CAN WE TRUST THE BIBLE? Part 13
"The Witness of Personal Transformation"

INTRO: Series Goal . . . I believe . . . Reliable witnesses . . . TODAY "The Witness of Personal Transformation," perhaps the most subjective (our personal story), but even more the most inarguable – the evidence of changed lives! My relationship with God through Jesus Christ and what this miraculous Book the Bible tells me that God is, what He is like (fully revealed in Christ), and how He expects me to trust Him and live for Him. Hopeful result is my transformed life impacts those around me (2 Cor. 5:17; Matt 5:13-16; Phil. 2:15-16). I'm not the only transformed life. Starting with the disciples, billions have discovered through personal experience that the Word works when you obey it. Ex. – Transformed lives (ICR) . . . "How has your decision to trust Christ for your salvation and to follow Him as the Lord of your life transformed your everyday life?" It is living, powerful, and life-changing (Heb. 4:12-13; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). What changes can it bring? God's Word is so powerful and effective (2 Cor 3:17-18).

I. THE *MEANS* OF TRANSFORMATION (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Pet. 2:2) Salvation doesn't make us perfect. We are all a work in process until Jesus calls us home. Though imperfect we are perfectly forgiven!

II. THE *MANIFESTATIONS* OF TRANSFORMATION – How does knowing and obeying this Book manifest changes? Source of:

A. TRUTH which sets us free (Jn. 17:17; 8:31-32) – source of wisdom and freedom from shame and guilt.

B. Purpose for LIVING (Phil. 1:21; 3:12-14) – **We** exist to know, love, obey, and share the life-changing possibilities through Christ and the Scripture. In John 17:4 . . . I exist . . .

C. DIRECTION (Psa. 119:105) – Again 2 Tim. 3:16 ff . . .

D. Comfort (Rom. 15:4)

E. Strength (Power, Victory) – Psa. 119:11; Matt. 4:1-11

F. Peace (Col. 3:15-16)

G. Joy (Psa. 19:8; Jn. 15:11; 1 Jn. 1:4)

H. Hope (Rom. 15:4, 13) – Facing death!

I. Blessing (Lk. 11:28; Jam. 1:22-25)

Two Powerful Examples – (Post Resurrection, esp. Acts) Peter and Paul (1 Cor. 15:8-10; Ph. 3:4 ff)

III. THE RESPONSE TO IT

ILLUS: H.A. Ironside story . . . Can we trust the Bible? I cannot prove that to you. I have presented a number of reliable witnesses that shout YES! Each of us still has to make up our minds. Song, "Jesus loves me this I know (Why?) *for the Bible tells me so*."

Believe it. Honor it. Love it. Obey it. Fight for it. Study it. Share it. LIVE IT and be transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:29). So, I ask again, "How has your decision to trust Christ for your salvation and to follow Him as the Lord of your life transformed your everyday life?"

CONC: I believe . . . I pray you do, too. Thank God for the Bible because without it, we'd never know about Jesus and could never be saved. Say it with me, "Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so." AMEN?

SERIES CONC: Reliable witnesses . . . Reliable witnesses have been called to the witness stand: God Himself, the Biblical writers, its literary uniqueness, Jesus, Gospel writers, Preservation Archaeology, its scientific accuracy, its recorded miracles, its fulfilled prophecies, and one's own personal experience to testifying to the authenticity of the Bible. Honestly it is not probable by human argument to convince someone to believe the Bible to be the true Word of God. These reasonable and reliable evidences for strengthening a Christian's faith, and not to convince the unbelieving. When all is said and done and the witnesses have left the stand, it must be realized that it is only the internal work of the Holy Spirit who can produce belief that the Bible is the final, authoritative, and authentic Word of God. Ultimately, the question of the veracity of the Bible is a matter of faith, not one of argument. Nevertheless, this does not mean that evidence is useless. Peter stated, "…Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have" (1 Pet. 3:15b). Our case is finished. The witnesses have testified. It is a solid case. The Bible is the true Word of God. It is an incredible Book. It is the world's greatest Book! What, then, should be our response to this fact? We must practice Colossians 3:16: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another…"