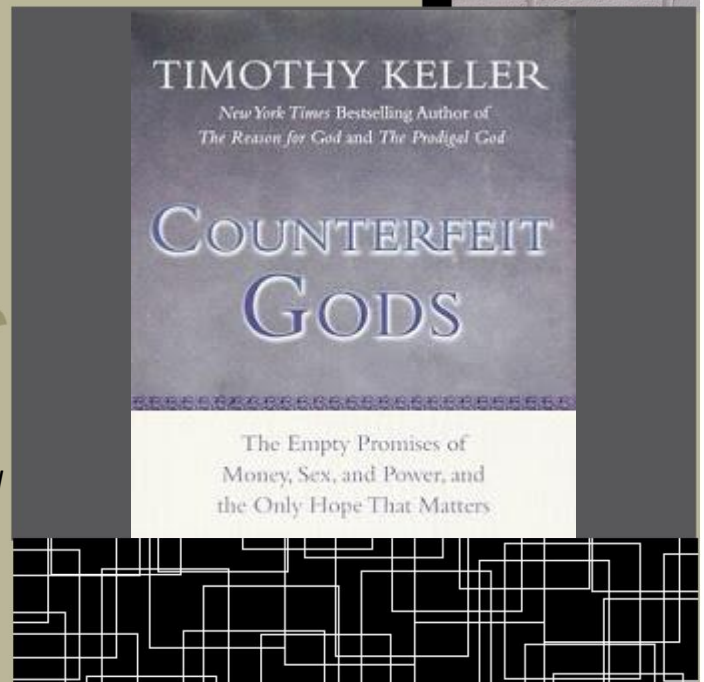
5. "God will not give you more than you can handle."

Oh really? I don't think so. God allows things to happen that are more than we can handle. That's why we need him. Here is one example of what Paul had to say in 2 Corinthians 1:8-9: *"...we were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead."* It is not advisable to say "God will not give you more than you can handle" to someone who is going through dire circumstances, and it is not biblically accurate either.

Paul does say this however: *"No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it."* (1 Corinthians 10:13)

What God is clearly saying to us is that we can overcome trials and adversity and achieve spiritual victory, but only with God, not by our own will. God will help us overcome any temptation that comes our way and he has an incredible way of turning problems into blessings.

"Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him." (James 1:12)



6. "Those who live by the sword, die by the sword"

This saying was adopted from the accounts of the arrest of Jesus and fairly consistent with the biblical text. As Judas led the Pharisees to the Garden of Gethsemane to arrest Jesus, Peter pulled out a sword and struck off the ear of a temple guard. Jesus healed the man's wound and said to Peter, *"Put your sword back in its place," Jesus said to him, "for all who draw the sword will die by the sword."* (Matthew 26:51-52)

What did Jesus mean when he said this? Should we take this literally to mean that those who live by violence will die by violence? First, you have to look at the situation they were in. They were outnumbered, and it was not the time or the place to fight back. Jesus also had a duty to protect his disciples because of their future mission. Jesus was teaching all of us a valuable lesson. There is a time to engage, and there is a time not to engage. We have to be careful not to react out of fear or anger as our first response.

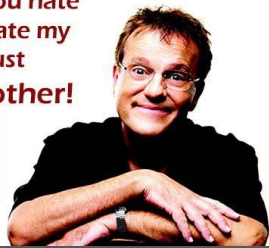
There is a lot more that can be written about this passage but the key take-away is to know what you are up against, be wise, and fight for what you believe in, but do it God's way, not yours.

7. "God hates sin but loves the sinner"

This is a commonly used cliché that is not in the bible. There is truth in this statement, but from a biblical perspective we can make a strong case that God hates sin and in some cases the sinner too. I didn't expect this answer but there is an explanation. I believe you will find about 145 instances of the word "hate" or "hated" in the bible. God hated Esau (Mal. 1:2-5; Rom. 9:13), and there are several references in Psalms about God hating sinners and putting his wrath on them. The word "hate" can have different meanings in the bible, which is why it is important to understand the context of how it is being used. It can be a strong negative emotion towards

somebody or something (jealousy, dislike, all the way up to utter disdain), or it could also mean to be "set against". However, keep in mind that we are limited to our human condition. We can love someone, yet hate what they did. We are certainly capable of hating someone. However, hating them and loving them at the same time? It just doesn't work. God is the essence of love, so even when he experiences hate towards something (or someone), it is always covered by love first and foremost. How he does it, we just don't know. The bottom line is that God loves us no matter what. He wants us to love the sinner (our own self included), and not judge each other. In summary, let's keep doing the loving and let God handle the rest.

Love the sinner, hate the sin?
How about: Love the sinner, hate your own sin! I don't have time to hate your sin. There are too many of you! Hating my sin is a full-time job.
How about you hate your sin, I'll hate my sin and let's just love each other!



- Mark Lowry

8. "Ask, and you shall receive"

Yes, this is in the bible. Jesus makes this clear in Matthew 7:7 and 21:22. This is not a guarantee. God will not violate his own nature and he will ultimately do what he thinks is best for us. He is, however, challenging us to boldly pursue him, to trust him, and to not be afraid to ask him for anything. If you continue to ask him for knowledge, patience, wisdom, love, understanding, etc., he will give them to you.

Ask about my other articles, including:

- "Am I stupid to believe in God?"
- "Am I crazy to be a Christian?"
- "Why are there so many other religions if they are all fake?"
- "What do these words actually mean?"
- "What are you fighting for?"

9. "The 3 Wise Men"

If you look at any nativity scene you will see the famous 3 Wise Men. However, read Matthew 2 and you will find that they were actually called the "Magi", and nowhere does it state there were 3 of them. It is possible that an assumption was made based on the 3 gifts of gold, incense, and myrrh that were presented to Jesus after his birth. To the Magi, whether there were 2 or 3 or more, thank you for blessing and protecting Jesus Christ.

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10. Did Eve eat an apple?

If you look at Genesis 2 and 3 you will find that God forbid Adam and Eve to eat from the "tree of knowledge of good and evil", otherwise the penalty would be death (mortality). We also know that Eve ate fruit from this very tree which led to the fall of mankind. However, it is tradition that depicts the apple being that fruit, not the bible. It could have been a banana or a pear. Whatever the case, it is the moment that God started his rescue mission for all of us, which is our savior Jesus Christ!

References I used include:

- NIV Bible
- Wikipedia.com
- Counterfeit Gods (Timothy Keller)
- The Case for Christ (Lee Strobel)
- What's so great about Christianity (D'Souza)