

OUTLINE OF STUDY

I. SOURCES OF TESTIMONY: THE GOSPELS

1. Age
2. Accuracy
3. Authorship

II. HUMAN TESTIMONY

1. Jesus own claims
2. John the Baptist
3. Others

III. MIRACLES

1. Purpose
2. Defined
3. Philosophical objections
4. Terms: "Signs"; "Wonders"; "Powers"
5. Miracles examined
6. Early unbelievers?

IV. PROPHECY

1. Apologetic value
2. Prophecies and probability
3. Examples of prophecies

V. RESURRECTION

1. What it means to us
2. Proofs:
 - a. The empty tomb
 - b. The eyewitnesses
 - c. Collateral proofs
3. Objections

VI. HIS MORAL GLORY

1. Sinless perfection
2. Life consistent with His teachings
3. Motives
4. Invincible
5. Insight
6. Taught highest moral code

VII. REASONS FOR UNBELIEF

1. Evidence insufficient
2. Ignorance of evidence
3. Attitude toward the evidence
4. Method in approach to the evidence

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SOURCES OF TESTIMONY: GOSPELS

OBJ: Establish the four “gospels” as reliable sources for the evidence of the credibility of the gospel account.

THE STORY OF JESUS CHRIST

If True

- To refuse to believe it is to be condemned; believing it is the only and the greatest hope of sinful man. **Mk 1:1...16:15-16**
- Our study has not merely to do with believing a book, but believing God, and His love in the redemptive work of His Son, Jesus Christ, as revealed and confirmed by the Holy Spirit.
- The rest of the NT and OT is confirmed. OT: **Jn 10:35**; NT: **Jn 16:13**

If False

- The greatest hoax ever perpetrated
- Gives false hope and unworthy of confidence.

Defending Our Faith In It

1 Pt. 3:14-15

A Matter of History

NOT “blind faith” – “1. Confident belief in the truth, value, or trustworthiness of a person, an idea, or a thing. 2. **Belief that does not rest on logical proof or material evidence.** See synonyms at belief, trust.” “Trust **implies depth and assurance of feeling that is often based on inconclusive evidence:** *The new President said he would try to justify the trust the electorate had placed in him. Faith connotes unquestioning, often emotionally charged belief.*” [bold mine, srf]

The “faith” *God* wants men to have *IS based on EVIDENCE, and REASONING from that evidence.* **Acts 17:11-12; Rom. 10:17; John 20:30-31; 10:37-38**

Whether Jesus was the Son of God, came from heaven, worked miracles, was raised from the dead, and ascended back to heaven are not matters that can be established by:

1. Feelings, personal view (“I just feel it is true”; or, “I just don’t believe it”)
 - e.g., Mt. St. Helens; land on the moon
2. Personal experiences (“I’ve experienced unexplainable, marvelous things...”; or, “I have never seen God or miracles”)
 - e.g., volcano; earthquake
3. Majority opinion (Dominant religion in country or county)
4. Scholarly decree (The Ph.D’s say it is so, or, isn’t so)
 - e.g, Piltdown man, 1912-1953!
5. Tradition (I’ve always believed it; or, never have believed it)
 - e.g., mistaken birthdate (Dad)
6. Culture (Family religion)
7. Ability of human reason to explain how or why
 - a. Whether electricity has killed a man does not depend on his, or anyone else’s, ability to explain how or why. The question is whether there is sufficient evidence to establish electricity as the cause of death. Another ill: black plague killing millions. Historical issues must be decided on the basis of historical evidence.

- b. Miracles are by their very nature unexplainable.
 - c. Reason's function is to weigh the evidence that claims to sustain the facts, and from that decide what is credible.
8. Inward conviction given directly by the power of the Holy Spirit
The "Protestant principle" is that conviction is brought to the heart by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the heart.³

A *historical issue* must be confirmed on the basis of *historical documents* that substantiate it. E.g., Columbus discovering America; men landing on the moon. So with the story of Jesus. *It's credibility must rest on the objective evidence of historical documents.* It will stand or fall right here. The documents in this case are: Matthew; Mark; Luke; John. **Mk. 1:1; Lk. 1:1-4; Jn. 20:31**

I. AGE: HOW OLD ARE THESE BOOKS?

A. Sources for our text: Manuscripts, Versions, Quotations, Lectionaries)⁴

Illustration: When did the author of a secular work actually write it?

- When did he live?
- Publishing date of printed copies
- Internal evidence

E.g., hymnbook used in worship.

- Editors
- Date of copyright/edition
- Nature of the songs

1. Manuscripts = hand-written copy in original language

Factors used in dating MSS (McDowell, NETDV, p. 38 [from Geiesler, *General Intro. to the Bible*, pp. 242-246])

- Materials used
- Letter size and form
- Punctuation
- Text divisions
- Ornamentation
- Color of the ink
- Texture and color of the parchment

2. Versions = translation into another language

3. Quotations = quotes by men who lived and wrote

4. Lectionaries – portions of scripture used in the worship services of churches

"Lectionary" – "1. A book or list of lections to be read at church services during the year." AHD. "Lection" – "A reading from Scripture that forms part of a church service." AHD. "lection" > L. *lectio, lection*, a reading. This is the same Latin word "lesson" is derived from.

B. Greek Manuscripts - 5700+ (See below, II,A)

Compare songs in hymnbook . . . Suppose had lost the original composition of the songwriters, but had multiple hand-written copies made by interested parties

1. Alexandrian MSS [A] - 375-425 AD

- a. N.T. except (lacks the following) Matthew up to 25:6; two leaves from John, including 6:50-8:52, and three leaves from 2 Corinthians, including 4:13-12:6.

- b. British Museum

2. Sinaitic MSS [Hebrew Aleph, א] - 300-350 AD.
 - a. Includes all books of NT
 - b. British Museum
3. Vatican MSS [B] - 300-350 AD
 - a. NT ends at Heb 9:14
 - b. Vatican library, Rome
4. Bodmer Papyrus II [p⁷⁵] - 200 AD - TNTD, p. 18 CRJ, p. 85
 - a. Contains most of John chapters 1-14 and quite a bit of last seven chapters. TNTD, p. 18
 - b. Located in Vatican Library in Rome⁵
5. Chester Beatty Papyri [p⁴⁵] - 150 AD - TNTD, p. 17; CRJ, p. 85
 - a. Eleven papyrus codices. One contains the four gospels and Acts and dates first half of 2nd century
 - b. Beatty Museum, Dublin ETDV, p. 49.
6. John Rylands MSS [p⁵²] - 130 AD - ETDV, p. 48; CRJ, p. 84
 - a. Jn 18:31-33,37-38
 - b. John Ryland Library, Manchester, England - TNTD, P. 17

C. Versions - 19,000+ (See below, II,A)

Compare songs in hymnbook . . . If translated into Spanish, could compare Spanish *version* with our copy

1. Three primary groups:
 - a. Syriac
 - b. Egyptian
 - c. Latin
2. Together contain all NT books
3. Dated by scholars to 2nd century (100's), though our copies not that old

D. Quotations – 19,000+ just of the gospels (See below, II,A)

Suppose had transcripts of “worship programs” where these songs in our hymnbook were used, or, letters where they were quoted (for encouragement, teaching). Could this be helpful in reconstructing the original song?

Writer	Date of Death	Quotes from gospels
Justin Martyr.....	c. 165.....	268
Irenaeus	c. 202.....	1,038
Clement of Alex.....	c. 215.....	1,017
Origen	c. 254.....	9,231
Tertullian.....	c. 220.....	3,822
Hippolytus.....	c. 235.....	734
Eusebius.....	c. 339.....	3,258
.....	19,368

Chart - ETDV, p. 55

The Greek NT, United Bible Societies (Dates of death)

NOTE: c. 339 (thus all these quotes) within 300 years of Christ' death!

E. Lectionaries - 2000+ (NETDV, p. 42; CRJ, p. 88)**II. ACCURACY: ARE THESE SOURCES RELIABLE?****A. Comparison of the sources (see above)**

1. MSS for N.T. - Approx. 5,000 - Metzger, TCGNT, p. xxiv; 5,686 partial and complete, NETDV, p. 34. 5,700 CRJ, p. 82⁶; IBTR⁷ Nearly 5,800 Geisler, 2013⁸
2. Versions for N.T. - 10,000+ Latin Vulgate; 2,000+ Ethiopic; 4,101, Slavic; 2,587, Armenian; 350+ Syriac Pashetta; 245 others – Total = 19,284+ NETDV, p. 34
3. Quotations for N.T. - over 19,000 just of the gospels and over 30,000 of all NT before 325 AD. ETDV, p. 55.

Scholars say the NT could be reconstructed from the quotes alone if all MSS and versions destroyed. NETDV, p. 43.

B. Comparison with other historical works of antiquity

Chart, NETDV, p. 38

Author	Book	Date Written	Earliest Copies	Time Gap	No. of Copies
Homer	Iliad	800 B.C.	c. 400 B.C.	c. 400 yrs.	643
Herodotus	History	480-425 B.C.	c. A.D. 900	c. 1,350 yrs.	8
Thucydides	History	460-400 B.C.	c. A.D. 900	c. 1,300 yrs.	8
Plato		400 B.C.	c. A.D. 900	c. 1,300 yrs.	7
Demosthenes		300 B.C.	c. A.D. 1100	c. 1,400 yrs.	200
Caesar	Gallic Wars	100-44 B.C.	c. A.D. 900	c. 1,000 yrs.	10
Livy	History of Rome	59 B.C.–A.D. 17	4 th cent. (partial) mostly 10 th cent.	c. 400 yrs. c. 1,000 yrs.	1 partial 19 copies
Tacitus	Annals	A.D. 100	c. A.D. 1100	c. 1,000 yrs.	20
Pliny Secundus	Natural History	A.D. 61-113	c. A.D. 850	c. 750 yrs.	7
New Testament		A.D. 50-100	c. 114 (fragment) c. 200 (books) c. 250 (most of N.T.) c. 325 (complete N.T.)	+50 yrs. 100 yrs. 150 yrs. 225 yrs.	5366

[Herodotus - huh ROD uh tuhs; Thucydides - thoo SID ih deez; Demosthenes - dih MOS thuh neez; Livy - LIH vee]

Compare if a *will* was involved . . . which one of these copies would we have the most confidence in?! A will IS involved!

To reject the credibility of the N.T. documents is to relegate all ancient documents to complete untrustworthiness, for none are as well attested as the N.T.!

Perhaps we can appreciate how wealthy the New Testament is in manuscript attestation if we compare the textual material for other ancient historical works. For Caesar's *Gallic War* (composed between 85 and 50 BC) there are several extant MSS, but only nine or ten are good, and the oldest is some 900 years later than Caesar's day. Of the 142 books of the Roman History of Livy (59 BC -AD 17) only thirty-five survive; these are known to us from not more than twenty MSS of any consequence, only one of which, and that containing fragments of Books iii-vi, is as old as the fourth century. Of the fourteen books of the *Histories* of Tacitus

(c. AD 100) only four and a half survive; of the sixteen books of his *Annals*, ten survive in full and two in part. The text of these extant portions of his two great historical works depends entirely on two MSS, one of the ninth century and one of the eleventh. The extant MSS of his minor works (*Dialogus de Oratoribus*, *Agricola*, *Germania*) all descend from a codex of the tenth century. The History of Thucydides (c. 460-400 BC) is known to us from eight MSS, the earliest belonging to c. AD 900, and a few papyrus scraps, belonging to about the beginning of the Christian era. The same is true of the History of Herodotus (c. 480-425 BC). Yet no classical scholar would listen to an argument that the authenticity of Herodotus or Thucydides is in doubt because the earliest MSS of their works which are of any use to us are over 1,300 years later than the originals.

F.F. Bruce, *The New Testament Documents, Are They Reliable?* (Eerdmans, Michigan, 1963), pp. 16,17

C. Authoritative testimony

“Authoritative” - “2...reliable because coming from one who is an expert or properly qualified”
W.NWD

“Fenton John Anthony Hort, whose life work has been with the MSS... ‘the amount of what can in any sense be called substantial variation is but a small fraction of the whole residuary variation, and can hardly form more than a thousandth part of the entire text.’” ETDV, p. 44. Fenton John Anthony Hort, 1828-1892 A.D., was a renowned textual scholar of the 19th century and served on the committee of the English Revised Version in the 1880s. (“Explaining the Variants” CRJ, pp. 85-87)

My N.T. is 421 pages. One thousandth part of that would be .421, or less than half a page!

“Sir Frederick Kenyon (one of the great authorities in the field of N.T. textual criticism) [“director and principal librarian of the British Museum” NETDV, p. 35; director of the British Museum 1909-1930 A.D.]: ‘It cannot be too strongly asserted that in substance the text of the Bible is certain: Especially is this the case with the New Testament. The number of manuscripts of the New Testament, of early translations from it, and of quotations from it in the oldest writers of the Church, is so large that it is practically certain that the true reading of every doubtful passage is preserved in some one or other of these ancient authorities. This can be said of no other ancient book in the world.

“Scholars are satisfied that they possess substantially the true text of the principal Greek and Roman writers whose works have come down to us of Sophocles, of Thucydides, of Cicero, of Virgil; yet our knowledge of their writings depends on a mere handful of manuscripts, whereas the manuscripts of the New Testament are counted by hundreds, and even thousands.” ETDV, p. 46.

“Kenyon continues in *The Bible and Archaeology*: ‘The interval then between the dates of the original composition and the earliest extant evidence becomes so small as to be in fact negligible, and the last foundation for any doubt that the Scriptures have come down to us substantially as they were written has now been removed. Both the authenticity and the general integrity of the books of the New Testament may be regarded as finally established.’ (Kenyon, BA, 288)”
NETDV, p. 35.

Simon Greenleaf, LL.D., Royall Professor of Law in Harvard University [1833-1848 A.D.], AEFE, pp. 27,28: “If any ancient document concerning our public rights were lost, copies which had been as universally received and acted upon as the Four Gospels have been, would have been received in evidence in any of our courts of justice, without the slightest hesitation. The entire text of the Corpus Juris Civilis is received as authority in all the courts of continental Europe, upon much weaker evidence of genuineness; for the integrity of the Sacred Text has been preserved by the jealousy of opposing sects, beyond any moral possibility of corruption; while that of the Roman Civil Law has been preserved only by tacit consent, without the interest of any opposing school, to watch over and preserve it from alteration.”

And these can be multiplied. See, e.g., ETDV.

III. AUTHORSHIP: DID MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN WRITE THE GOSPELS?

A. Matthew

1. Papias (c.80-c.155): [PAY pih us]
 “Matthew composed the Logia in the Hebrew tongue; and each one interpreted them as he was able.” INT, p. 131 (Dates from pp. 12ff of INT)
2. Irenaeus (c.140-203)
 “Matthew also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect.’ Irenaeus claims he knew Polycarp [c.69- 155, srf] in his early youth, and that Polycarp always taught the things he had learned from the apostles.” INT, p.131
3. Origen [c.185-253, srf]
 “Origen also assigned this Gospel to Matthew.” INT, p. 132

Note: Our MSS of Matthew’s gospel are in Greek. Matthew was a Jew, and collected taxes for Rome. It is possible he wrote his gospel in *both* Hebrew and Greek and the Hebrew version dropped out of use. We do not know. The point here is to show that Matthew was indeed the author of the book we know as “The Gospel According to Matthew.” INT, p. 134.

B. Mark

1. Papias (c.80-c.155)
 “And the Elder [Apostle John? srf] said this also: Mark having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately everything that he remembered without however recording in order what was either said or done by Christ...So then Mark made no mistake, while he thus wrote down some things as he remembered them; for he made it his own care not to omit anything that he had heard, or to set down any false statement therein.” INT, p. 140 (Mark did sustain a close spiritual relationship with Peter, 1 Pt 5:13.)
2. Irenaeus (c.140-203)
 “After their departure (exodon), Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, did also hand down to us in writing what had been preached by Peter.” INT, p. 141
3. “Clement of Alexandria [c.155-c.215, srf], Tertullian [c.150-222, srf], Origen [c.185-253, srf], Eusebius [c.265-340, srf], all ascribe the second Gospel to Mark.” INT, p. 141
4. Title, *Kata Markon*, found in earliest MSS - INT, p. 141

C. Luke

1. Muratorian Fragment (c. 170)
 “The first document definitely to ascribe the Gospel to Luke is the Muratorian Fragment.” INT, p. 151
2. Irenaeus (c.140-203)
 “Luke also, the companion of Paul, recorded in a book the Gospel preached by him.” INT, p. 151
3. Clement of Alexandria (c.155-c.215)
 “Clement of Alexandria also definitely ascribes the Gospel to Luke.” INT, p. 151
4. Internal evidence that same writer as Acts. Compare the end of Luke and the beginning of Acts. “We” sections and medical language in Acts strongly favor Lukan authorship.

D. John

1. Theophilus of Antioch (c. 115-188)
 “John says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God.”” INT, p. 163

2. Muratorian Fragment (c. 170)
 “John, one of the disciples, wrote a fourth book of the Gospels.” INT, p. 163
3. Irenaeus (c.140-203)
 “Afterwards, John, the disciple of the Lord, who also leaned upon His breast, did himself publish a Gospel during his residence at Ephesus in Asia.” Ibid, p. 164 “His testimony is perhaps the most important of all the testimonies, for he was a pupil of Polycarp, and Polycarp was a friend of the Apostle John.” INT, pp. 163-164.
4. Clement of Alexandria (c.155-c.215)
 “John, he last of all, seeing that what was corporal was set forth in the Gospels, on the entreaty of his intimate friends and inspired by the Spirit, composed a spiritual Gospel.” INT, p. 165.
5. Internal evidence through process of elimination favors John.

CONCLUSION

What? When? Who? Why? How?

- **What?** - The sources for our study: four books called the “gospels.”
- **When?** - Written in first century.
- **Who?** - Mt, Mk, Lk, Jn. wrote them.
- **Why?** - To give the evidence for faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Men are not expected to be gullible. They are bidden to read, consider, and carefully choose. “He that has ears to hear, let him hear.”

Jn 20:30-31; Mk 1:1....16:15-16; Lk 1:4

- **How?** - With care and concern for truthfulness.
Lk 1:1-4; Jn 19:35; 21:24

(True, Christians believe they wrote by the influence of the Spirit. But, for now, we present them as credible historical evidence that must be considered by the honest inquirer, whether believer or UNbeliever.)

Thus we have four books dating to the first century, three of which were written within forty years of the events they relate (before the destruction of Jerusalem - another criteria of credibility), written by men who were either eye-witnesses or obtained their information from eye-witnesses (the two highest standards of credibility for historical writings), and preserved with remarkable accuracy. They were all written to record the good news about Jesus, and two expressly claimed care and truthfulness for their record. WHAT IS THEIR TESTIMONY? YOU MUST BE THE JURY. LET THE WITNESSES SPEAK!

Christianity will stand or fall upon the testimony of these documents.

APPROACH TO THE ACCOUNTS CONTAINED IN THE DOCUMENTS

(See AEFÉ, pp. 31-33)

If secular historians:

- Their writings are held to be credible until the contrary is shown; “innocent till proven guilty.”
- Not expected that everything alluded to by one will be mentioned by other contemporary historians. An event or circumstance is often received on the testimony of a lone historian. The silence of other writers is not necessarily considered to throw suspicion on his testimony. Contemporary histories do not have to be identical to be held consistent.
- An apparent contradiction between contemporary historians is treated as a “difficulty,” likely due to our lack of a “more extensive knowledge of ancient history,” rather than a “contradiction.” The

“obscurity which necessarily hangs over the history of every remote age” encourages a modesty in criticism, attributing the difficulty to our ignorance rather to bad faith or careless inaccuracy of the writers. And even when these seem to be irreconcilably opposed, the whole historical account is not treated as myth. [for examples of contradictions in secular accounts, see AEFÉ, pp. 38-39.]

But, with the sacred writings:

- Guilty till proven innocent! Assume they conspired together to impose a false religion on the world.
- The silence of secular history on a matter these historians report is held to cast doubt on, or even impeach, their record, but not vice-versa! If among themselves, or in comparison with secular works, there are found differences in accounts, these are held to discredit the sacred writings. E.g., they are made to stand in judgment before the court of Josephus, when in fact they have far more support than does he! Why not vice-versa?!
- Gone is the humility that recognizes our limitations of knowledge of ancient customs, culture, and circumstances, and instead apparent contradictions are treated critically as examples of ignorance, inaccuracy, or dishonesty on the part of the writers.

NOTE: Those who approach the evidence with such a prejudiced mind WILL NEVER BE CONVINCED. They are not interested in TRUTH. They indeed may be afraid of the consequences! (More about the attitude that accounts for unbelief in the last lesson.) All that is asked, and all that is required, is that these accounts be treated by the SAME RULES as other historical documents. We will proceed on that basis, letting the documents speak for themselves. **John 5:40; 7:17**

NOTE TO THE BELIEVER: Do not despair at the treatment given the gospel accounts. The more than have been scrutinized, the more they have proven worthy. Like a true diamond, the more they have been polished by critical examination, the more they have shined! And it has only served to confirm the unique and solid foundation for our faith! Also, by virtue of these attacks through the years, believers have come to the defense of the faith, leaving volumes as a rich heritage for the present-day believer, e.g., the following are just a few on the subject...

Publications you may be interested in:

- *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, Josh McDowell
- *More Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, Josh McDowell
- *The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, Josh McDowell (1999)
- *Paley's Evidence of Christianity*, Richard Whately
- *Biblical Criticism*, J.W. McGarvey
- *That You May Believe*, Homer Hailey
- *General Introduction to the Bible*, Geisler & Nix
- *The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* F.F. Bruce
- *Evidences of Christianity*, J. W. McGarvey (out of print?)
- *Why We Believe the Bible*, George Dehoff
- *Inspiration & Canoncity of the Bible*, R. Laird Harris

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Lk 1:3 - “having investigated everything carefully”

KJV - “**having had perfect understanding of all things**” Wallace in *A Review of the New Versions* maintains the KJV is claiming inspiration for Luke and the other versions are wrong.

parakoloutheo = “having investigated” (“having...had under.” KJV) TH - “2. metaph...b. to follow up a thing in mind so as to attain to the knowledge of it, i.e. to understand [cf. our follow a matter up, trace its course, etc.]; to examine thoroughly, investigate:...Lk 1:3 (very often so in Grk auth...)” So VN, Gngrch, RWP, Hendriksen, Lenski, Vincent, etc.

Also, the word is perfect, active participle - his "researches lay before him as something that was completed and done." Lenski. "Luke got himself ready to write before he began by full and accurate knowledge of the subject." RWP. So, Hendriksen. If of inspiration, would it be in the perfect tense - completed before he began to write?

"carefully" NASV; "perfect" KJV = i. An *adverb*, TH. Note KJV has as an adjective. "exactly, accurately, diligently" TH. "The word expresses that accuracy which is the outcome of carefulness." VN

NOTE: Our faith rests on solid, historical fact, not "cunningly devised myths" (2Pt 1:16)!

"so that you may know the exact truth" - v 4

"you may know" = *epiginOskO* - full (*epi*) knowledge ("things you have been taught"), but Luke intends to thoroughly ground.

"exact truth" = *asphaleia*. "The noun is derived from *sphallo*, to trip up, plus the negative *a*; hence it is a condition in which one stands solidly and is no longer tripped and made to totter and to fall." Lenski. "'Theophilus shall know that the faith which he has embraced has an impregnable historical foundation.' Plummer" RWP

Another question bearing on the credibility of ancient documents: *Who Had Custody of Them?*

I.e., Were they "found in the place where, and under the care of persons with whom, such writings might naturally and reasonably be expected to be found...?"

"The rule of municipal law on this subject is familiar, and applies with equal force to all ancient writings, whether documentary or otherwise. The first inquiry, when an ancient document is offered in evidence in our courts, is whether it comes from the proper repository; that is, whether it is found in the place where, and under the care of persons with whom, such writings might naturally and reasonably be expected to be found; for it is this custody which gives authenticity to documents found within it.¹ If they come from such a place, and bear no evident marks of forgery, the law presumes that they are genuine, and they are admitted to be read in evidence, unless the opposing party is able successfully to impeach them. The burden of showing them to be false and unworthy of credit, is devolved on the party who makes that objection. The presumption of law is the judgment of charity. It presumes that every man is innocent until he is proved to be guilty; that everything has been done fairly and legally, until it is proved to have been otherwise; and that every document, found in its proper repository, and not bearing marks of forgery, is genuine. Now this is precisely the case with the Sacred Writings. They have been used in the church from time immemorial, and thus are found in the place where alone they ought to be looked for...There is not pretense that they were engraven on plates of gold and discovered in a cave, nor that they were brought from heaven by angels; but they are received as the plain narratives and writings of the men whose names they respectively bear, made public at the times when they were written..."

¹Per Tindall, Ch. Just. in the case of the Bishop of Meath v. the Marquis of Winchester, 3 Bing. N.C. 183,200,201. 'It is when documents are found in other than their proper places of deposit,' observed the Chief Justice, 'that the investigation commences, whether it was reasonable and natural, under the circumstances of the particular case, to expect that they should have been in the place where they are actually found; for it is obvious, that, while there can be only one place of deposit strictly and absolutely proper, there may be many and various, that are reasonable and probable, though differing degree, some being more so, some less; and in these cases the proposition to be determined is, whether the actual custody is so reasonably and properly accounted for, that it impresses the mind with the conviction that the instrument found in such custody must be genuine.'...It is this defect, namely, that they do not come from the proper or natural repository, which shows the fabulous character of many pretended revelations, from the Gospel of the Infancy to the Book of Mormon." Simon Greenleaf, LL.D., Royall Professor of Law in Harvard University, *An Examination of the Testimony of the Four Evangelists* (by the rules of evidence administered in courts of justice) (Boston:Charles C. Little and James Brown, 1846), pp. 25-27. [AEFE]

Further evidence of the Credibility of the Historical Accounts:

While the historians should be received as credible unless proven otherwise, there is evidence in their writings that they are accurate and truthful reporters of the events they relate. Upon closer examination of their accounts, comparison with one another, with contemporary accounts, and collateral facts, their narratives are found to have the marks of true, unartful witnesses. ETFE, pp 33ff; IBTR, p. 65f (William Ramsey on Luke's accuracy). Remember, this should not be necessary, but let the burden be accepted, and yet their records stand!

1. The abundance of natural, unnecessary details.

A false witness will avoid details. And the more witnesses, the greater amount of details, the greater possibility for detection. True witnesses, with undesigned simplicity, will fear not to relate the details "without the least regard either to the facility or difficulty of verification or detection." ETFE, p. 35. The gospels abound in this. E.g., Mk 15:21; Jn 18:10; Mt 27:58-60; Jn 12:1; etc.

2. Concurrence with other contemporary accounts.

Unlike the remarkable preservation of the gospel accounts, much of the contemporary literature of that day has been lost. But what is available serves to confirm the reliability of the sacred narratives. [E.g., details surrounding the crucifixion, NETDV, pp 55f.]

3. Report of those things most disparaging to themselves.

E.g., their want of faith; their pride; their dullness of understanding; their cowardice.

4. Archaeological confirmation.

AEFE = *An Examination of the Four Evangelists*, Simon Greenleaf

CRJ = *The Case for the Real Jesus*, Lee Strobel (Zondervan)

ETDV = *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, Josh McDowell

iB = iBooks version (page number, etc. from the iBooks version)

IBTR = *Is the Bible True...Really?* Dave Sterrett and Josh McDowell (Moody Publishers, 2011) (iB by page number indicates iBooks version)

INT = *Introduction to the NT*, Theissen

ITCNT = *An Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the NT*, A. T. Robertson

TNTD = *The New Testament Documents*, F.F. Bruce

NETDV = *New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, Josh McDowell (1999)

TCGNT = *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, Bruce Metzger

TH = *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, C. G. Wilke / C. L. Wilibald Grimm / Joseph Henry Thayer

VN = *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* W. E. Vine

¹ *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*, Third Edition copyright © 1992 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Electronic version licensed from INSO Corporation. All rights reserved.

² *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*, Third Edition copyright © 1992 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Electronic version licensed from INSO Corporation. All rights reserved.

³ “The abbreviated Protestant principle (which contains a large element of truth) is stated by Chillingworth: ‘The Bible, I say, the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants!’ [W. Chillingworth, *The Religion of Protestants* (1938)] The truer Protestant principle is that there is an *external* principle (the *inspired* Scripture) and an *INTERNAL PRINCIPLE* (THE WITNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT). It is the principle of an objective *divine* revelation, with an interior *divine* witness.” Bernard Ramm, *The Pattern of Religious Authority* (Michigan: Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1965), p. 29 [caps mine, srf]. “Because the abbreviated Protestant principle is so prevalent, it is necessary to enlarge the discussion with some necessary documentation of the theses ... *Westminster Confession*: ‘...our full persuasion and assurance of infallible truth, and divine authority thereof, IS FROM THE INWARD WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.’ ... *Belgic Confession*: ‘We receive all these books, and these only as holy and canonical...believing, without doubt, all things contained in them, not so much because the Church receives and approves them as such, but more especially BECAUSE THE HOLY GHOST WITNESSETH IN OUR HEARTS that they are from God...’” (Ramm, p. 30) “The real Reformation principle is not that the Bible, but that the Holy Spirit speaking, is infallible; and the believer trusts the written word BECAUSE THE HOLY SPIRIT SPEAKS IN HIS HEART consonantly with the same Holy Spirit speaking in Scripture.” W.D. Niven, *Reformation Principles after Four Centuries* (1953), p. 23 (Ramm, p. 30) [caps mine, srf]. “‘Nevertheless, we acknowledge the INWARD ILLUMINATION OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD TO BE NECESSARY FOR THE SAVING UNDERSTANDING OF SUCH THINGS AS ARE REVEALED IN THE WORD.’” *Confession of Faith (of English Baptists)*, London, 1677) (Ramm, p. 31). “‘Not, of course, as though the Bible, by itself, were sufficient to give, to every one who reads it, the true knowledge of God...by their teaching of the WITNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT as absolutely indispensable for all conviction concerning Scripture, by their REQUIREMENT OF ILLUMINATION FOR THE RIGHT UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE...our fathers have sufficiently shown that such a mechanical explanation cannot be ascribed to them.’” Abraham Kuyper, *Principles of Sacred Theology*, p. 360 (Ramm, p. 32). “‘...this HOLY SPIRIT IS THE AUTHOR OF THAT LIGHT BY THE AID OF WHICH WE OBTAIN A PERCEPTION AND AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE DIVINE MEANINGS OF THE WORD, and is the Effector of that *Certainty* by which we believed those meanings to be truly divine...’” Arminius, *The Writings of Arminius*, I. 140. (Ramm, p. 32-33) [caps mine, srf] “Here is a perfect blend of the requisite objective and SUBJECTIVE factors in religious authority, a blend which Bromily speaks of when he writes: ‘Ought we not to seek the authority of the Bible in the balanced relationship of a perfect form (the objective Word), and a perfect content (the Word applied SUBJECTIVELY by the Holy Ghost)...’” G. W. Bromily, “The Authority of the Bible: The Attitude of Modern Theologians,” *The Evangelical Quarterly*, 19:136 (April, 1947) (Ramm, p. 36-37) [caps mine, srf]

⁴ See “Greek Manuscript Evidence” in *United Bible Societies Greek N.T.*, pp. xiiiiff, for a list of the Greek manuscripts, lectionaries, versions, and early “church fathers” (quotations).

⁵ “The Vatican Library is most grateful to Mr Frank J Hanna III for his donation to the Library, in January 2007” <<http://goo.gl/uPYgj5>> “The manuscript is currently housed at the Vatican Library (P. Bodmer XIV-XV) at Rome.” <<http://goo.gl/zemv5m>>

⁶ “Exactly how many copies are in existence?” I [Lee Strobel] asked.

“We have more than 5,700 Greek copies of the New Testament. When I [Daniel Wallace] started seminary, there were 4,800, but more and more have been discovered. There are another 10,000 copies in Latin. Then there are versions in other languages—Coptic, Syriac, Armenien, Georgian, and so on. These are estimated to number between 10,000 and 15,000. So right there we’ve got 25,000 to 30,000 handwritten copies of the New Testament.” CRJ, pp. 82,83. [brackets mine, srf]

⁷ “I know you just said this, but how many New Testament manuscripts exist today?” asked Andrea.

“Thousands. Over 5,600 Greek manuscripts are catalogued, but Wallace and his team are consistently putting more on their website. If you go beyond the Greek manuscripts and consider all the copies of the Latin Vulgate and other translations, that number approaches 24,000.”

pp. 90,91-iB, Dave Sterrett & Josh McDowell. “*Is the Bible True . . . Really?*” Moody Publishers, 2011. iBooks.

⁸ **“Number of New Testament Manuscripts**

New copies of ancient manuscripts, both biblical and non-biblical, continue to be found. This necessitates an update of the figures and charts used in various books on the topic. For example, in the original version of Norman L. Geisler and William E. Nix, *General Introduction to the Bible* (Moody Press, 1968), we noted that there were about 5,000 Greek NT manuscripts (p. 285). This followed acknowledged manuscript authority Bruce Metzger in his book *The Text of the New Testament [TNT]* 1964 edition (pp. 31-33). By 1986 when we revised *General Introduction to the Bible* (GIB rev, 1986), there were 5,366 NT manuscripts (p. 387). This followed Metzger’s updating “Appendix III: Statistics Relating to the Manuscripts of the Greek NT” in his 1981 *Manuscripts of the Greek Bible* (pp. 54-56). By 1999 when we helped revise Josh McDowell’s *More Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, we contacted the manuscript institute founded by expert Kurt Aland that gave us the latest number as 5,656 as of August 1998 (see McDowell, NEDV, 36). To date (2013) there are nearly 5,800 NT manuscripts. For this general figure we can thank both Kurt Aland and Dan Wallace of Dallas Theological Seminary. Most of the discrepancies reported as to the number of NT manuscripts can be traced to the different times to which they refer.” Copyright © 2013 NormanGeisler.net - All rights reserved

<http://normangeisler.net/articles/Bible/Reliability/Norman%20Geisler%20-%20Updating%20the%20Manuscript%20Evidence%20for%20the%20New%20Testament.pdf>

REVIEW

1. What does John 10:35 affirm about the Old Testament?
2. What does John 16:13 affirm about the New Testament?
3. What difference does it make if we believe or disbelieve the gospel to be true?
4. The truthfulness of the story of Jesus can be established by (choose all correct answers)
 - a. Feelings
 - b. Personal experience
 - c. Majority opinion
 - d. Scholarly decree
 - e. Tradition
 - f. Culture
 - g. Ability of human reason to explain the how and why of it
 - h. Credibility of historical documents and their testimony
5. What are the historical documents that underlie our faith in the gospel?
6. How can we know Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were written in the first century?
7. What is a “manuscript”?
8. About how many Greek manuscripts of part or all of the New Testament are known today?
9. What is a version?
10. About how many quotations from the gospels by writers in the first three centuries?
11. Why were Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John written? Give scripture for your answer.
12. How do the four books known as “Gospels” differ from other ancient books as far as
 - a. Purpose?
 - b. Reliability, i.e. accuracy of the text?
 - c. Authorship?
13. Explain how what was studied in this lesson bears on the following questions:
 - a. How can I trust the gospel records when the Bible wasn’t officially accepted by the church until c. 350 A.D.? - or - when it rests on the church’s approval (“church” here used in the sense of the hierarchy of the church)?
 - b. We don’t have the original writings. How can we know we have what they wrote?
14. What do John 5:40 and 7:17 teach about how evidence is treated?

HUMAN TESTIMONY

OBJ: Examine the testimony of men who met, observed firsthand, and knew Jesus intimately.

HUMAN TESTIMONY:

1. In our courts, men live and die by it.
2. The practice of science depends upon it. Milk dairies today do not have to repeat Louis Pasteur's experiment before they pasteurize milk.
3. You call someone "dad" and "mom" on the basis of it.
4. What must be determined is whether the testimony is credible, i.e., whether it is sufficient to establish the proposition.
5. Note: Written testimony (as well as oral) is recognized as valid testimony in courts of law today. "Deposition" - "4. Law. Testimony under oath, especially a statement by a witness that is written down or recorded for use in court at a later date."

You are the "jury" – let's listen to the witnesses . . .

I. JESUS OWN CLAIMS

A. His Relation to God

1. Came from heaven (Non-earthly origin/God's approval).
Jn 6:33-35,38(41,42),50,51,58 (and, returning to heaven! **v62**) (multiple times in this discourse!); **16:28**; (Also see **Jn 3:13; 7:27-28; 8:14,23,42; 13:3; 17:8**)
2. Intimate knowledge of and unity with God/reveals God
John (1:18); 12:44-45,49-50; 14:7-11 (See also **Jn 6:46** [thus able to accurately learn from the Father thru him, **v 45**]; **7:29; 8:55; 10:15; 15:23-24; 17:25,26; Mt 11:27**)
3. Equal with God
Jn 5:17-23; 8:58 (See also **Jn 10:30ff**, accepted worship, **Jn 9:38,39; 20:28,29**)

B. His Relation to Messianic Hope

1. To be the Messiah
Jn 4:25-26 ("declare all things to us" – The "Prophet" **Dt. 18**) (note **v. 42**, "Savior of the world"); **10:24,25 (8:56-note what involved)**.
2. To be The King of the Jews.
Mk 15:2; Jn 18:37. (2 Sam 7:10-13; Isa 9:6-7)
3. To function as God's Prophet
A prophet was God's mouthpiece, or spokesman. **Ex 4:16; 7:1**. "The Prophet" was expected, **Jn 1:21**. Some distinguished him from the Messiah, **Jn 7:40-41**, while others identified him with the Messianic King, **Jn 6:14,15**. Moses had prophesied a prophet to come in his place and Peter applied that to the Messiah, (**Dt 18**) **Ac 3:22-23** (The "Christ," **vv 18,22**). Jesus claimed to speak the words of God and that those who refused to listen would be judged: **Jn 12:48-50** (Also **Jn 7:16** [note "not...but" in John]; **8:26,28; 14:10,24; 15:15**)
4. To be the Good Shepherd (Shepherd-King)
A Messianic hope: **Ezek 34:23-24 (vv. 11-22)** (Also **Ezek 37:24ff; Zech 13:7-9**) **Jn 10:11-16**
5. To be the Son of God
A Messianic hope: **Ps 2:2...7; Mt 16:16-18** (Also **2 Sam 7:14**)

UNIQUELY God's Son: **Jn 5:17-18, 19ff; 20:17; Mt 26:63,64** (Also **Jn 3:16, 11:25-27, 17:1-5**)

C. His Relation to Human Need

1. True Revelation of God's Grace
(**Jn 1:14-18**); **Jn 14:1-6** (Also see **6:44-48; 8:24; Mt 11:25-30**)
2. Savior
Lk 19:9-10; Jn 3:14-17 (Also **Jn 12:47**)
3. Light of the world
Jn 8:12 (Also **9:5; 12:35-36**)
4. Bread of life
Jn 6:35,48-58
5. The Resurrection
Jn 11:25-26

NOTE: *There is no middle ground! Either Jesus is all he claimed to be, or he was a madman, or he was the greatest impostor ever to walk the face of the earth! Here are his claims. One MUST make a choice!*

II. JOHN THE BAPTIST

Though sent by God, his testimony was regarded as human testimony, **Jn 5:33-36**.

A. What were John's motives? NOT...

1. Popularity, a following - **Jn 3:26-30; Mt 11:7** ("reed shaken with the wind"); **Jn 1:19-23**
2. Political ambition - **Mt 3:7; 14:3-4**
3. Money - **Lk 3:10-14** (note: never requested or received public collections. "What shall we do?" - What an opportunity! Compare what modern "evangelists" would say: "Send money"; "Pass the basket."); **Mt 3:4; Mt 11:8** (not "dressed in soft clothing")
4. Never accused of fraud or hypocrisy
5. Did not seek his own glory
Denied he was the Christ, Elijah, or the Prophet, **Jn 1:19-23**. Said Jesus must "increase" and he "decrease," **Jn. 3:25-30**.
6. Crazy?
 - a. Void of motives often associated with extremes of insanity (#'s 1,2,3).
 - b. Esteemed by thousands who heard him, **Mt 3:5, 21:26**.
 - c. All recorded sayings and conduct are sober.
 - d. Must prove insanity! Not simply assume because not like testimony!

B. His testimony concerning himself

(Indirectly concerning Jesus)

1. Negatively: NOT (**Jn 1:19-21**)
 - a. The Christ
 - b. Elijah
 - c. The Prophet
2. Positively:

- a. A Voice preparing the way for Jehovah, according to a 700 yr. old prophecy” - Jn 1:23 (Isa 40)
- b. Came baptizing in order that this one before whom he ran might be manifested to Israel - Jn 1:31

C. His testimony concerning Jesus

1. Not worthy to untie his sandals - **Jn 1:27**
2. Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world - **Jn 1:29,36**
3. Existed before John - **Jn 1:30**
4. Beheld the Spirit descend in bodily form as a dove upon Jesus - **Jn 1:32** (**Lk 3:22**, “in bodily form”)
5. Baptizes in the Holy Spirit & fire - **Jn 1:33; Mt 3:11-12**
6. Son of God - **Jn 1:34**
7. Comes from above - **Jn 3:31**
8. All things pertaining to purification (v 25), life (v 36), and the wonderful promises of God (v 34) have been given to him - **Jn 3:27,35** (Cmpr **Jn 1:14-18; 5:20-27; 6:37-38; 14:6; 17:2-3; Mt 11:27-30**)
9. Belief in Jesus as the Son of God is essential to life, and disobedience brings the wrath of God - **Jn 3:36**
10. “Are you the Expected One, or shall we look for someone else?” **Mt 11:3**. Not a denial that he the Lamb of God, but is he one and the same with the King of Israel? Note misunderstanding of kingdom in context. John had been in prison over 3 months.)

III. OTHERS

A. Disciples

1. Andrew: “We have found the Messiah” - **Jn 1:41**
(Note circumstances: John’s testimony; “stayed with him”)
2. Philip: “We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote” - **Jn 1:45**
On what did Philip base his conclusions? Not stated, but, consider: a) Cntxt - John’s testimony; Andrew & Peter’s testimony (? , v 44); b) “Come and see,” v 46, i.e., willing for his conclusions to be tested as to whether “any good” can come out of Nazareth.
3. Nathanael - “You are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel” - **Jn 1:49** (Note circumstances)

An interesting note by John Gill, 1809 (Online Bible, ver. 3):

“It is said of Nathanael, in the Syriac dictionary {x}; that his mother laid him under a fig tree, when the infants were slain, i.e. at Bethlehem; which, if it could be depended upon, must be to Nathanael a surprising and undeniable proof of the deity of Christ, and of his being the true Messiah; since, at that time, he was an infant of days himself, and was the person Herod was seeking to destroy, as the Messiah, and king of the Jews.”

R. C. H. Lenski (The Interepretaion of St. John’s Gospel, Augsburg Pub., 1943) observes:

“Who would not wish that the evangelist had told us more fully what actually happened under the fig tree when Nathanael was there before he met Philip? Something apparently disproportionate lies in the connection of this simple statement of Jesus and the instantaneous, magnificent confession of Nathanael who but a moment ago was filled with serious doubt; but we know that the disproportion does not really exist...What Jesus

refers to is ... something of a deep personal nature, known only to Nathanael and to his God, that occurred say a day or two before when he had again sought seclusion under that tree. For the reference of Jesus literally strikes home in Nathanael's heart ... Imagination seeks to supply something that would be great enough to justify the great confession that rose to Nathanael's lips...We leave the mystery as John left it to us."

4. Peter
 1. **Jn 6:68,69** (End of Galilean min.)
 2. **Mt 16:16** (During retirement min, six-month period following Galilean min.)
 3. **Mk 9:5** - classed with Moses & Elijah. Note however **v 6**. (Mark sustained a close spiritual rela. with Peter, **1 Pt 5:13**, possibly being converted by him, or studying under him. Secular history says he wrote he was the "interpreter of Peter." INT, p. 140.)
 4. **Mt 26:74**, "I do not know the man!" However, note **v 75**. Also see **Jn 21:15,16,17; Ac 2:36, 3:13-15, 4:10-11,19-20, 5:29-32,40-42**. (Acts = a document written by Luke, AD63.)
 5. Martha - **Jn 11:21-22,27**
 6. Thomas - **Jn 20:28**
 7. John, the writer - **Jn 19:35-37; 20:30-31; 21:24**
 8. Generally - **Mt 8:27; 14:33** (note circumstances); **Jn 16:30**

But, someone says, "they were his disciples." *Wouldn't you be if you had seen what they did?!*
And, if after what they said they heard and saw they were *not* his disciples...?!

B. Relatives

His brothers

1. "He has lost his senses" - **Mk 3:21 (31)**. (In 2nd yr of his ministry, during great Galilean min., on "busy day") Q: Would forgers put this in their record?
2. "IF you do these things..." - **Jn 7:4** (Unbelief, **v 5**) (During third year of ministry, just previous to later Judean ministry)

Note: According to other documents, they became believers, **Ac 1:14; Gal 1:19; Jude 1:1 (Mt 13:55)**

C. Samaritans

1. Woman at well: **Jn 4:19, 29(v18), 39**
2. Of the city of Sychar - **Jn 4:42 (v 5,28,30,39)**

Note: Remember that Samaritans & Jews hated one another, and that they had their own religion.

D. Gentiles

1. Centurion with paralyzed servant - **Mt 8:8-9**
2. Pilate - Three times: "I find no guilt in him" **Jn 18:38; 19:4,6**.
4th time implied - Herod sent him back to Pilate **Lk 23:10-11**
3. Pilate's wife: **Mt 27:19**
4. Centurion at the cross - **Mt 27:54**

E. Jewish multitude - divided

1. Con - **Jn 6:60 (66); 7:12,20,27,41-43; 12:34; Lk 7:39**

2. Pro - **Jn 6:14** (Bethsaida, east shore of sea of Galilee); **7:12,31,40,41** (Jerusalem); **10:41** (Bethany beyond the Jordan, **Jn 1:28**); **12:13** (Jer.); **Mk 2:12** (Capernaum); **Mk 7:37** (Decapolis); **Lk 7:16** (Nain, 6 mi SE of Nazareth - BBA)

F. Jewish rulers, Pharisees, scribes

1. **Jn 6:42**; **7:15,47-49,52**; **8:13,48**; **9:16**; **10:20-21,33**; **11:37,47-48** (Note **Jn 12:42,43**); **Mt 9:3,34 (12:24)**; **12:38**; **27:63**
2. Nicodemus, a Pharisee, a ruler of the Jews: **3:2**.
A man with a sense of justice, **Jn 7:50-51**. And he evidently still felt that way at Jesus' death, **Jn 19:39**.

G. Officers of the Jews

Jn 7:46 - "Never did a man speak the way this man speaks!"

H. Hometown people

Mt 13:54-56

I. Others

1. Man born blind - **Jn 9:10-11,15,17,30-33,38**
2. Simeon - **Lk 2:29-32, 34-35**
3. Anna - **Lk 2:38**
4. Seventy - **Lk 10:17**
5. Thief on the cross - **Lk 23:39-42**

CONC

So, here are the witnesses. We have heard from his friends and his enemies, from the interested and the unconcerned, his nearest relatives and foreigners, from the powerful and the common man, from those who met him once to those who knew him well, from men and women from all walks of life. YOU must be the jury. Remember the solemnness of your decision: if he IS the Son of God, eternity hangs in the balance! If he IS the Saviour of the world, we owe him our undying love! If he IS the King of Israel, we owe him our unrestrained allegiance!

AEFE = *An Examination of the Four Evangelists*, Simon Greenleaf

BBA = *Baker's Bible Atlas*

INT = *Introduction to the NT*, Theissen

VN = *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* W. E. Vine

REVIEW

1. Give some examples from daily life showing the weight we give to human testimony as to what we believe and do.
2. List at least two of Jesus claims about himself relative to:
 - a. God
 - b. The Messianic Hope
 - c. Human Need
3. What is there about John the Baptist that makes his testimony so credible?
4. List at least three things he testified about who Jesus was.
5. In a word or brief phrase, sum up the testimony of these disciples:
 - a. Andrew
 - b. Philip
 - c. Nathanael
 - d. Peter
 - e. Martha
 - f. Thomas
 - g. The apostle John
6. Did Jesus' brothers believe Jesus' claims before he died? Did their testimony change later?
7. What is known about Jews and Samaritans that adds credibility to favorable testimony of Samaritans concerning Jesus?
8. List three prominent Gentiles who testified about who Jesus was.
9. Was the Jewish populace united in their views about Jesus? How is this fact to be viewed relative to the truth about who Jesus was?
10. Give a couple examples of what the Jewish rulers would testify about Jesus.
11. What did the officers say about Jesus?
12. Why is negative testimony of hometown folk to be discounted?

You are the jury. You have heard the testimony of the witnesses. Now you must render a verdict. But remember that *your soul* may well hang in the balance of your decision!

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MIRACLES

OBJ: Examine the evidence of miracles for the credibility of gospel of Jesus Christ.

The question: “What then do you do for a sign, that we may see, and believe you? What work do you perform?” Jn 6:30.

GOSPELS DESIGNED TO BE EVIDENCE FOR MIRACLES: JN 20:30-31.

Will **stand** or **fall** on **this** testimony.

CLAIMED PURPOSE OF THESE MIRACLES:

1. “That the Father has sent me,” **Jn 5:36; 10:37-38**. Claimed as evidence of his divine mission.
(On “works,” see “Terms used” p. 3)
2. The blind man’s irrefutable logic: **Jn 9:30-33**.
Note Nicodemus, **Jn 3:2**.
3. Peter’s argument to UNbelieving Jews - **Acts 2:22**
4. Compare Moses, **Ex 4:1-5**.

“MIRACLE” DEFINED:

“1: an extraordinary event manifesting a supernatural work of God

“2: and extremely outstanding or unusual event, thing, or accomplishment” - W.SNCD, 1970

“1. an event or action that apparently contradicts known scientific laws and is hence thought to be due to supernatural causes, esp. to an act of God”

“2. a remarkable event or thing” - W.NWD, 1982

“from Late Latin *miraculum*, from Latin, a wonder, marvel, from *mirari* to wonder at” *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*. 2010.

Distinguish between #1 and #2:

- a. #2 often used in society today, but Bible means #1.
- b. **Jn 3:2** - “no one can do these signs that You do **unless God is with him**”
 (“sign” = *sEmeion* - “a sign, mark, indication, token, is used...(c) of miraculous acts (I) as tokens of Divine authority and power...” VN)

““The suspension or violation of the laws of nature involved in miracles is nothing more than is constantly taking place around us. One force counteracts another: vital force keeps the chemical laws of matter in abeyance; and muscular force can control the action of physical force. When a man raises a weight from the ground, the law of gravity is neither suspended nor violated, but counteracted by a stronger force. The same is true as to the walking of Christ on the water and the swimming of iron at the command of the prophet. The simple and grand truth that the universe is not under the exclusive control of physical forces, but that everywhere and always there is above, separate from and superior to all else, an infinite personal will, not superseding, but directing and controlling all physical causes, acting with or without them.’ God ordinarily effects his purpose through the agency of second causes; but he has the power also of effecting his purpose immediately and without the intervention of second causes, i.e., of invading the fixed order, and thus of working miracles. Thus we affirm the possibility of miracles, the possibility of a higher hand intervening to control or reverse nature’s ordinary movements.” *Easton’s Bible Dictionary*, “miracle”

“Miracles” of the NT were “signs” to confirm the messenger and his message to be from God.

THREE TYPES OF EVIDENCE FOR THREE KINDS OF PROPOSITIONS:

1. Demonstration (mathematics, science)
2. Sense (Personal experience)
3. Testimony

Whether Jesus performed miracles is a *historical issue that can only be established by testimony*. Yet, we can be as certain of the truthfulness of matters established by testimony as those evidenced by demonstration or sense. E.g.,

- a. We are just as certain that the Declaration of Independence was signed July 4, 1776, as that a geometric proposition is true, yet the credibility of one is a matter of demonstration, and the other of testimony.
- b. We can be just as sure that cyanide is poisonous as that food is nutritious, yet one is believed upon testimony only, and the other upon sense.

NOTE: We ACT UPON (July 4th celebrations; avoid cyanide) the two matters established only by testimony with the same assurance we do upon those evidenced by demonstration or experience (sense).

REASONS MIRACLES DENIED:

“...For many today, the study of history is incorporated with the ideas that there is no God, miracles are not possible, we live in a closed system, and there is no supernatural. *With these assumptions or presuppositions* they begin their ‘critical, open, and honest’ investigation of history. When they study the life of Christ and read about His miracles or resurrection, they conclude that it was not a miracle or a resurrection because we know (*not historically, but philosophically*) that there is no God, we live in a closed system, miracles are not possible, and there is no supernatural. Therefore, these things cannot be. What men have done is to rule out the resurrection of Christ even before they start an historical investigation of the resurrection.

“*These presuppositions are not so much historical biases but, rather, philosophical prejudices.* Their approach to history rests on the ‘rationalistic presupposition’ that Christ could not have been raised from the dead. *Instead of beginning with the historical data, they preclude them by ‘metaphysical speculation.’*” NETDV, p. xxxvii. (italics mine, srf)

1. **“Miracles are impossible.” Contrary to the laws of nature.**
 - a. It depends on what is meant. If one means the **unalterable laws of nature, this begs the question, for if there be a Supreme Being, the laws of nature can be altered¹⁰**, or used in uncommon and unusual ways, and that with **purpose**. If one means contrary to the **present and ordinary** course of nature, yes, and that, again, with **purpose**, as “signs,” and to accomplish plans that cannot be accomplished with the present and ordinary means. The point is, where is sufficient CAUSE for such an EFFECT? ONCE BELIEVE THERE IS A GOD, AND MIRACLES ARE NOT IMPOSSIBLE!¹¹
 - b. **Jn 3:2! Jn. 9:32-33**
2. **“Contrary to experience.”** (See ****quote of Hume**, p. 30 .)
 - a. To ALL experience? NEVER experienced? “Nobody’s seen miracles.”

But, this ASSUMES the point in question. (Note quote* at end of lesson: “**unalterable experience**”) Have testimony (NT) of those who said they saw them (and willing to suffer for that testimony, some even to death)
 - b. To OWN experience? YOU never saw? “I never saw a miracle.”
 1. Were you there? Only if you were there and in a position to witness all the pertinent factors and did not see such an event take place could you say it was “contrary” to your experience. A miracle is not “contrary” to my experience any more than a volcano is.
 2. Shall we refuse to believe ALL **outside** (not “contrary” to) our OWN experience?...volcano...

earthquake...quintuplets ...comet...etc.?? To do so is to reason like a butterfly, born in the spring, but living only two or three months, and having never experienced trees bare of leaves and fields covered with snow, denying such as an “impossibility” **because he never experienced it!**

- c. To GENERAL or ORDINARY experience of mankind? “Miracles don’t happen today.”
 1. Assumes that if natural course ever varied from, it must be FREQUENT, GENERAL, & CONTINUED
 2. But, this the very PURPOSE of miracles: occur at SPECIAL times, among SPECIAL people, for SPECIAL purposes!

The miracles of the NT not isolated, unrelated incidents of history, but part of the grand scheme of redemption in place since the beginning!
 3. Illustration: Clock (see p. 25, [Clock illustration](#))
 4. **Mt 9:33; Mk 2:12; Lk 5:26; Jn 9:32; 15:24** - Not **designed** to be common to experience!
- d. NOTE **JN 20:29!**

3. No testimony can prove a miracle.

- a. WHY? Reasons #1 & #2 above! (See ****quote of Hume**, p. 30 .) If miracles are **possible**, even **probable** (in view of purpose), human testimony can certainly render their occurrence credible.
- b. If twelve men, common men known of ordinary intelligence and honesty, were to solemnly relate to you the account of a unique and unusual event that took place before their eyes; if the ruling body of the country, hearing a rumor of this were to call these men into its presence, and offer to them that they either recant their story or be tortured; if they refused with one voice to acknowledge any falsehood or collusion; if they began to be executed, pursued, exiled rather than give up the truth of their account; **WOULD WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THEIR ACCOUNT?**

Illus. with far less confirming factors:

Suppose that in 1903 someone witnessed that they had seen a person fly an engine driven, heavier-than-air machine for 120 feet. That was certainly foreign to the general experience of all mankind, yes, even to the “unalterable experience” of mankind to that point, and believed by many, if not nearly everyone, to be impossible. But to reject it would have been to reject not only the possibility of it but the fact of it! (Orvill & Wilbur Wright. Five others witnessed the flight. First flight Dec., 1903.)

- c. Multiply both the witnesses and the miracles testified to and this is what we have in the NT documents.

NOTE: To disbelieve these witnesses is to believe the other alternative, i.e., that all these witnesses, many independent of one another, agree in the same false story. Which is more credible?

- d. **Jn 20:31!**

4. Cannot believe in miracles of NT because afraid they may have been like the fraudulent miracles of today.

Answer:

- a. Apply to other matters, e.g.,
 - Many hypocrites...none sincere?
 - Counterfeit money...none authentic?
 - Real estate scams...buy no property?
- b. There were fraudulent miracle workers DURING THE AGE THE TRUE MIRACLES ARE PROPOSED TO HAVE HAPPENED. Those people had to discern the difference. They could and so can we.
 - **Ex 7:11,22; 8:7** versus **8:18-19**
 - **Ac 8:9-11** versus **6-7,13**

- 2 Th 2:9-10 versus 1 Th 1:5; 5:19-21
- c. Mt 7:21-23!
- 5. **If miracles actually happened, the Jews would have believed in Jesus.**
 - a. Not so. When unable to deny something they could not explain happened, they
 - 1. Attributed it to the power of Satan - Mt 12:22-24
 - 2. Denied the evidence - Jn 9:15-35; 11:47-48...53; 12:9-11; Ac 4:16-17
 - b. Some Jews did believe because of the miracles! Jn 6:68-69; 9:36-38; 11:45; 12:10-11; etc.
Question: *Why did they?* Those who deny these were miracles must explain why these Jews did believe.
 - c. Power, blindness of prejudice
 - 1. Examples of other historical events denied
 - a. Some deny the Holocaust (e.g. Iran's leader) - discredit it as a true historical event?
 - b. Some deny the world is a sphere and there is even a flat earth society... credible?
 - c. Some deny men landed on the moon...did it happen?
 - 2. Jews today cling to Judaism in spite of
 - a. Destruction of the temple
 - b. Fulfilled prophecy about the Messiah and their nation
 - c. Dispersion throughout the earth

TERMS USED: WORKS, SIGNS, WONDERS, POWERS

1. **“Works” (or, “deeds”)**
 - a. Used in reference to miracles performed: Jn 7:21...23b.
(v. 21, “deed” NASB, “work” KJV, NKJV, ASV = *ergon*, same word translated “works” throughout John. While “works” in John does not always refer to miracles, it clearly does in this passage and in others.)
 - b. Distinguished from John the Baptist's testimony - evidence not from what John said about him, but from what he **DID**: Jn 5:36.
 - c. Distinguished from his own WORDS; again an appeal to the evidence of what he **DID**: Jn 10:25,38; 14:11.
 - d. No one else **DID** what he did! Jn 15:24. Irrefutable proof of who he was and his divine mission to rescue THEM from SIN.
2. **“Signs”**
 - a. *sEmeion* - “a sign, mark, indication, token, is used...(c) of miraculous acts (I) as tokens of Divine authority and power...” VN
 - b. E.g., Jn 2:11; 3:2; Mt 16:4; Jn 20:30.
3. **“Wonders”**
 - a. *teras* - “something strange, causing the beholder to marvel” VN
 - b. Used only once in gospels of Christ' miracles, Jn 4:48. Used by Peter, Ac 2:22, in reference to Jesus' miracles. Used several times of apostolic miracles in Acts and epistles.
4. **“Powers”**
 - a. *dunamis* - “is (a) power, ability, physical or moral, as residing in a person or thing; (b) power in action, as, e.g., when put forth in performing miracles...It is sometimes used of the miracle or sign

itself, the effect being put for the cause...” VN

- b. Translated “mighty works” in KJV of Jesus’ miracles. Translate “miracles” in NASB. E.g., **Mt 11:20,21; Mk 6:2.**

“Trench sums up the difference in the several words as follows: ‘In the name wonder, the astonishment, which the work produces upon the beholders...is transferred to the work itself...But the miracle is not a ‘wonder’ only; it is also a sign, a token and indication of the near presence and working of God... Frequently, also the miracles are styled ‘powers’ or ‘mighty works,’ that is, of God. As in the term ‘wonder,’ or ‘miracle,’ the effect is transferred and gives a name to the cause, so here the cause gives its name to the effect.’”²² “Richard Chenevix Trench, *Notes on the Miracles of Our Lord*, pp. 1-5.” TYMB, p. 107

JESUS MIRACLES:

1. Peculiarity: Mt 9:33; Mk 2:12; Lk 5:26; Jn 9:32; 15:24

2. Number:

- a. About 35 separately recorded in 3+ yrs. = aver. of about 1 per month! (See chart at end of lesson.)
b. **Many others: Jn 20:30; 21:25; 7:31; 11:47**

3. Variety:

- a. **In kind:** water to wine (**Jn 2**); feeding 1000s without preparation or adequate provision (twice - **Mt 14:15-21; 15:32-38**); walk on sea (**Mt 14:23**); calm stormy sea (twice - **Mt 8:26; 14:32,33**); raise dead (three instances: widow’s son at Nain, **Lk 7:11-17**; Jairus’ daughter, **Lk 8:49-55**; Lazarus, **Jn 11**); blind see (**Mt 9:27-31; 12:22; 15:30; 21:14; Mk 8:22-26; 10:46-52; Jn 9**); deaf hear, mute speak (**Mt 12:22; 15:31; Mk 7:31-37**); lame walk (**Mt 15:30; Mk 2; Jn 5**); restore severed ear (**Lk 22:49-51**); hemorrhage stopped (**Mt 9:20-22**); fever removed (**Mt 8:14-15**); lepers cleansed (**Mt 8:2-3; Lk 17:11-19**); cast out demons (**Mt 8:28-34; ; 12:22-24; 15:21-28; 17:14-21; Lk 8:2**)
- b. **In place:** Jerusalem (**Jn 5**); Cana in Galilee (**Jn 2**); Nain in Galilee (**Lk 7:11f**); scarcely populated places (**Mt 14:13f; Lk 9:10-12f**); on the sea (**Lk 5:1f; Mt 14:25**); Bethany (**Jn 11**); Capernaum (**Mt 8:5f**); country of the Gadarenes/Gerasenes opposite Galilee (**Mt 8:28f; Lk 8:26f**); cities and villages (**Mt 9:35**); in gardens (**Lk 22:47f** - restore ear); in houses (**Mt 8:14**); in synagogues (**Mt 12:9f**)
- c. **In means:** spoke it done (**Mk 2:11,12**); clay spittle and water (**Jn 9:6.7**); touching his clothes (**Mt 9:20-22**); natural means (**Lk 5:1f**); touch hand (**Mt 8:15**); touching the coffin, or bier (**Lk 7:14**); fingers in ears, spit, touch tongue with saliva (**Mk 7:33**); using a hook and fishing (**Mt 17:27** - coin in fish’s mouth); lay hands on (**Lk 13:13**)
- d. **In circumstances:** by intention and plan (**Jn 11**); by incidence (**Mk 5:25-34** - woman with hemorrhage); in private (the child, the parents, Peter, James, and John, **Mk 5:40; Lk 8:51**); in public, including common people and scribes, **Mk 2:2; Mt 12:22,23**); before his disciples (**Mt 15:14f,22f**); before his enemies (**Mt 12:9-14**)

I.e., not restricted to a particular kind, place, means, or circumstance as might be required by a fraud.

4. Universality:

- a. Over **natural** world - **Mk 4:35-41**
b. Over **spiritual** world (spiritual beings) - **Mk 1:21-28**
c. Over **world of humanity**, both as to his physical and spiritual condition

1. Over disease - **Mk 1:40-45**

Note: Not all illnesses result of demon-possession. **Mt 4:24; Mt 10:1,8; Mk 16:17-18**

He made eyes to see (**Jn 9**), tongue to talk (**Mt 12:22**), ears to hear (**Mk 7:31f**); feet strong (**Jn 5:1-9**); return withered hands to normal (**Mt 9-13**); flesh cleansed (**Lk 17:12-15**); fever

leave (**Mt 8:15**); blood flow stopped (**Mt 9:20-22**); mind restored (**Mk 5:1-20**); body raised (**Jn 11**)

2. Over death - **Jn 11**
3. Over sin - **Mk 2:1-12**

5. Truly, “the works which no one else did”! Jn 15:24

His miracles proved him to be master of the “laws of nature” (**Mk 4:35ff**), all created beings (**Mk 1:21ff**), material things (**Jn 2:1ff**), the human body (**Mk 1:40ff**), life itself (**Jn 11**). He demonstrated that space and distance (**Jn 4:46ff**), time (**5:1ff**, 38 yrs), quantity (**Jn 6:1ff**) or precedent (**Jn 9**) were no obstacles to him.

6. Other noteworthy facets of Jesus’ miracles:

- a. No effort by Jesus or his disciples to prove a miracle had happened. They were allowed to stand or fall on their own merit.
- b. Not encourage healed to publicize. **Mt 8:4; 9:30; 12:15-19; Mk 5:43**
- c. Instantaneous healing. **Mt 8:3,13,15; 9:22**. (See however, **Mk 8:22-26**.)
- d. No failures.
- e. No contributions.
- f. Faith not always required. **Jn 5:2-13**

TESTIMONY TO

1. Nicodemus, **Jn 3:2**
2. Pharisees, **Jn 10:21; 11:47**
3. People, **Mt 13:54; Mk 1:27; 6:14; 7:37; Lk 5:26; 7:16; Jn 2:10; 4:29; 6:14; 6:28-30; 7:31; 9:20-21; 12:17**
4. Disciples, **Mt 8:27; 14:33** (See Acts)
5. Luke, a physician, “having investigated everything carefully” **1:3**
6. Matthew, a tax-collector, well accustomed to fraud, deceit, lying
7. The healed! **Mt 9:31; Mk 1:45; 5:20; Lk 17:15-16; Jn 5:11; 9:15,25**

Never did ONE later deny the fact of the miracle!

JOHN 9: A MIRACLE EXAMINED

1. Testimony of those who were there:

- a. Neighbors - vv **8-10**
- b. Parents - vv **20-21**

Note: No one could have known better whether the man was blind, and no one would have more disappointed other than the man himself had there been fraud.

- c. The Jewish leaders - vv **16,18,24,26; 10:21**

Note: No one ever wanted more to prove Jesus a fraud than these men. And they had the power to perform whatever investigations they deemed necessary, and even to exert pressure by excommunication upon those who they felt were lying.

- d. The man himself - vv **10-11,15,17,25,27,30-33,38**

Note: the man told the **same** story every time, to **different** parties, at **different** times, under **threat of persecution**, under **examination and cross-examination**. Also observe he was a man of clear logic (vv 30-33) and simply honesty (vv 12,17,25,27,36).

2. Possible means of deception

a. The “blind” man an accomplice.

But if so, and attempting to bring fame or wealth to Jesus, he was a poor accomplice, for when asked, “Where is he?” he said, “I do not know”! (v 12). Moreover, if he was an accomplice and had any previous connections with Jesus, neither his closest companions (v 2), nor the man’s parents, nor his enemies (see pt #1) aware of it. The parents were afraid in confessing a miracle had indeed took place and the Jews sought every reason to expose it, thus both would have had motivation to expose a conspiracy between the man and Jesus.

b. A delusion. He not really made to see.

But, again see the testimony, and by whom.

c. Others?

3. Note: Jesus said only the “blind” could not see the implications! v 39

JN 11: A MIRACLE UNCHALLENGED

1. Lazarus well known. Not an unknown accomplice. 11:1,2,31; 12:9-11.

2. Dead, bound hand and feet, face wrapped with a cloth, in tomb four days. (vv. 17,39,44)

Note: How able to “come forth” if “bound hand and foot”? Does not say feet are bound **together**. Feet separately wrapped would meet demands of the text. (Freeman, M&CB, p. 437; Pulpit). Another possibility is that the wrappings were loose enough to allow some maneuverability. (Meyer). Note also, it is not said that he walked out. Could his coming forth be part of the miracle? “A ‘napkin’ [“cloth,” NASB, NKJV] is also mentioned in connection with the burial of Lazarus...This was a handkerchief which was employed to tie up the chin.” Freeman, p. 437. However, “It is not known whether the whole face was covered in this manner, or only the forehead. In the Egyptian mummies it is only the forehead that is thus bound.” Barnes Notes.

3. Done publicly. vv. 31...38,45; 12:17.

4. Testimony of his enemies: v 47; 12:19. See also 12:9-11.

5. Upon examination, others believe. Jn 12:9-11, 12...17-18.

NOTE: No evidence the Pharisees examined this as they did in the case of the man born blind. WHY? Surely, if there was any chance of fraud or even manufacturing a story to take the glory away from Jesus, they would have been favorable to it (compare Jn 9:24; Mt 28:12-15). The resurrection of Lazarus WAS NOT CHALLENGED!

DENIAL OF MIRACLES BY EARLY UNBELIEVERS?

1. Pharisees

a. By power of the Devil, Mt 12:24

b. Deny Jesus responsible. “Give glory to GOD.; we know this man is a sinner...What did HE do...? How did HE open your eyes?” Jn 9:24-26.

2. “The first heathen writers against Christianity did not dare to deny Christ’s miracles. Neither Celsus, Porphyry, Hierocles, nor Julian, pretend that these facts were entirely false, for they attempted to account for them. The Jewish rabbis, in the Talmud, acknowledge these miracles, and pretend that they were wrought by magic, or by the power of the venerable name of JEHOVAH, called *tetragrammaton*, which they ridiculously pretended that Jesus stole out of the temple, and by which they say he performed his wonderful works.” AEOC, pp. 116-117.

3. “Why was it more than one hundred years before anyone attempted a refutation of the miracles as

evidence of the deity of Christ?" TPOF, p. 77

4. Quadratus, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and Origen, early writers in defense of Christianity, appealed to miracles as evidence. The objectors of their day attempted to discredit them on the claims that they were either "illusory appearances," "magic," "tricks of demons." See PEOC, pp. 363-366.
Celsus - "Platonist philosopher of 2d century A.D.; author of first notable attack on Christianity, in his True Word or True Account, answered by Origen...in his Contra Celsum." WBD

Porphyry (POR fi ri) - "232?-?304. Greek scholar and Neoplatonic philosopher...vigorously defended paganism and opposed Christianity..." WBD

Hierocles (hi ER o klez) - "Greek Neoplatonic philosopher of Alexandria in 5th century A.D." WBD

Julian (JOOL yan) - "331-363...Persistent enemy of Christianity..." WBD

Quadratus - "Quadratus lived about seventy years after the ascension, and presented his apology to the emperor Adrian." PEOC, p. 363.

Justin Martyr - 100?-?165, WBD

Tertullian - 160?-?230, WBD

Origen - 185?-?254, WBD

Talmud - "TALMUD is a collection of Jewish religious and civil laws, together with scholarly interpretations of their meaning. It ranks second to the Bible as the most sacred and influential written work of the Jewish religion..."

"The Talmud consists of two parts, the *Mishna* and the *Gemara*. The Mishnah is the written version of traditional Jewish law. Short passages of the Mishnah are followed by extremely thorough explanations, which make up the Gemara..."

"According to Jewish tradition, the Mishnah originated in the time of Moses during the 1200's B.C. and was memorized and handed down from generation to generation. Its contents were collected and written down from about A.D. 70 to 200. The Gemara, which has two versions, was written between about 200 and 500." Jacob Neusner. "Talmud." *The World Book Encyclopedia*. 1980 ed.

AEOC = *Alexander's Evidences of Christianity*, Archibald Alexander, Prof. of Theological Seminary at Princeton. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work, 1836.

IBTR = *Is the Bible True...Really?* Dave Sterrett and Josh McDowell (Moody Publishers, 2011)

M&CB = *Manners and Customs of the Bible*, James M. Freeman. Plainfield, N.J.: Logos International, 1972.

NETDV = *New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, Josh McDowell (1999)

PEOC = *Paley's Evidences of Christianity*, William Paley, M.A., with Annotations by Richard Whately. Murfreesboro, Tenn.: Dehoff Publications, 1952.

TPOF = *The Posture of Faith*, Gordon Wilson. Lufkin: Gospel Guardian Foundation, 1964.

TYMB = *That You May Believe*, Homer Hailey. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1973.

VN = *Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, W. E. Vine

WBD = *Webster's Biographical Dictionary*. Springfield, Mass.: G&C Merriam Co., 1974.

W.NWD = *Webster's New World Dictionary*, Third College Edition (Zane Pub., 1992-1995)

W.SNCD = *Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary*, 1970 ed.

CLOCK ILLUSTRATION:

“Suppose, for instance, a clock so constructed as to strike only at the hour of noon. A child might suppose, from an observation of several hours, that it was the nature of that clock to move silently; and when he heard it strike, he might account this a departure from its nature: though it would be, in fact, as much a part of the maker’s original design, as any of the movements; his design having been to announce the hour of noon, and no other.

‘But a similar misapprehension of the nature of the machine would be much more likely to prevail, if a clock could be so constructed as to strike only at the end of a year; or at the end of a century; supposing the maker to have kept his design from being generally known. If, at the end of the year, he dispatched, with a message from himself, certain messengers to whom he had made known the construction of the clock, and whom he had authorized to announce the striking, as an attestation of their coming from him, this would be a decisive proof of the genuineness of their message.

‘Now this may serve as an illustration of the view which an intelligent believer may fairly take of miraculous evidence: namely, that the Christian miracles are not properly speaking - ‘violations of the Laws of Nature,’ but departures from the present ordinary course of Nature, in conformity with an arrangement originally so made as to let these be signs evidencing a divine mission.’” PEOC, p. 19.

****Quote - David Hume:** The following is from the pen of David Hume, an unbeliever. He was a skeptic philosopher of the eighteenth century. This quote is referred to on p. 3.

***“Our belief of any fact from the testimony of eyewitnesses is derived from no other principle than our experience of the veracity of human testimony. If the fact attested be miraculous, there arises a contest of two opposite experiences, or proof against proof. Now a miracle **is a violation of the laws of nature**; and as a firm and **unalterable experience** has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as complete as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined; and if so, it is an undeniable consequence that it cannot be surmounted by any proof whatever, derived from human testimony....

‘What have we to oppose to such a cloud of witnesses, but the **absolute impossibility** or miraculous nature of the event?’” David Hume, *M’Ilvaine’s Review of Hume on Miracles*, pp. 12,21. (emp. mine, srf.)

MIRACLES OF CHRIST

1. Water turned to wine — **John 2:6–10**
2. Nobleman’s son healed — **John 4:46–53**
3. Centurion’s servant healed — **Matthew 9:5–13**
4. Draughts of fish — **Luke 5:4–6; John 21:6**
5. Devils cast out — **Matthew 8:28–32; 9:32,33; 15:22–28; 17:14–18; Mark 1:23–27**
6. Peter’s wife’s mother healed — **Matthew 8:14,15**
7. Lepers cleansed — **Matthew 8:3; Luke 17:14**
8. Paralytic healed — **Mark 2:3–12**
9. Withered hand restored — **Matthew 12:10–13**
10. Impotent man healed — **John 5:5–9**
11. The dead raised to life — **Matthew 9:18; 19:23–25; Luke 7:12–15; John 11:11–44**
12. Issue of blood stopped — **Matthew 9:20–22**
13. The blind restored to sight — **Matthew 9:27–30; Mark 8:22–25; John 9:1–7**
14. The deaf and dumb cured — **Mark 7:32–35**
15. The multitude fed — **Matthew 14:15–21; 15:32–38**
16. His walking on the sea — **Matthew 14:25–27**

17. Peter walking on the sea — **Matthew 14:29**
18. Tempest stilled — **Matthew 8:23–26; 14:32**
19. Sudden arrival of the ship — **John 6:21**
20. Tribute money — **Matthew 17:27**
21. Woman healed of infirmity — **Luke 13:11–13**
22. Dropsy cured — **Luke 14:2–4**
23. Fig tree blighted — **Matthew 21:19**
24. Malchus healed — **Luke 22:50,51**
25. Performed before the messengers of John — **Luke 7:21,22**
26. Many and divers diseases healed — **Matthew 4:23,24; 14:14; 15:30; Mark 1:34; Luke 6:17–19**
27. His transfiguration — **Matthew 17:1–8**
28. His resurrection — **Luke 24:6; John 10:18**
29. His appearance to his disciples, the doors being shut — **John 20:19**
30. His ascension — **Acts 1:9**

- *Torrey's New Topical Textbook* by R. A. Torrey

REVIEW

1. What is a “miracle” as the Bible uses the term?
2. What is the purpose of miracles?
3. What kind of evidence do we have that Christ performed miracles?
4. If miracles are not denied because of lack of historical evidence, why are they denied?
5. Some say miracles are impossible. This is not so if what is true?
6. Illustrate with a clock that miracles might be expected to be contrary to *common* experience.
7. Explain why the existence of fraudulent miracles then and now do not invalidate the fact and value of true miracles.
8. What are some other terms used to refer to miracles in the New Testament.
9. About how many miracles by Jesus are separately and specifically recorded in the gospels?
10. List several things Jesus’ miracles demonstrated He had power over.
11. The gospels record one particular miracle that was examined thoroughly by those who did not believe in Jesus as the Son of God. Which one was it and where is it found?
12. Another particular and remarkable miracle is recorded that the gospel writer noted was unchallenged. What is it and where is it found.

¹⁰ Men use laws of nature to accomplish what might ordinarily seem impossible. E.g., while the law of gravity says that which is heavier than air must fall to the earth, man has learned to use the laws of nature to cause an airplane, weighing tons, to fly! This would have been deemed “impossible” by those in the 19th century!

¹¹See IBTR, chapter 10, Anti-Supernaturalism, for discussion of the possibility of miracles.

PROPHECY

OBJ: Examine the evidence prophecy provides for the credibility of the gospel of Christ.

- **Jn 1:45** (Recognized by the Jews that their Scriptures foretold a coming one. Moses - 1500 years earlier); **5:39** (“Scriptures” “bear witness”), **45-46**; **Lk 24:25-27,44-47** (“slow of heart” for NOT seeing fulfillment in Jesus!)
- Apologetic value: **Ac 17:2-3**; **28:23 2:24-32** (To Jews)

Value of prophecy depends on:

- Being delivered **prior** to the event.
- **Corresponding precisely** with the event, and not in such vague and general language as can be applied to anyone under most any circumstances, “as the predictions in the vulgar Almanacs; that ‘a certain great personage is likely to have cause for uneasiness,’ &c.” PEOC, p. 217
- Being **beyond mere human ability to predict**, as eclipses, etc.
- Being **such that it does not cause its own fulfillment**, as by suggesting to the party involved the doing of the thing predicted. The Lord might have manufactured “fulfillment” by riding into Jer. on a colt, but not those predictions depending on things beyond his control.

NOTE: Prophecies of the Messiah were not clear as to their precise meaning to those who made them. However, after he came, and made the claim that he fulfilled them, it allowed the inquirer to examine him in the light of them and see whether the prophecies, and his interpretation of them, were consistent with his life and character. **1 Pt 1:10-12**; **Ac 2:23-31**; **17:2-3**. Jesus made those claims, and challenged his opponents to investigate them. **Jn 5:37- 39,45-47**.

Septuagint (LXX) “completed in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus (285-246 B.C.)” ETDV, p. 150. Thus, AT LEAST 250 years between the prophecies and fulfillment. Internal evidence indicates last prophet prophesied c. 400-450 B.C. Others, such as Isaiah, based on the internal evidence of the book (Is 1:1) and **2 Kings 19:2**, prophesied many years earlier (Isaiah, c. 700 BC); Moses, c. 1500 BC!

Note further that the evidence comes from books IN THE CUSTODY OF ADVERSARIES of Jesus! (Jews, **Rom 3:2**).

NOTE: If the prophecies are indeed fulfilled in Jesus, it not only proves him to be the Messiah, but the prophets to be men of God! Jesus held this view of the OT, i.e., that it was the Word of God: **Jn 5:37-39**; **10:34-35**.

PROPHECIES & PROBABILITY

- a. Over 300?...! Many he would have no control over.
 - b. Examples: (These the eight used by Stoner—see below)
 - c. Where born - Mic. 5:2...Mt. 2:5,6 (Micah, c. 700 B.C.)
 - d. Forerunner - Mal 3:1, 4:5,6... Mt. 11:10-11; Lk 1:17 (Malachi, c. 425 B.C.)
 - e. Enter Jer. as a king riding on a donkey - Zech 9:9...Mt 21:4,5 (Zechariah, c. 500 B.C.)
 - f. Betrayed by a friend - Ps 41:9...Jn 13:18 (David, c. 1000 B.C.)
(Stoner uses Zech 13:6 - betrayed by a friend resulting in being wounded in his hands, p. 103. But this verse is not quoted in NT as Messianic and it is doubtful whether it is.)
 - g. Betrayed for thirty pieces of silver - Zech 11:12...Mt 27:9
 - h. This betrayal money returned, refused, thrown down in the house of the Lord, and later used to buy a potter’s field - Zech 11:13...Mt 27:10.
 - i. Silent before accusers - Isa 53:7. (Isaiah, c. 700 B.C.)
Four times he silent: Once in 2nd stage of Jewish trial, Mk 14:61; all three stages of Roman trial, Mt 27:12-14; Lk 23:9-10; Jn 19:9-10.
 - j. Crucified - Ps 22:16...Jn 20:25
13. Illustrate with book about John F. Kennedy:

- a. Came from large family
- b. Father US ambassador to England
- c. Oldest brother killed in WW II
- d. Pilot P.T. boat in U.S. Navy
- e. Senator from Massachusetts
- f. First Catholic president
- g. Assassinated in Dallas
- h. Wife named Jacqueline

Furthermore, suppose that it could be proved the book was printed in 1700 and designed to identify a man yet to be born! Multiply the years between the prophecy and fulfillment from 300 years to as much as 1500, the authors from one to over 30, and the prophecies from 8 to over 300, AND THIS IS WHAT WE HAVE IN THE MESSIANIC PROPHECIES!

What is the mathematical probability that one man the world over would fulfill all eight prophecies from the day they were made down to the present time? The quotes that follow are taken from *Science Speaks* by Peter Stoner. An introduction to Mr. Stoner and his mathematical qualifications are given below and then the quotes from his book follow.

From Title Page:

Peter W. Stoner: Chairman of the Departments of Mathematics and Astronomy at Pasadena College until 1953; Chairman of the Science Division, Westmont College, 1953-1957; now Professor Emeritus of Science, Westmont College."

Science Speaks, p. 4, "Foreword":

The manuscript for *Science Speaks* has been carefully reviewed by a committee of the American Scientific Affiliation members and by the Executive Council of the same group and has been found, in general, to be dependable and accurate in regard to the scientific material presented. The mathematical analysis included is based upon principles of probability which are thoroughly sound and Professor Stoner has applied these principles in a proper and convincing way.

American Scientific Affiliation
H. Harold Hartzler, Ph.D.,
Secretary-Treasurer
Goshen College, Ind.

If these estimates [estimates on the probability of each of the individual eight prophecies considered, srf] are considered fair, one man in how many men, the world over, will fulfill all eight prophecies? This question can be answered by applying our principles of probability. In other words, by multiplying all of our estimates together, or 1 in $2.8 \times 10^5 \times 10^3 \times 10^2 \times 10^3 \times 10^3 \times 10^5 \times 10^3 \times 10^4$. This gives 1 in 2.8×10^{28} , where 28 means that we have 28 ciphers following the 2.8. Let us simplify and reduce the number by calling it 1 in 1028. Written out this number is 1 in 10,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000.

This is the answer to the question: One man in how many men has fulfilled these eight prophecies? But we are really concerned with the answer to the question: What is the chance that any man might have lived from the day of these prophecies down to the present time and have fulfilled all of the eight prophecies? We can answer this question by dividing our 1028 by the total number of people who have lived since the time of these prophecies. The best information available indicates the number to be about 88 billion or 8.8×10^{10} . To simplify the computation let us call the number 1011. By dividing these two numbers we find that the chance that any man might have lived, down to the present time, and fulfilled all eight prophecies is 1 in 1017.

Let us try to visualize this chance. If you mark one of ten tickets, and place all of the tickets in a hat, and thoroughly stir them, and then ask a blindfolded man to draw one, his chance of getting the right ticket is 1 in 10. Suppose that we take 1017 silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They will cover all of the state 2 feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver

dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would have had of writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man, from their day to the present time, providing they wrote them in their own wisdom.

Now these prophecies were either given by inspiration of God or the prophets just wrote them as they thought they should be. In such a case the prophets had just one chance in 1017 of having them come true in any man, but they all came true in Christ.

This means that the fulfillment of these eight prophecies alone proves that God inspired the writing of those prophecies to a definiteness which lacks only one chance in 1017 of being absolute.

Sometimes we weigh our chances in the business world, and say if an investment has nine chances in ten of being profitable, and only one chance in ten of being a failure, it is safe enough for us to make the investment. Whoever heard of an investment that had only one chance in 1017 of failure? The business world has no conception of such an investment. Yet we are offered this investment by God. By the acceptance of Jesus Christ as our Savior we know, from only these eight prophecies which lack only 1 chance in 1017 of being an absolute proof, that that investment will yield the wonderful dividend of eternal life with Christ. Can anyone be so unreasonable as to reject Jesus Christ and pin his hope of eternal life on such a slim chance as finding the right silver dollar among this great mass, covering the whole state of Texas 2 feet deep? It does not seem possible, yet every man who rejects Christ is doing just that.

More than 300 prophecies, from the Old Testament, which deal with the first advent of Christ, have been listed. Every one of them was completely fulfilled by Jesus Christ. Let us see what happens when we take more than eight prophecies.

Suppose we add eight more prophecies to our list, and assume that their chance of fulfillment is the same as the eight just considered. The chance that one man would fulfill all sixteen is 1 in 1028×1017 or 1 in 1045.

Let us try to visualize this as we did before. Take this number of silver dollars. If you make these into a solid ball, you will have a great sphere with a center at the earth, and extending in all directions more than 30 times as far as from the earth to the sun. (If a train had started from the earth at the time the Declaration of Independence was signed, and had traveled steadily toward the sun at the rate of 60 miles per hour, day and night, it would be about reaching its destination today. But remember that our ball of silver dollars extends 30 times that far in all directions.) If you can imagine the marking of one silver dollar, and then thoroughly stirring it into this great ball, and blindfolding a man and telling him to pick out one dollar, and expect it to be the marked one, you have somewhat of a picture of how absolutely the fulfillment of sixteen prophecies referring to Jesus Christ prove both that He is the Son of God and that our Bible is inspired. Certainly God directed the writing of His Word.

In order to extend this consideration beyond all bounds of human comprehension, let us consider forty-eight prophecies, similar in their human chance of fulfillment to the eight which we originally considered. Using the same principle of probability which we have used so far, we find the chance that any one man fulfilled all forty-eight prophecies to be 1 in 10157.

This is really a large number and it represents an extremely small chance. Let us try to visualize it. The silver dollar, which we have been using, is entirely too large. We must select a smaller object. The electron is about as small an object as we know of. It is so small that it will take 2.5×10^{15} of them laid side by side to make a line, single file, one inch long. If we were going to count the electrons in this line, one inch long, and counted 250 each minute, and if we counted day and night, it would take us 19,000,000 years to count just the one-inch line of electrons. If we had a cubic inch of these electrons and we tried to count them it would take us, counting steadily 250 each minute, $19,000,000 \times 19,000,000 \times 19,000,000$ years or 6.9×10^{21} years.

With this introduction, let us go back to our chance of 1 in 10157. Let us suppose that we are taking this number of electrons, marking one, and thoroughly stirring it into the whole mass, then blindfolding a man and letting him try to find the right one. What chance has he of finding the right one? What kind of a pile will this number of electrons make? They make an inconceivable large volume.

...

No man could in any way look over this mass of electrons, blindfolded or not blindfolded, and pick out any one electron, let alone the one that had been marked. (The electron, in fact, is so small that it cannot be seen with a powerful microscope.)

To the extent, then, that we know this blindfolded man cannot pick out the marked electron, we know that the Bible is inspired. This is not merely evidence. It is proof of the Bible's inspiration by God—proof so definite that the universe is not large enough to hold the evidence.

Some will say that our estimates of the probability of the fulfillment of these prophecies are too large and the numbers should be reduced. Ask a man to submit his own estimates, and if they are smaller than these we have used, we shall add a few more prophecies to be evaluated and this same number will be reestablished or perhaps exceeded.

Our Bible students claim that there are more than 300 prophecies dealing with Christ's first advent. If this number is correct, and it no doubt is, you could set your estimates ridiculously low on the whole 300 prophecies and still obtain tremendous evidence of inspiration.

For example you may place all of your estimates at 1 in 4. You may say that 1 man in 4 has been born in Bethlehem; that 1 of these children in 4 was taken to Egypt, to avoid slaughter; that 1 in 4 of these came back and made his home in Nazareth; that 1 in 4 of these was a carpenter; that 1 in 4 of these was betrayed for 30 pieces of silver; that 1 in 4 of these has been crucified on a cross; that 1 in 4 were then buried in a rich man's tomb; yes, even that 1 in 4 rises from the dead on the third day; and so on for all of the 300 prophecies and from them I will build a number much larger than the one we obtained from the 48 prophecies.

Any man who rejects Christ as the Son of God is rejecting a fact proved perhaps more absolutely than any other fact in the world.

Stoner, Peter W., M.S. *Science Speaks*. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1963), pp. 105-112.

EXAMPLES OF PROPHECIES

Prophecy of the Messiah took the form of:

1. Direct Statements
2. Typical persons
3. Typical events
4. Typical institutions

I. DIRECT STATEMENTS

A. Lineage

1. Abraham - **Gen 22:18...Mt 1:1**
2. Isaac - **Gen 21:12...Lk 3:23,34**. Note: descendants of Ishmael eliminated.
3. Jacob - **Gen 28:14...Lk 3:23,34**. Note: eliminates Esau and his descendants.
4. Tribe of Judah - **Gen 49:10...Lk 3:33, Heb 7:14**. Eliminates 11 other tribes.
5. Jesse - **Isa 11:1...Lk 3:23,32**. Note **Num 1:26,27** - how many eliminated. Story of Ruth.
6. David - **2 Sam 7:12ff...Mt 1:1**
See importance of genealogies!

B. Birth

1. Place: Bethlehem - **Micah 5:2...Mt 2:4-6**
2. Time:
 1. After 400 BC - **Mal 4:4-6**
 2. Before end of Roman empire - **Dan 2:44**. Divided 395 AD. Overrun in 400's.
 3. Before destruction of Jerusalem - **Dan 9:24-27**. AD 70.

C. Ministry

1. Forerunner - **Mal 3:1, 4:5,6...Lk 1:17**
2. Rejected by own people - **Isa 53:1-3...Jn 1:11**
3. Enter Jerusalem on a donkey - **Zech 9:9...Mt 21:4,5**

D. Death

1. Oppressive, unjust judgment led to death - Isa 53:7-8. Unlawful arrest, false witnesses, self-indictment, four times declared innocent!
2. Silent before accusers - Isa 53:7.
Four times he silent: Once in 2nd stage of Jewish trial, Mk 14:61; all three stages of Roman trial, **Mt 27:12-14; Lk 23:9-10; Jn 19:9-10.**
3. Death as a criminal - **Isa 53:9a,12...Lk 22:37; Mt 26:65; Lk 23:32**
4. Grave with rich - **Isa 53:9 ...Mt 27:57-60**
Whereas the Jews intended for Jesus to have a dishonorable burial, he had an honorable one.
5. Cast lots for garments - **Ps 22:18...Jn 19:24**
6. Pierced hands & feet - **Ps 22:16...Jn 20:25.**
7. Cries on cross - **Ps 22:1...Mt 27:46**
8. Mockery & insults - **Ps 22:7,8...Mt 27:39-43**
9. RAISED FROM DEAD! **Ps 16:7-11...Ac 2:25-31.**

E. Etc., etc.!

“Floyd Hamilton in *The Basis of the Christian Faith*...says that: ‘Canon Liddon is authority for the statement that there are in the Old Testament 332 distinct predictions which were literally fulfilled in Christ.’ ETDV, p. 181.

II. TYPICAL PERSONS

A. Melchizedek - Heb 5:6

B. Isaac - Heb 11:19

C. Hagar, Sarah - Gal 4:21-24

D. Moses - Ac 3:22-23

E. David - Lk 1:32-33

F. Solomon, Jonah, Cyrus, Joshua the high priest, Zerubbabel....

III. TYPICAL EVENTS

A. Bread from heaven - Jn 6:32-35

B. Serpent in wilderness - Jn 3:14-15

C. Bondage, wilderness, rest - Heb 3-4.

*** NOTE: Typical persons and events explain the use of prophecies which had first application in the lives of the writers, or persons spoken of.

IV. TYPICAL INSTITUTIONS

A. Priesthood - Heb 9:8-11

B. Passover - 1 Co 5:7; Lk 22:15,16

Note Ex 12:46...Jn 19:36, no bones broken.

C. Sacrifices - Heb 10:1.

ISAIAH 53:

1. Written c. 700 BC (**1:1, 2 Ki 19:2**)

Infidels attempt to date Isaiah much later. But,

- Without evidence. Only their prejudice against prophecy is the ground of objection.
- Can't be later than 250 BC when Septuagint was translated, and even then would be a remarkable prophecy of Jesus.

2. In the custody of the ADVERSARIES of Jesus, i.e., the Jews (**Rom 3:2**).

3. Declaredly prophetic, i.e., written professing to describe future events.

NOTE: Past tense used throughout. Gesenius (See Barnes notes) argues it refers to past events.

But:

- Not ALL is past tense, **52:13; 53:11-12**.
- Nature of prophecy. Prophets were said to "see" what they wrote, e.g., **Isa 1:1, 2:1**, etc. Also called "seers." Thus, they write as though the events passing before their eyes. Cmpr **Isa 9:2,6** (KJV,ASV) **Isa 42:1, 45:1ff**

4. Evidence ancient Rabbins of Jews interpreted it of their Messiah (see Barnes notes on Isa 52:13ff), but their modern expositors try to make it refer to the nation of Israel. PEOC, pp. 210-211. Several problems with making it the nation:

- a. **For whom** is the nation suffering in behalf of? **vv 4-6**
- b. He suffered **innocently**.
- c. When oppressed, "**he did not open his mouth,**" does not fit the history of the Jewish nation. **v 7**
- d. **Death** came to him, **vv 8-9**. The Jewish nation?
- e. A voluntary sacrifice for the transgressions of others, **vv 10- 12**.
- f. These and other particulars of the prophecy forbid its application to Isaiah, another prophet, or some other man.

5. Applied by NT prophets to Jesus. **Ac 8:30-35**

- a. If it is indeed a prophecy of the Jesus as the Messiah:
- b. It proves prophets could foretell the future by the power of God, specifically Isaiah.

- c. It shows the Messiah was to be a suffering Messiah. This is why the Jews stumbled over him and the Greeks thought him foolish.
 - d. It substantiates the claims of Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God.
 - e. It teaches that only thru his sacrificial death can men have their sins forgiven.
 - f. It shows the blindness and sin of the Jews in rejecting him.
 - g. It declares the love and mercy of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit.
6. Specific elements of the prophecy:
- a. Exalted - **52:13**. Indeed, above Abraham, Moses, Elijah!
 - b. Appearance marred - **52:14**. Beaten, spit upon, scourged, crown of thorns.
 - c. That he would cleanse many nations a matter of astonishment - 52:15. Pilate, Agrippa, could not comprehend it.
 - d. That he would be rejected - **53:1**. That his own people rejected him does not discredit him (as infidels might argue), but inadvertently concurs with his being the Messiah of prophecy!
 - e. Humble origin and appearance - **53:2**. Born of a despised and downtrodden nation, of a peasant family, brought up in a disreputable village, untrained in rabbinical schools, no pretence to military or political honors, powers, or fame, common physical features, and a lowly approach in his ministry.
 - f. Not only rejected, but despised - **53:3**. See bitter opposition of Jewish leaders, culminating in the cross.
 - g. Vicarious suffering - **53:4-6**.
 - h. His death viewed as a judgment of God - **53:4b**.
 - i. Sorrowful and painful ministry - **53:4-5**.
 - j. A propitiatory death - **53:5b**, "The chastisement of our well-being ("peace" KJV)...we are healed"
 - k. Not argue his defense - **53:7**. Once in the 2nd stage of the Jewish trial and in all three stages of the Roman trial: **Mk 14:61; Mt 27:12-14; Lk 23:9-10; Jn 19:9-10**.
 - l. Unfair trial, oppressed - **53:8**. Four times declared "innocent"! (Three times stated, once implied)
 - m. Grave with wicked - **53:9**. Jews intended he die as criminal. crucified between two robbers. Note also **v 12**. Remarkably, tho...
 - n. With rich man in his death - **53:9**. Joseph's tomb.
 - o. Innocent - **53:9**.
 - p. His suffering according to God's plan - **53:10**.
 - q. He would live to carry out the will of God benefiting his seed - **53:10**. He was raised to sit on David's throne and redeem those who believe in him and have life because of him (his "seed").
 - r. His death a victory - **53:12**.

ETDV = *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*. Josh McDowell. (Campus Crusade for Christ, 1972.)

PEOC = *Paley's Evidences of Christianity*. William Paley, with annotations by Richard Whately. (Murfreesboro, Tenn.: Dehoff Publications, 1952)

REVIEW

1. What factors must prophecy possess to make it valuable?
2. The Old Testament prophecies of the Christ predated Jesus by *at least* how many years?
3. What is the mathematical probability that eight selected prophecies be fulfilled in one man?
4. There are over _____ Old Testament prophecies concerning Christ.
5. Prophecies took different forms. Give four examples.
6. What is the great Messianic chapter in the Old Testament prophesying the Messiah (the one the Ethiopian was reading from)?

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

OBJ: Examine the evidence to the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

WHAT THE RESURRECTION MEANS TO US

1. Jesus is the Son of God! **Ro 1:4**
2. Our hope is alive! **1 Pt 1:3-4**
1. Baptism has meaning! **Ro 6:4,5**
2. Certainty of judgment! **Ac 17:30-31**
3. If NOT, (**1 Cor 15:14-19**)
 - a. The witnesses are false witnesses
 - b. The NT is a fraud
 - a. Our faith is vain
 - b. We are still in our sins
 - c. Never see faithful loved ones again.
 - d. No hope. Most miserable of men.

EVIDENCES FOR THE RESURRECTION:

1. THE EMPTY TOMB
2. EYEWITNESSES
3. COLLATERAL PROOFS

I. THE EMPTY TOMB

A. *The empty tomb itself!*

1. The Jews recognized the potential danger of the body being missing, and the power of being able to produce it. **Mt 27:62-66.**
2. The tomb had but one means of entrance, and against it a large stone was rolled, and a Roman guard stationed. It was a tomb “where no one had ever lain,” **Lk 23:53.** (Some tombs had more than one room, with several cells in each room for bodies. These obviously would be tombs of the rich. Freeman, M&C, pp. 261,262). Thus, no mistake about WHICH body. Sunday morning the body was gone! NO SKEPTIC EVER PROPOSED THAT THE BODY WAS STILL IN THE TOMB SUNDAY MORNING. Either:
 - a. Jesus arose and left on his own accord, or,
 - b. Someone else removed the body.
 - i. The Jews did not. Of all people, they wanted the body there as proof against claims of resurrection.
 - ii. The Romans had no motive. Moreover, the soldiers jeopardized their lives if they allowed the body to be moved, and the Roman rulers jeopardized their political future if they authorized it due to the Jews influence, the very influence that caused Pilate to concede to their wishes to crucify an innocent man in the first place.
 - iii. The disciples did not believe he was to rise from the dead. Even if they had, they would have had to overpower the Roman guard, which story the guards would have told, and the disciples brought to justice. This would have them changing their entire lives in a courageous commitment to a cause they knew to be a lie!

- iv. Unbelievers have recognized the power of the empty tomb, from the time of the first century unbelievers until now, as evident by their efforts to explain it! The Jews of the first century had the tomb guarded, then circulated the “explanation” how the body came to missing in spite of this; infidels thru the years have followed with other fruitless efforts - see below: “Efforts to Account for the Empty Tomb.”

B. The grave clothes - Jn 20:6-7

“rolled up” = *entulissO* - “2. *fold up of the soudariov* [facecloth, srf] J 20:7. M-M.” A&G. “It was arranged in orderly fashion.” RWP. “The napkin [KJV for “face-cloth, srf] was neatly folded and laid ‘into one place,’ the linens being in another. They felt in the tomb as if they were in a chamber where one had divested himself of one set of garments to assume another.” EGT. “...neatly folded up, or we may say, rolled up...somebody had carefully folded this cloth and laid it there in the most orderly way...” Lenski. “...was not spread out, but folded together. In so orderly a manner, not in precipitate confusion, did that take place which had been here done.” Meyer.

Note also “saw,” v 5, *blepO*, but “beheld,” v 6, *theOreO*.

theOreO - “from *theOros*, a spectator, is used of one who looks at a thing with interest and for a purpose, usually indicating the careful observation of details” VN. “θεωρ. [θεωρεῖν (*theOreO*), srf] is used primarily not of an indifferent spectator, but of one who looks at a thing with interest and for a purpose;... θεωρ. as denoting the careful observation of details can even be contrasted with ὁρα [horan] in so far as the latter denotes only perception in the general...” TH. “*blepei*, he sees; on the other hand, ver. 6, *theOrei*, he contemplates.” Meyer

1. Friends would not have removed them.
2. Thieves, even had they removed them (for what purpose?), would not have left them orderly.

C. The “large stone” at the entrance to the tomb.

1. **Mt 27:60**, “large stone” (“great stone” KJV) = *lithon megan*, from which we get “megalith.” **Mk 16:4**, “extremely large” (“very great” KJV) = *megas sphodra*. *Megas* = “great” TH; *sphodra* = “extremely, greatly” TH. So large that four to six women (**Mk 16:1, Lk 24:10**) did not think they could move it, **Mk 16:3**.

Q: Joseph “rolled” it in place. If one man could do so, how big was it, and could one man not remove it?

“The great stone that was rolled before the door of the tomb was a flat, upright slab, circular like a great wheel. This moved in a groove next to the cliff and was wheeled back to the left to expose the door and forward to close it. The groove slanted upward from the door so that, when the stone was wheeled to the left, it had to be blocked in order to hold it. The bottom of the slant was just in front of the door where the stone would come to rest on a level. After the body was duly placed in the tomb, the circular slab closed the entrance as indicated.” Lenski on Mt 27:60. Thus, while one man may be able to remove the block and let gravity assist him in getting the stone into place, that in no way implied he might by himself be able to roll it away, on an upward incline, and block it.

Pictures:

- Good News For Modern Man, pp. 58,91
- Eerdman’s Handbook to the Bible, p. 528
- MacMillan Bible Atlas, #237-8. (Herod’s family tomb)

2. WHO moved the stone?
 - a. Could a brutally beaten, crucified, pierced, allegedly dead man move it??
 - b. The women could not.
 - c. Male disciples would have had to overpower the guard, which if they did, the guards would have told this story rather than the incredible one they did. Moreover, they had no motive.

- d. The Jews nor the Romans wanted the stone removed, but on the contrary. Moreover, had they removed it and removed the body, they would have told this instead of the story the soldiers told, and certainly produced the body on Pentecost.
 - e. Matthew says an “angel of the Lord” did! **Mt 28:2**. That is at least rational (assuming one allows the possibility of angels), for he would have the POWER and the MOTIVE (which brings to another interesting question)...
3. WHY was the stone removed?
- a. NOT so Jesus could exit. Doors were no obstacle and space was no barrier. **Jn. 20:19,26; Lk. 24:31; Ac 1:10,11**.
 - b. So MEN could see the EMPTY TOMB!
 - i. The Romans and Jews. **Mt. 28:13**
 - ii. The disciples. **Mt. 28:6; Mk. 16:6; Lk. 24:3; Jn. 20:2-10**.
 - iii. ALL knew the body had been laid there three days ago, the tomb sealed, a guard stationed. Now, the body is gone...The point is: **WHERE’S THE BODY?!**

D. EFFORTS TO ACCOUNT FOR THE EMPTY TOMB:

1. The disciples stole the body - Mt 28:11-15

- a. If soldiers “asleep,” v 13, how know what happened to the body. Even if it was stolen, how know it was “His disciples”?
- b. If the soldiers had been asleep on duty, would they have want this “spread” (v 15), knowing it would mean death? Note v 14a.
- c. ALL soldiers asleep at the SAME time?!
- d. If the Jews really thought this, why did they not launch an investigation, calling the supposed thieves to trial, and using the measures at their disposal to gain a confession? WHERE’S THE BODY??
- e. The disciples did not even expect him to rise.
- f. Would Peter and John return so soon to the scene of the crime?
- g. Matthew wrote while these men lived? Would they be no response forthcoming? History knows none.
- h. The Roman guards, and likely those known to be the best (“make it as secure as you know how” Mt. 27:65), fell asleep on duty, and while they were asleep some discouraged fishermen, a tax collector, and some others, who had proved to be cowards only a couple days earlier, came, dared to break the Roman seal to fabricate a lie, rolled away the large stone, removed the linen wrappings from the corpse and carefully rolled them up, stole the body, all this without waking the guards—ALL of whom were asleep. The Roman guards then told on themselves, that they were asleep on duty, and moreover, based their testimony on what had happened to the body on events that transpired, by their own testimony, while they were asleep. No effort was made to interrogate the thieves and recover the body, nor was any punishment meted out, and this by those who had successfully had an innocent and popular man falsely tried and put to death and had taken special measures to insure the security of the tomb. Then this bunch of cowardly thieves began to proclaim boldly, at the expense of their very lives, that Jesus was risen from the dead! BELIEVE IT, WHO CAN???
- i. Sounds more like a cover up...just as Matthew reports it!

2. Joseph of Arimathea removed the body to another place.

- a. Motivation? No motive. In fact, much more motive NOT to be further identified as an adherent of Jesus. Joseph was “a prominent member of the council,” **Mk 15:43**, and a “secret” disciple of Jesus “for fear of the Jews,” **Jn. 19:38**. He had to “gather up

courage,” **Mk 15:43**, to ask Pilate for the body the first time. Would he risk further association with the name of Jesus, esp. at this time? And if so, WHY?

- b. The Roman guard posted at the tomb would have known had this happened and this would have been the story handed out to explain the empty tomb rather than the one that was used which jeopardized the soldiers and did not stand investigation.
- c. Had this been so, the Jews could have obtained the information of the place of the new burial and squashed the claims of the resurrection when they began. This is why they wanted the tomb secured in the first place.
- d. According to history, Joseph was “a good and righteous man...who was waiting for the kingdom of God” **Lk. 23:50**. If so, when it began to be reported that Jesus arose from the dead and had begun to reign as the king on David’s throne (Ac 2), Joseph would have corrected the pernicious error.
- e. The question echoes: **WHERE’S THE BODY??**

3. The women found the wrong tomb.

- a. The women made a point of following the body to see where it would be buried. They even observed “how his body was laid,” **Lk 23:55**, indicating careful observation. **Mk 15:47** says they “**were looking on** (*theOreO*) to see where He was laid.” They intended to come back to bring spices, **Lk 23:54-24:1**.

theOreO - “from *theOrOs*, a spectator, is used of one who looks at a thing with interest and for a purpose, usually indicating the careful observation of details” VN. “*theOreO* is used primarily not of an indifferent spectator, but of one who looks at a thing with interest and for a purpose;...*theOreO* as denoting the careful observation of details can even be contrasted with *horan* in so far as the latter denotes only perception in the general...” TH

- b. Two women, not just one, observed the place of burial (**Mt 27:61; Mk 15:47**), and four to six came back in the morning bringing spices (**Mk 16:1; Lk 24:1...10**). Did BOTH women forget what they carefully observed, and ALL FOUR TO SIX mistakenly go to the wrong tomb??
- c. Did all these women experience the same hallucination regarding angelic visitors and an empty tomb at *the wrong tomb*?
- d. Private tomb of a rich man. Not an ordinary tomb.
- e. Tomb a matter of public record - Roman guard, sealed, by authority of the Roman governor (Pilate) and under the special care of his enemies, the Jewish rulers (**Mt 27:64-66**).
- f. If they went to the wrong tomb, would not Peter and John have corrected the mistake when they were told and went to the tomb, **Jn 20:2-8**?
- g. The other disciples did not believe when the women told them, **Mk 16:11**. Would they not have double checked?
- h. The tomb belonged to Joseph. Nicodemus, along with Joseph, buried Jesus. Would neither of these men have checked the tomb to verify if the body was still there? (**Jn 19:38-42**)
- i. When the disciples began to preach that Jesus was resurrected, would not the Jewish leaders have pointed out the correct tomb and that it was still sealed? That’s why they wanted the tomb guarded and sealed! (**Mt 27:64-66**)
- j. **BODY WAS GONE! THE TOMB WAS EMPTY!** Even the enemies concede!! And hundreds testified they had seen him alive afterwards!

4. The swoon theory: Jesus fainted and did not die.

Presumes Jesus did not die on the cross, but fainted from he physical and mental stress. Once within the coolness of the tomb, he revived, arose, pushed open the door, and left.

- a. The soldiers, whose responsibility it was to ascertain if the criminals were dead, thought Jesus was, **Jn. 19:32-33**. They were there, and they were certainly not accomplices.
 - b. When the soldiers pierced his side there came one “blood and water,” **Jn. 19:34**. According to several medical authorities, this was indicative of a ruptured heart, in which case it was clear evidence of death.
 - c. Would take greater credulity to believe what this assumption requires that to believe in the resurrection! After being beaten through the night, no sleep, scourged the next morning, made to carry his cross, nailed to the cross, hung there six hours, spear thrust in his side, buried in a sealed tomb, no food or medical attention,...now, without any help or medical attention, he revives, removes the grave clothes and folds them neatly, pushes away the large stone at the mouth of the tomb, overcomes the soldiers, and in this condition, weakened, battered, and bleeding, persuades his disciples he is the victorious Savior risen from the dead, can give them life, and imbues them with moral power to confront their enemies and lay down their lives for him!
 - d. The soldiers would have reported THIS story, rather than the one they did!
 - e. Had he thus made his way out of the tomb, he would eventually have died, if not hunted down and killed. **WHERE’S THE BODY??**
- 5. Question: Why didn’t the Jews search for Jesus to kill him again?**
- a. No evidence they believed he had arisen. On the contrary, Peter had to present the proofs on the day of Pentecost to the very ones who had him crucified.
 - b. It would have been an admission of the resurrection!
 - c. He did not appear publicly, but rather to his disciples. One might argue why not? If he had appeared publicly, even his enemies would have believed. But the evidence is to the contrary. They hadn’t believed in the presence of all the other miracles he worked, including the raising of Lazarus, which they could not and did not deny. See **Lk 16:31**.

II. THE EYEWITNESSES

[Also in Resurrection of Christ #32604]

Angels announce the resurrection to certain women. Peter & John enter the empty tomb. (Garden. Early Sunday morning.) **Mt 28:1-8; Mk 16:1-8; Lk 24:1-8,12; Jn 20:1-10**

Though John only records Mary Magdalene coming to the tomb, she came with the other women, Mary, the mother of James, and Salome, Joanna, and others (**Mk 16:1; Lk 23:55,56...24:1...24:10**). However, as John indicates, she left immediately when she saw the stone rolled away, and the other women experienced the discussion with the angel/s in the tomb (two angels there, **Lk 24:4**. Did one speak or both? Note also **Jn 20:12**-two angels talk to Mary Magdalene when she returned to the tomb). It is evident Mary Magdalene was not in on this discussion, for she ran and told Peter and John that they had taken the Lord’s body out of the tomb and the women did not know where they had laid him. The angel told the other women, however, that Jesus had been raised and would meet the disciples in Galilee.

Jn 20:8 - “he saw and he believed.” Believed what? **v 2b**, or, resurrection? Consider:

- Evidences, **vv 5-8. Lk. 24:12**.
- But, their reaction, **v 10**.
- Also, Mary, standing outside tomb, **v 11**. Did they not explain to her the good news if they now understood it?
- “For” **v 9** - still not understand that the resurrection prophesied!

NOTE: Observe as examine the witnesses that they are neither credulous nor demented.

A. First = Mary Magdalene. Mk 16:9-11; Jn 20:11-18

(Jerusalem, Sunday morning)

Chronological notes: [May be best to leave these chronological notes out of class copy and discussion - not critical and may derail thought.] Davies argues Jesus appeared to the other women before he appeared to Mary Magdalene (p. 172). He bases it upon “the whole course of events and circumstances.” He thus makes “first” in **Mk 16:9** to be first relative to the three appearances he mentions (Mary, **v9**, two men, **v12**, eleven, **v14**), i.e. first of these three.

If Jesus had appeared to the women “as they went to tell the disciples” (KJV, NKJV, **Mt 28:9** - this phrase not in NASB, NIV, NU-text), i.e. as they left the tomb, it is strange Luke does not mention *this* among “these things,” **Lk. 24:9,10**. Shepard, *The Christ of the Gospels*, has Jesus appearing to the women as they *returning* to the tomb. This is conjecture, but it is possible if the KJV insertion on **Mt 28:9** is incorrect. Or, if they returned to the tomb after telling the disciples about the empty tomb and the angels (**Lk 24:9,10**), then left again, Jesus may have appeared to them then (compare Barnes).

If “these things” of **Lk 24:10** did not include seeing Jesus, the “nonsense” would refer to the angels and their announcement of the risen Christ. Peter and John had indeed witnessed the fact that the tomb was empty, so *that* (the tomb being empty) would not be “nonsense” to them. That he was raised they did not believe, and *that* may have seemed as “nonsense.”

Fact: Not one of the four historical documents indicate any problem with the appearances to the women or their testimony of it.

It is evident Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene alone, as she was the “first” to see him (**Mk 16:9**). She would not have been the first had others been there.

Why did she not recognize Jesus, **vv. 14,15**?

Due to tears of grief, **vv. 11,13,15**? or, were her eyes “prevented from recognizing him,” **Lk. 24:16**? or, in her unbelief and grief, did she simply assume it was the gardener and not look up, **vv. 2,13-16**? Note: Had she fabricated this story to deceive others into believing, would not more likely have said, ‘I recognized him as soon as I saw him!’ The FACT is, we DO NOT KNOW why, but if we accept THE HISTORICAL EVIDENCE, she did recognize him shortly thereafter. This confirms she was and UNEXPECTED witness.

Careful observer

“Stooped and looked into the tomb; and she beheld two angels sitting, one at the head, and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying,” **Jn 20:12**. While this is John’s statement, there is no indication the male disciples followed the burial procession, nor observed how the body was laid in the tomb. There is, however, three accounts (Mt, Mk, Lk.) stating that the women did, among whom was Mary Magdalene. (**Mt. 27:61; Mk. 15:47; Lk. 23:55**, “how the body was laid.”). So, where did John get this information, but from Mary? Note that her observation and memory were precise.

Three senses

She not only *heard* him and *saw* him, but “was *clinging* to” him. (**20:17**)

Women as witnesses

The culture of first century Judaism “restricted women from acting as legal witnesses (Edwards, 1988, 4:1093; Osborne, 1984, p. 219).” Garry K. Brantley, *Reason and Revelation*, 5/93, p. 36. IF this is correct, the fact that they are mentioned among the first witnesses to the resurrection in *all four accounts* is because *that’s what happened*. If manufacturing an account, and women were not considered credible witnesses, would they have been used??

B. Second = The other women who had went to the tomb. Mt 28:9-10; Lk 24:9-11

(Jerusalem, Sunday morning)

Unexpected witnesses

These women certainly did not EXPECT to find what they did, i.e., an empty tomb.

Competent witnesses

Moreover they “entered” the tomb (**Mk. 16:5, Lk. 24:3**), and were invited to “Come, see the place where he was lying.” (**Mt. 28:6, Mk. 16:6**). Some of these were among those who

followed the body to the grave and “saw the tomb and how his body was laid.” **Lk. 23:55**. Thus, they were certainly competent to testify about the empty tomb.

More than one witness; saw same thing

Observe that there was more than one woman, and they all saw the same thing. This does not fit hallucinations.

Three senses

They *heard, saw, and touched* Jesus. They did not simply hear a voice, or see a form, but also “took hold of his feet.”

C. Third = Peter. Lk 24:34; 1 Cor 15:5

(Sun., early afternoon?)

Chronological notes: He had already appeared to Peter before he appeared to the two men on road to Emmaus, **Lk 24:34**: “has appeared to Simon” [“the aorist again expresses the past fact” Lenski].

First appearance to a male disciple.

Unexpected witness

Note that Peter and John went into the tomb, and Peter “beheld” the linen wrappings. Note that they not only saw firsthand the empty tomb, but looked thoroughly. They now knew the body was gone (**Jn. 20:10**), but they still “did not understand the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.” So, according to the historical documents, Peter would not have been in a disposition to manufacture “evidence” favorable to a resurrection.

D. Fourth = Two on the road to Emmaus. Mk 16:12-13; Lk 24:13-35.

(On the road to and in Emmaus. Sun., afternoon and evening, **v 29**. It was seven miles from Emmaus to Jer. At three mph it would take over two hours to walk the distance; at four mph [15 min. mile] it would still take 1 hr., 45 min.)

Chronological notes: “after that” **Mk 16:12**, i.e., Mary Magdalene’s report to the disciples. After Luke records the women’s testimony to the apostles (**Lk. 24:9-11**, he says “that very day” he appeared to the two (**Lk. 24:13**).

Note: “On the first day of the week...that very day...it is the third day...” **vv 1,13,21**. Compare **Mt. 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; 27:64** - “third day.”

Not credulous, nor expectant

Note these men mentioned the testimony of the women and Peter and John relative to the empty tomb, **vv 22-23**. They are yet hesitant to believe that “he was alive,” if fact, Jesus calls them “slow of heart to believe,” **v25**. Not credulous, nor men our seeking to interpret anything as evidence of a resurrection.

Rational discussion and sensory experience over extended time and distance experienced by more than one witness

Observe that this meeting may have occupied several hours. The journey was about a 2 hour walk at a minimum. We do not know at what point Jesus joined them, “beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning himself in all the Scriptures.” Then, sat at table with them that evening at Emmaus.

Cumulative evidence

Their “slowness of heart to believe,” the length of the appearance, the sensory involvement, the rational nature of the events that transpired in the appearance (the discussion that took place), and that all of this was experienced by not one, but two persons, argue strongly against a hallucination.

Why were their eyes prevented from recognizing him? **v 16**.

I don’t know, but observe:

- Not likely this facet would have been part of the story had it been invented to support a resurrection fable.

- By Jesus asking, “What things?”, occasion was given for an undesigned coincidence confirming the women’s testimony and Peter & John’s trip to the tomb.
- Their attitude of being “slow to believe” is thus manifested.
- They were expected to believe THE TESTIMONY OF EYEWITNESSES and PROPHECY OF SCRIPTURE, vv 23-27.
- No other man on earth could have given these men the instruction they received about the suffering Messiah from the Scriptures.

Note also they confirm the experience of the women and Peter and John, and the appearance to Peter (1 Co 15:5), v 34.

E. **Fifth** = ***To the eleven while reclining at table (Mk 16:14)***

(Jerusalem, Sun. evening) While the two were telling about their experience (Lk 24:36). **Mk 16:14; Lk 24:36-43; Jn. 20:19-25; 1Co. 15:5** (Could refer to the second appearance to the “twelve” one week later.) Thomas not present.

Chronological notes: Evening on the first day of the week, **Jn. 20:19**. The fact that he showed them his hands and feet identifies the account of **Jn. 20:19-25** with **Lk. 24:36-43 (Lk 24:39-40; Jn. 19:20)**. Moreover, the appearance to the two was “that very day” and his discussion with them went into evening (**Lk. 24:29-30**). John says it “even. on that day” (**Jn 20:19**) when the appearance he relates took place.

1 Co. 15:5 does not specify *which* appearance to the apostles, and may indeed comprehend all of them in a generic statement. Since this is the first to the apostles as a group, we mention it here. On “the twelve” see notes below on the “eleven.”

Note: Davies puts Mark’s account of the great commission here, separate from Mt’s. He makes this one in private to the eleven, and Mt’s to the 500. p. 172.

While it says the “eleven,” **Mk 16:14**, ten were in this first meeting. Judas had committed suicide. Thomas was absent, **Jn 20:24**. Does Mark refer to the meeting a week later? **Jn 20:26ff**. The thing that seems to identify it with the first meeting is that (a) they were “reclining at table” which is what they were doing in **Lk 24:36-43**, which is definitely the first meeting [v41, “Have you anything here to eat?”], and (b) “He reproached them for their unbelief and hardness of heart” - a week later? If Mark does refer to the first meeting, he uses “eleven” like the “twelve” was used, e.g., **Jn 20:24, 1 Co 15:5**, to refer to the body, or college, of apostles. (There were not twelve apostles at the time these two verses refer to. Judas had committed suicide.) “...the twelve was a name, not of number, but of office, like the Triumviri, Decemviri, &c. among the Romans.” Macknight on **1 Co 15:5. Lk 24:36ff** is definitely the first meeting and he uses the term, “eleven,” **Lk 24:33**.

Figure of speech: “Adjournment” (“*to adjourn: i.e. to extend the time...epithet is used of a subject either (1) before it has acquired the reason for giving the name, or (2) after the reason has ceased.*” Bullinger, *Figures of Speech*, p. 689. Examples of (2): **Ex. 7:12**, “staff”; **1 Sam. 30:5**, “wife” (see NASB footnote); **Mt. 26:6**, “leper.”

Note: The disciples were still “mourning and weeping” when Mary came, **Mk 16:10**. “They [the eleven, srf] refused to believe it!” **Mk 16:11**. “These words appeared to them [the apostles, srf] as nonsense, and they would not believe them.” **Lk 24:11**. Note their unbelief. They were not *expecting* to see him, and even upon seeing him at first thought he was a spirit. Hardly the frame of mind for hallucinations. The evidence involved not only the sight, but touching and his eating food. **Note 1Jn 1:1ff**.

Here again, we have:

- Witnesses who are dubious, not credulous
- More than one witness who see the same thing
- Over an extended period of time
- With objective evidences offered and experienced

F. **Sixth** = ***The eleven INCLUDING Thomas, one week later. Jn 20:26-31.***

(Sunday, one week after the resurrection.)

Chronological notes: “And after eight days...” **Jn 20:26**. NASV fnt, “Or, a week later”. So NIV. Inclusive method of reckoning would make this the next Sunday.

Note Thomas’ attitude and Jesus’ “Blessed...” v **29**. **Note vv. 30-31**.

G. Seventh = To seven disciples at the Sea of Galilee, or, Tiberius. Jn. 21:1-14

(Sea of Galilee) **Jn 21:1-25**. The seven are: Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James, John, and two others, **Jn 21:2**. This is the THIRD time he was manifested TO THE DISCIPLES, **Jn 21:14**.

Chronological notes: No note of time is given, except to say it is the third appearance to the disciples after he rose from the daed, v **14**.

Observe:

- Collective witness. Seven men saw the same thing, at the same time, over an extended period of time, and experienced the objective fish-catch and breakfast.
- Objective evidences. The large catch of fish, the fire, the bread, fish cooking, which they ate. Hallucinations and imagination do not catch fish, build fires, cook fish, provide bread, and fill the stomach.

H. Eighth = Eleven disciples in a mountain in Galilee. Mt 28:16,17; 1 Cor 15:6 (?).

(A mountain in Galilee.)

Note: McGarvey makes the meeting with the five hundred brethren of **1 Cor 15:6** identical with the meeting with the eleven of **Mt 28:16,17** and the time of the giving of the great commission. So, Lenski (on **Mark 16:15**, where he makes a new paragraph beginning with v **15**, thus making v **14** refer to the Sunday even meeting on the day of the res. So, McGarvey, FFG. pp 751,762). Hendriksen makes them different, making the meeting with the five hundred a separate and following appearance. Thus he has eleven appearances, not counting Paul (Hendrikson, NT Comm, John, p. 477). Davies identifies **Mark 16:14ff** with the fifth appearance to the eleven, and makes **Mt 28:16-20** the same as the one in Galilee with the 500 brethren. He thus has ten appearances. Davies, pp. 169,174,177.

The Great Commission given: **Mt 18:18-20; Mk 16:15-18; Lk 24:46,47** (All accounts given together here for comparison, even though these may represent different occasions.)

I. Ninth = James, 1 Cor 15:7. No details given of this appearance.

Chronological notes: This before last meeting with all the apostles, **1 Cor 15:7**.

J. Tenth = All the apostles at ascension. Lk 24:44-49; Ac 1:3-8.

(Jerusalem)

Note on **Lk 24:44-49**: “The words of Jesus from here on were not necessarily spoken on Easter evening. They may have been, but may also have been spoken at later appearances.” Hendriksen. See notes below under “Examples of so-called discrepancies...6. Jer. or Galilee?”

The Ascension (Olivet, between Jer and Bethany)

Mk 16:19,20; Lk 24:50-53; Ac 1:9-12

Note Ac 1:3

K. ATTACK ON THE CREDIBILITY OF THE WITNESSES:

Witnesses: At least five women, **Mk 16:1; Lk 24:10**; two on the road to Emmaus, **Lk 24:13ff**; the 11, **Mk 16:14**; Matthias, Barsabbas, **Ac 1:21-23**; James, **1 Co 15:7**; and others, **1 Co 15:6**; Paul, **Ac 9,22,26**;

1. Matthew’s story of the guard at the tomb. Mt. 27:62-66; 28:11-15

Held incredible that:

- a. The priests remembered and acted upon the claim of Jesus to rise from the dead, but the disciples did not.
- b. That Pilate, at the priests' request, would grant a guard
- c. That the soldiers would report to the priests rather than to Pilate
- d. That the guard would tell a story that would risk their lives for the sake of money (asleep on duty)

Ans: (a-d correspond to a-d above)

- a. The disciples did not understand Jesus' claims to be raised, for they did not anticipate his dying. They, therefore, did not anticipate a resurrection. However, while his enemies did not believe he would rise, remembered his claims, and knowing that securing the body would grant them victory, wished to take certain measures to protect it from being stolen.
- b. Pilate would not want a report circulated Jesus had arisen from the dead either in view of his participation in his sentencing, so he would be interested in preventing it also.
Moreover, political considerations in his dealings with Jews would move him to placate them in this if he would placate them by granting an innocent man to be crucified!
- c. The guard had been given to priests, and therefore it is not unnatural finding it (the guard) reporting to the priests. **Mt 27:65**
- d. The risk of punishment was removed by the Jews assurance that if this came to the ears of Pilate they would intervene, **Mt 27:14**. Could they convince the guard they had such influence? They had just persuaded Pilate, against his will, to condemn a man he declared innocent!
- e. No record that Matthew's story was ever denied in the subsequent controversies between the chief priests and the apostles.
- f. Matthew for Jewish readers. If untrue, they would have been the worse people to tell it to, and they of all would have denied it. No record of such denial. If they didn't then, how can anyone today be in better position to do so

2. That Mary did not at once recognize Jesus

- a. If the story is a fabrication, by Mary or John, it is more likely it would have her saying she recognized him immediately!
- b. She thought he was still dead and seeing Jesus alive was not even a possibility in her mind. Ever have something on your mind, look right at someone you know well, and not acknowledge them at first?
- c. Her eyes were full of tears. Also possible that her eyes were "prevented" from recognizing him, **Lk. 24:16**.

3. Actions testified to are impossible of a human body

If Jesus bodily raised, how could he vanish, **Lk 24:31**, and enter rooms through closed doors, **Jn 20:19,26**?

- a. Obviously these are miracles. If the resurrection be true, then these supernatural appearances and disappearances certainly no problem. Allow God, and all things are possible.
- b. The testimony includes evidences of a flesh and bone body, i.e., handled him, including verification it was the same body put into the tomb, **Jn. 20:27**, and eat their food, **Lk. 24:36-43**.

4. Not one witness of the actual resurrection

- a. True, and remarkable. But instead of weighing against the testimony, this favors the idea this story was not fabricated, for if so, at least some of the witnesses would have been given the role of testifying they saw him come from the tomb!

- b. What this proves is, there was not one witness of the actual resurrection. So...? Must God do things as WE think they ought to be done? We would not have had him crucified in the first place!
- c. Deal with the witnesses' testimony who saw him after he was raised.

5. Witnesses contradict one another (see next point)

L. Examples of so-called "discrepancies":

(From EOC, McGarvey, pp. 116-131.)

Preliminary considerations:

- a. Discrepancies in details do not necessary invalidate the main issue. E.g.,
 - i. Infidels CLAIM John contradicts other gospel writers about the time of the crucifixion, but none doubt the FACT of the crucifixion.
 - ii. In a court of law, witnesses may vary on details, e.g., whether a murder was committed with a butcher knife or steak knife, without necessarily invalidating the FACT that a murder took place.

- a. The fact that all the accounts do not read exactly the same, rather than prove them unreliable, show they were not written in collusion.

But, DO the witnesses contradict one another? If two statements that seem contradictory can be explained by any rational hypothesis, the contradiction has not been established. Seeming contradictions may appear because speakers and writers may omit details, which if known, would have explained the apparent discrepancy.

Illustration: Same question, two different people ...

- What kind of car does Wally drive to church? Ans: Toyota
- What kind of car does Wally drive to church? Ans: Hyundai

Discrepancy, but *contradiction*? Mean no such person as Wally? Probably doesn't even have a car? Untrue? Witnesses unreliable? NO! He drives BOTH kinds of cars at *different* times!

1. WHEN the women came to the tomb.

Mt 28:1, "as it began to dawn"; **Jn 20:1**, "while it was still dark" --- VS --- **Mk 16:2**, "when the sun had risen." Mt & Jn agree against Mk.

ANS:

- Mt & Jn speaks of when they left for the tomb and Mk of when they arrived.
- All three use the word *erchomai*, "came." RWP, Lenski, Hendriksen, McGarvey (EofC, p. 126) all take as the first point (first bullet) evidencing the Gk will allow it (i.e. "came," *erchomai*, not necessarily = arrived at, but can mean, starting. EOC, p126). The "vehicle," *erchomai*, has more than one passenger on the bus.

2. WHO went to the tomb.

Mt 28:1 = Mary Mag. & "the other Mary" (two women); **Mk 16:1** = Mary Mag., Mary the mother of James, & Salome (3 women); **Lk 24:10** = Mary Mag., Mary the mother of James, Joanna, and "other women" (3 women +); **Jn 20:1** = Mary Mag. (1 woman)

ANS:

- None say the ones they mention are the ONLY ones that went. If all went all tell the truth.
- Possible indication in John of other women, tho' only Mary Mag. mentioned - **20:2**, "we."
- If you wrote to a friend and said, "I went to the parade." Should they conclude you mean you are the ONLY one who went? *Specifics do not exclude.*

Illustration: After Whitehead clan returned from Crockett (5/25/14) I asked ...

- Amy Gove: "Who did you see?" Her ans: "Everybody"
- John Whitehead: "Who did you see?" His ans: "Whiteheads"

• Michael Gove: “See anyone other than the Whiteheads?” Ans: “Yes, an Osteen.”
Should we conclude these folks are not credible? That they are dishonest or incapable? That they did not make a trip to Crockett? NO - ALL are true! And, should you less confidence in the these people because of the “discrepancies” in their answers, or be cautious about the honesty and methods of someone who tries to discredit them with these questions?!

3. NUMBER OF ANGELS seen at the tomb

Mt (28:2,5) & Mk (16:5) mention one (Mk, “young man..wearing a white robe”) while **Lk (24:2) & Jn (20:12)** mention two.

ANS:

- Same as with number of women.
- Exam.: “I saw Mary at the mall today.” That the ONLY person you saw??

4. CONDUCT of the women immediately after they left the tomb

Matthew and Mark say they were to go the disciples and report the resurrection and that Jesus would meet them in Galilee, **Mt 28:7; Mk 16:7**. Lk says they did, **Lk 24:9,10**. But Mark says “trembling and astonishment gripped them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.” **Mk 16:8**

ANS:

- They said nothing to anyone BUT THE DISCIPLES.
- WHO would they be afraid of? Fear was the motive for not saying anything. Since Mark connects their not telling “anyone” with their fear (“for”), might that indicate who Mark meant by “anyone”? But they had nothing to fear by telling the disciples. They did have a reason for fearing the enemies of Jesus, and thus not saying anything to them.
- Universals do not necessarily affirm of particulars, e.g.: **Jn 3:32** (did absolutely “no one” receive his witness? See **v33**.); **Jn 15:5** (“can do nothing” - wash their face?); **Mk 16:20** (Americas?); **Acts 28:22** (“everywhere” - assemblies of the saints?). Context and harmony qualify. **Synecdoche of the genus (whole for part)**. Illustration: “We went to Disneyland.” “What did you get to see?” “We saw everything that was there!” (The inside of the office?)

5. FIRST APPEARANCE of Jesus to the MALE disciples

- Matthew - on a mountain in Galilee;
- Mark and John - in Jerusalem on Sunday after the resurrection;
- Luke and Paul (**Lk. 24:34, 1 Cor. 15:5**) - to Peter

ANS:

- **None** of these say the appearance they chose to record was the **FIRST** of all the appearances in order of time, **NOR** that it was the **ONLY** appearance. Paul says he appeared to Peter before to the twelve, which agrees with Luke. Thus, *there is no contradiction*. All the stated appearances took place, each writer choosing which to mention.
- Illustration: If two people describe a wreck and one mentions a passenger in the front seat, but the other didn’t, does that mean the passenger didn’t exist? Or, that the witnesses can’t be trusted - the wreck probably didn’t happen?

6. JERUSALEM or GALILEE?

Were the disciples to remain in Jerusalem or meet Jesus in Galilee?

Matthew and John have the disciples meeting Jesus in Galilee (**Mt 28:16f; Jn 21:1f**), whereas Luke has him meeting them in Jerusalem, and telling them to remain there, which they did, **Lk 24:33-36,49-52**.

ANS:

- Depends on whether the conversation recorded in **Lk 24:36-49** all took place at one time, that being the Sunday evening following the resurrection. If **vv. 44ff** could refer to a *later* conversation, then the supposed difficulty disappears.
- “Now (*de*) He said to them...” (“And” KJV, ASV; “Then” NKJV, ESV; NIV omits). “adversative particle... *and...but...*Simply indicating a transition *now, then...that is...*After

a neg. *rather...de kai but also ,but even...kai...de and also, but also...de* may often be omitted in translation.” Gingrich

- Luke not always write in chronological order:
 - ▶ **Lk. 3:18-22** - Writes of John’s imprisonment before Jesus’ baptism. But, **see Jn 3:22-24**, esp. v 24.
 - ▶ **Lk. 4:1-12** - The temptation. That Mt’s is the chronological order is indicated by:
 - Matthew’s adverbs of order: “After...then...then...again... then...then...” Lk. simply says, “and.”
 - In Matthew’s account, his third recorded temp. has Jesus ordering Satan to “Begone” - which Satan did, v 11.
 - ▶ **Lk. 9:57-60** - introduced in midst of discussion about a journey toward Jer. through Samaria, vv 51-56, whereas according to Matthew this occurred during the Galilean ministry sometime earlier, **Mt 8:18-23**. And Luke gives no note indicating this occurred at a different time. Uses the same particle in **9:57**, de. (Hendrikson, Foster, Shephard, Meyer, McGarvey, EOv, p. 129, all place these events chronologically with Mt.)
 - Others - see notes on Lk.
- In Luke’s second account, he makes it clear that Jesus appeared to his disciples over a period of forty days, “speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.” **Ac 1:3**. To interpret his first account as saying he met them once, on Sun even. after the resurrection, immediately after which he ascended, **Lk. 24:50**, is to make Luke contradict himself. Does not a writer have the write to clarify and enlarge before being charged with being unreliable in his testimony?
- The Galilean appearances easily fit within the forty days between **Lk 24:43 and 44**. See [eighth appearance](#) in previous notes.
- See points under next “discrepancy” - “Forty Days.”

7. The “FORTY DAYS” of **Ac 1:3** contradicts **Lk. 24:36-53**

ANS:

- **Ac 1:3** simply provides additional information about the period he had previously written about. There he concentrated on describing an appearance and certain teaching he left the apostles. Here he skips that to add information about that period and to include some additional instructions, vv 4-8, that prepare the way for his present treatise. There is no contradiction.
- Both Luke and Acts written to Theophilus. Was Theophilus so slow that he would not detect an apparent contradiction, and Luke so poor a thinker and writer he would not take precautions to avoid such? The very fact there is not effort to wrestle with this supposed problem, indicates Luke felt there would be no problem with it, especially to one who lived so much nearer to the events than do we.
- Illustration: If you describe to someone some things discussed with corporate office, must it be concluded you discussed ALL these things AT ONE TIME? If you later mentioned that this interaction transpired over several weeks (email, phone, or personal visit), would anyone find it strange, much less to say contradictory, that the things you mentioned as having discussed may have been separated by intervals of days, maybe weeks, and other events? (compare **Lk 24:36-49 ... Ac 1:3**)

III. COLLATERAL PROOFS

Other historical facts that cry for explanation, and the resurrection affords the most reasonable.

A. Conversion of two skeptics:

1. James, the brother of the Lord - **Mk 3:21; Jn 7:5; Ac 1:14; Gal 1:19**
2. Paul - **Ac 7:58, 8:1ff, 9:1-22**

** What caused it??

B. Early, widespread, universal, and strong belief of the resurrection in the churches.

1. Early - Based on the historical information in Acts, within 50 days a church began, in the very place the crucifixion had taken place, built on the foundation of belief in the res. Paul believed in it within 3-6 years of its occurrence.
2. Widespread - Churches in Syria (Jer., Antioch), Asia Minor (Ephesus, Colossee), Europe (Philippi, Thessalonica), Greece (Corinth), and Italy (Rome) all believed in the resurrection.
3. Universal - While there were factions, some even denying the resurrection of all men (**1 Cor 15**), none in the churches denied the resurrection of Christ.
4. Strong - Sacrifices, transformation of lives, persecutions testify to the strength of their convictions.

C. First day of the week

1. Illustrate with July 4th to United States citizens.
 - a. Commemorate NOTHING?
 - b. Try to change the date!
2. Early church largely JEWS, who observed the SABBATH, and had for 1500 yrs! But, **Ac 20:7; 1 Co 16:1-2**; early secular history changed to FIRST DAY. Why??

D. The very existence of the church

1. What happened in the fifty days from his crucifixion to Pentecost that caused such a movement? New leader? No. Decide to carry on, give their lives, in the face of the death and failure of their former leader? No.
2. What was the CAUSE of these people's faith, courage, zeal, and dedication? Related to this is...

E. The transformation in the attitude of the apostles

1. Before, proud, selfish, ignorant, and afraid to die.
2. Fifty days later, humble sacrificial servants, able to teach truth that has lasted to this day, and willing to give their life blood for their testimony. WHAT HAPPENED?

F. The miracles performed by the apostles for the next 30 years!

These are recorded in the book of the Acts of the Apostles, e.g. **2:4-6,43; 3:1-10...4:16; 5:12,15-16; 9:32-43; 13:11-12; 14:3; 19:11-12; 20:9-10; 28:3-6**

These were done in many different locations—in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, Asia Minor, Europe, Greece, island of Malta; in the temple area, in private homes, and in open spaces. Sometimes they were done before large and unbelieving audiences. They continued over a period of at least thirty years, and performed by not one, but by different apostles (eyewitnesses). Luke, a careful historian, gave names, places, and chronological indicators as to the time frame. He wrote when it could be checked out. Did no one of that day expose the fraud of his "history"? *Why not?*

OBJECTIONS TO THE RESURRECTION

1. **Historical objections - historical material inadequate.**
See lesson, "Sources."
2. **Philosophical objections.**
 - a. See introduction to lesson on "Human Testimony" for attitude toward treatment of evidence
 - b. Same as the objections to miracles. See that lesson.

3. Attack on the credibility of the witnesses

See above under “Eyewitnesses.”

4. Naturalistic explanations.

Efforts to explain by natural means.

a. The resurrection story is a fraud, framed for the express purpose of deceiving people

1. Motive?? A story that made the religious leaders of the day murderers of the Messiah and indicted the Romans for their share in it. It accused the Jewish leaders of ignorance of their own Scriptures. It could be expected and did bring opposition, persecution, and death. The people in the churches were often poor and humble (**1Co 1:26-28; 2Co 8:1,2**), and believing in the resurrection brought no money, fame, or power to them or to the authors.
2. They died for their testimony. For what they knew to be a lie? These the same men that “forsook him and fled.”
3. Would they have proclaimed this fraud, esp. in its inception, in the very place the crucifixion and burial took place, so very soon after it occurred, and to the very people who had been involved in the crucifixion?
4. Proof it a fraud, other than one’s one prejudice?? How account for the positive historical evidences.
5. WHERE’S THE BODY?? This is the VERY REASON the Jews secured the tomb! Mt 27:64.

b. Supposed “appearances” were hallucinations

1. Disciples NOT EXPECT the resurrection, and in fact needed objective proof to convince them.
2. Nature of the testimony of the appearances:
 - a. Many witnesses - 1 Cor 15:5ff
 - a. Different times, places, and circumstances - Gospels
 - b. Objective evidence - they “handled” him. 1 Jn 1:1ff
 - c. Collective witness - groups witnessed the same thing at the same time
3. If hallucinations, their teaching based on this should have accorded with their previous conceptions of an earthly king on an earthly throne bringing political deliverance. But their teaching was new and revolutionary, even to their previous beliefs. Likewise, the Gentiles had no concept of a humble, crucified, King, **Mt 20:25**.
4. Consistency of the testimony of those to whom he appeared. Not a strange looking creature to one, but looking like Jesus to another. All believed they actually saw him. Their teaching that followed consistent, and that on one of the most controversial areas man ever discussed: religion!
5. These people neither talk, act, or write like demented people given to hallucinations and irrationality. Such people produce the NT?? Must PROVE insanity, not just CLAIM it.
6. Why appear FOR ONLY FORTY DAYS? Ac 1:3.
7. WHERE’S THE BODY??!

“There are too many different times, places, and people involved for the hallucination theory to be valid, and psychological preconditions are lacking...Let me quote from a well-published psychologist, who says, ‘Hallucinations are individual occurrences. By their very nature only one person can see a given hallucination at a time. They certainly are not something which can be seen by a group of people. Neither is it possible that one person could somehow induce an hallucination in somebody else. Since an hallucination exists only in this subjective, personal sense, it is obvious that others cannot witness it.’” Gary Habermas, professor at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia in a debate with

Anthony Flew, professor emeritus of Keile Univ., and a atheist. The debate took place in 1985. This quote from the book of the debate, *Did Jesus Rise From the Dead?* p. 50.

5. “Resurrection” borrowed from pagan mythology

- a. No objective proof - *Is the Bible True Really*, p30f
- b. Acts 17 - idea of a resurrection foreign to them. Why, if their pagan religion mysteries had been promoting the concept of resurrection for years?

6. See above: “Efforts to account for the empty tomb.”

EOC - McGarvey, J.W., *Evidences of Christianity*. Nashville, Tenn.: Gospel Advocate Co., 1956.

EGT - *Expositor's Greek Testament*

RWP - Robertson, A.T., *Word Pictures in the NT*

REVIEW

1. Why is the resurrection of Christ so important?
2. What are the two main categories of proofs of his resurrection?
3. Describe the tomb in which the body of Jesus was laid.
4. What precautions were taken against an empty tomb on Sunday morning, and by whom were these precautions taken? Why were they taken?
5. How do we know the tomb where Jesus was laid was indeed the one that was empty Sunday morning?
6. What did Peter observe when he entered the tomb that was of special interest besides the fact that the body was gone?
7. How many separate appearances to eyewitnesses are recorded/
8. List some of these eyewitnesses.
9. List several things about these appearances and the eyewitnesses themselves that serve to strengthen the credibility of their testimony.
10. Besides the two main categories of proofs, another category is "Collateral Proofs." Six were discussed in class. What are they?

MORAL GLORY

OBJ: Show that Jesus' life was consistent with being the Son of God. **Jn. 1:14**¹²

I. SINLESS PERFECTION

Jn 8:46

Every effort to convict him failed. E.g., **Mt 12:1-8, 10-14; 15:2,3,9; Mk 2:5-12**

The testimony of those who knew him:

- Peter - **1 Pt 2:22**
Note: He reproved Peter sternly. More than once. Yet—no hint of fault in Jesus (Compare our tendency to recriminate those who rebuke us.)
- John - **1 Jn 3:5**
Note **1 Jn. 1:8,10**
- Judas! **Mt. 27:3,4**

“There is in all His talk no trace of regret or hint of compunction or suggestion of sorrow for shortcoming, or slightest vestige of remorse. He taught other men to think of themselves as sinners...He told His disciples that every time they prayed they were to pray to be forgiven, but He never speaks or acts as though He himself has the faintest consciousness of having ever done anything other than what was pleasing to God.” C.E. Jefferson, ETDV, p. 126.

If we consider the time from when Jesus was 12 years old until he died at age 33, this would be over 11,000,000 minutes living in the midst of a corrupt and ungodly generation, without one sin! Moreover, he was under added scrutiny due to his strict moral teachings, his rebuke of others, his marvelous claims, and the hatred and opposition of his enemies—yet, not one sin!

Other scriptures affirming his sinlessness: 2 Co. 5:21; Heb. 4:15.

II. LIFE CONSISTENT WITH TEACHINGS

A. Sinless perfection - (vv above)

Teaching - **Mt 5:17-20**

B. Spiritual kingdom - Jn 18:36-37

- **Jn 6:15**
- When arrested - **Jn 18:10,11,36**

C. Love God - Mt 22:36,37

- Sinless perfection
- Came to do His will - a continual theme of his preaching. E.g., **Jn. 4:34; 17:4; 19:30**. See also **5:30; 6:38**.

D. Love man

- Compassion (Lk 10:27ff) - his compassion
- Greatest demonstration - gave his life **Jn 15:12,13**. See also **Mt. 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; 20:34; Mk 1:41; Lk 7:13; Jn 11:33-35**

III. NONE OF THE TEMPORAL MOTIVES ASSOCIATED WITH EARTHLY GLORY

A. Earthly power - Jn 6:15

B. Wealth - Lk 9:57,58; Mk 10:21,22

C. Popularity, applause

1. People, **Jn. 6:60-66**
2. Religious leaders, **Mt. 23**
3. Herod, tetrarch of Galilee **Lk. 23:9 (Lk. 3:1)**
4. Roman authorities, **Jn. 19:9-11**

IV. NEVER UNABLE TO ANSWER ANY QUESTION, DETECT ANY TRAP

E.g., **Mt 22:15...22; 23...33; 34,41...46**

V. RESPONDED TO MEN ACCORDING TO THEIR TRUE CHARACTER - UNERRING INSIGHT

Jn 2:24,25; 3:2,3ff; 6:25,26; 8:1-11

VI. TAUGHT THE HIGHEST MORAL CODE KNOWN TO MAN

It began with love of God with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength, then demanded love of man as oneself, issuing in a character pure in heart and life.

E.g., **Mt 5:13-16, 19-20, 21ff**

CONC

Truly, "Never did a man speak the way this man speaks," (**Jn 7:46**), nor did ever a man LIVE like this man lived! John said, "We beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father..!" **Jn 1:14**

ETDV = Evidence That Demands a Verdict, Josh McDowell. Crusade for Christ, Int., 1972

TH = *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, C. G. Wilke / C. L. Wilibald Grimm / Joseph Henry Thayer

¹² "glory" - *doxa*, from *dokeō*, to be of the opinion, to have a judgment of. His "glory" is that which causes us to extol Him. "3b. majesty which belongs to Christ...b. the *absolutely perfect inward or personal excellence of Christ*...2 Co. 3:18; 4:4...Jn. 1:14; 12:41...Jn. 2:11...Jn. 11:40...1 Co. 2:8; Jam. 2:1" TH

REVIEW

1. What did Jesus claim about sin in his life?

No one could convict him of sin.

2. One thing too often characteristic of sinful man is that he does not practice what he preaches (Rom. 2:17-24; Mt. 7:1-5). List some areas in which Jesus demonstrated perfect consistency with his teachings.

Sinless perfection

Maintained his role to establish a **spiritual kingdom** based on faith in the truth about who he was and that he came to redeem man from his sins through his death, rather than succumbing to the desire and efforts of the people and his own disciples to lift him up as ruler of an earthly kingdom.

Demonstrated his ultimate **love for God** by living completely according to His will though it involved the greatest sacrifice.

Time and again demonstrated his **love for man**, giving the greatest demonstration that can be given in laying down his life for man.

3. Jesus was motivated by his will to do the will of his Father and his great love for mankind. What are two or three motives that often are behind men achieving earthly fame and glory?

Earthly power

Wealth

Popularity

4. Jesus faced many questions, often difficult questions with the intention to trap him. How many was he not able to handle?

None, though these were presented time and again by learned men who counseled together to trap him. He was challenged not simply by one group, but by others who held different philosophies—none were able to ensnare him. Note that they put forth “lawyers” to try him.

5. What did Jesus know about man that enabled to respond unerringly to the need the man had?

He knew “what was in man”—their true character and motives.

6. How would you rate the moral code Jesus taught?

While some of principles Jesus taught were found in moral teachings of others, in its entirety, Jesus’ moral code exceeds all before him and since and is free of all the imperfections found in others.

REASONS FOR UNBELIEF

OBJ: To show that unbelief is not due to lack of evidence, but to attitudes and actions toward the evidence.

Jn 12:37 - many miracles, yet did not believe

Jn 7:48 - There is persuasive power in the fact that some, especially learned men, do not believe. Thus our study.

CAUSES OF UNBELIEF

I. EVIDENCE (INSUFFICIENT, UNCONVINCING)

- We have seen in this study this is obviously not the problem!
- Thousands have been convinced by it, including some strong skeptics, e.g, James, the eleven, Paul. Lord Lyttleton, etc.

II. IGNORANCE (OF THE EVIDENCE)

Jn 20:30-31

III. ATTITUDE (TOWARD THE EVIDENCE)

Jn 5:40; 7:17

Observe: (1) Jews believed in miracles (OT, Moses, Sinai). (2) Jews set the guard at the tomb. (3) Soldiers told Jews the story of the removing of the stone by an angel. (4) Jews unable to produce the body. (5) Jews knew Jesus' claims. Jews knew he had worked miracles. (6) Jews read the OT. BUT THE JEWS DID NOT BELIEVE! WHY?? THEY REFUSED TO BELIEVE! They rejected the conclusion the evidence inevitably pointed to. They "closed their eyes" and "hardened their heart."

"I had motives for not wanting the world to have a meaning; consequently [I] assumed that it had none, and was able without any difficulty to find satisfying reasons for this assumption. The philosopher who finds no meaning in the world is not concerned exclusively with a problem in pure metaphysics, he is also concerned to prove that there is no valid reason why he personally should not do as he wants to do, or why his friends should not seize political power and govern in the way that they find most advantageous to themselves . . . For myself, the philosophy of meaninglessness was essentially an instrument of liberation, sexual and political." Aldous Huxley (an atheist), NETDV, p. xl. (italics mine, srf)

WHY?

- Pride - **Jn 7:48; 8:33,39,41; 9:34**
- Peer pressure (honor among men) - **Jn 5:41-44; 12:42,43**
- Fear - **Jn 9:18-22**
- Money, material possessions - **Mk 10:21,22; Lk 16:14ff**
- Tradition, prejudice - **Mt 15:1-14; Lk 24:25,26; Ac 28:23ff**
- Family - **Lk 14:25ff**
- Pleasure - **2 Thess 2:10-12**
- Indifference - **Mk 4:19**

Mt 18:3 - humility required to enter kingdom. God has not made the evidences such as to convince the proud, obstinate, and perverse. Rather, it is required that a man be humble and have an honest interest in truth. **Lk 8:15; Jn 18:37.**

IV. METHOD (IN APPROACH TO EVIDENCE)

A. Weigh all in the light of the unknowable

1. E.g., I don't know how one bomb can do the damage claimed at Hiroshima, so I can't believe it happened. ("know how" - understand nuclear fission, how and why it works like it does)

Discount the positive evidence because there is something we cannot explain.

2. **Jn 9:15,16...19-21...25-26**

3. I don't expect to know what a nuclear physicist knows. Likewise, I should not expect to be able to explain everything GOD does!
4. I may not be able to explain how a black cow eats green grass and gives white milk, but that doesn't lead me to deny it happens. If I cannot explain all God's natural laws, it should not be strange that I cannot explain SUPERNatural happenings.

"In proceeding to weigh the evidence of any proposition, the previous question to be determined is, when may it be said to be proved? The answer plainly is, when its truth is established by competent and satisfactory evidence. By competent evidence, is meant such as the nature of the thing to be proved requires; and by satisfactory evidence, is meant that amount of proof, which ordinarily satisfies an unprejudiced mind, beyond any reasonable doubt. The circumstances which will amount to this degree of proof...is, their sufficiency to satisfy the mind and conscience of a man of common prudence and discretion, and so to convince him...A juror would violate his oath, if he should refuse to acquit or condemn a person charges with an offense, where this measure of proof was adduced." Simon Greenleaf, LL.D., Royall Professor of Law in Harvard University, *An Examination of the Testimony of the Four Evangelists (by the rules of evidence administered in courts of justice)* (Boston:Charles C. Little and James Brown, 1846), pp. 30.

B. Unbalanced consideration to objections.

1. Spend most of time wrestling with objections, difficulties, failing to consider what may be full, clear, and convincing positive evidences. Like a tax auditor assigned to fraud cases may tend to think all men dishonest; or a parent or a mate that dwells only on the shortcomings and never on the good things in their child or mate.
2. Such tendency may be due to our taking for granted our faith, and then when an objection is proposed, the novelty of it catches our attention. Yet, we have never really given attention to the evidences FOR our faith. Thus this study!

Note: When the gospel was first preached situation paganism or Judaism was the accepted faith, and if the gospel was to replace either, it had to give the evidences upon which this new religion should be received. Thus these evidences were preached and believers became acquainted with them to become believers.

3. **Jn 20:30-31** - How many ever studied the gospel of John as evidences for our faith?!

C. Shun examination of the evidence.

1. Doubts may arise, but due to shame for doubting, or fear that examination will demonstrate the weakness of our faith, an open investigation of the ground for our faith is not pursued. Such will only produce at best a weak faith without conviction, and worse, doubts may continue to get stronger and one eventually get tired of living by a demanding standard he is not sure of and give in to his doubt.

Parents: Encourage open discussion of questions and doubts children may have so that positive evidence can be presented and the child will not dwell only on the negatives.

2. **Mk 9:24.** Be honest about our doubts, but live by our faith. As we continue to study with honest hearts our faith will grow. **Ro 10:17; Lk 8:11,15**

3. Truth has nothing to fear from examination. **Jn 3:20-21**. God has given us four books for the very purpose that we “might know the exact truth about the things we have been taught.” **Lk 1:4**. Let the challenge be accepted! Thus this study. (Note: Two people share their doubts. This produces a deepening darkness and growing burden of doubt. But do either of them turn to a fair and diligent study of the evidences God has provided? If not, their doubts will consume them in unbelief.)

MK 16:15-16!

NETDV = New Evidence That Demands A Verdict, Josh MacDowell (Nelson Pub., Nashville, 1999)

REVIEW

1. Is the evidence for the gospel of Jesus Christ lacking? Explain your answer.

No. This study has examined the abundant evidence validating the claims of Jesus. But, the existence of sufficient evidence does not guarantee people will believe due to the motives and methods in dealing with that evidence.

2. Where is this evidence? (So, what must one do to examine it?)

The evidence is found in the four gospels. Therefore, one must *read those documents—or hear the evidence in them presented . . .* by a teacher, a parent, a friend..

3. List some motives people have that lead them either to not examine the evidence or not to deal fairly with it.

Pride
Peer Pressure
Money, material possessions
Tradition, prejudice
Family
Pleasure
Indifference

4. List three faulty methods in dealing with the evidence. No. This study has examined the abundant evidence validating the claims of Jesus. But, the existence of sufficient evidence does not guarantee people will believe due to the motives and methods in dealing with that evidence.

Weigh all in the light of the UNknowable
Unbalanced consideration to objections
Shun examination of the evidence