

Gravity

True For You But Not For Me



Evidence for God's Existence and Identity
God-Evidence-Truth.com

Michael Edwards

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Thank you to my beautiful wife Beate, who always keeps God first. Without her help, this book would have never been written. You are exactly what I ordered and I love you with all of my heart.

9-22-11, 1st Edition

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All Scripture verses taken from English Standard Version

The Holy Bible, English Standard Version[®] (ESV[®])

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Dear Friend, Can you imagine jumping off the edge of a 10,000 foot cliff without a parachute while screaming, “Gravity is true for you but not for me!” Not unless you’re crazy, right? We all know the law of gravity is true because of the evidence. We drop something and it falls, we trip and we fall. I like to point out to people that my dogs have no idea what gravity is, so they can’t believe in it, but they never float away. Gravity is true for everyone, everywhere, whether they believe it or not.

But do you think that any single belief about God can be true for everyone? I have often heard people say, “God is true for you but something else is true for me,” as if the truth about God is just personal opinion. In fact, the Bible claims to be true for everyone, whether they believe it or not, just like gravity. In essence, it warns that leaving this world without heeding the Bible’s crucial advice is more foolish than jumping off a cliff without a parachute.

It’s certain that you have some thoughts about God’s existence or non-existence. The question is—do you have any objective evidence to back it up? If not, no matter what you believe, it’s blind faith. If your belief is founded on your feelings or based on what someone else believes, you are in for a surprise. The truth about God’s existence and identity has nothing to do with feelings or what any person or group desires to be true. Truth is discovered, not invented.

If you have ever thought your family or friends want you to become a Christian simply because they want you to believe what they believe, you are mistaken. They want you to believe because it’s *true*.

The person who gave you this book cares about you. He or she believes that you deserve a chance to examine the facts with your own eyes and be aware of the Bible’s implications for your life, now and for eternity. This book is not an attempt to try to force you to believe what Christians believe. Nor does it suggest that you commit intellectual suicide in order to believe in God. It contains sound facts and encourages you to use reason, logic, and common sense to make an informed decision. The Christian faith has a tremendous foundation of scientific and historical support that no other religious belief can claim. These facts are often distorted and ignored by a popular culture which would prefer it to be false.

“Christianity, if false, is of no importance, and if true, of infinite importance. The only thing it cannot be is moderately important.” –*God in the Dock*, C. S. Lewis.

Inside, you will find an easy-to-read basic outline of the evidence. So stick with me, as we begin with the fundamentals to determine if truth really exists, what it is and what it is not. Understanding how truth really works is crucial for discovering the truth about God and the purpose of life, so please pay close attention.

“Is life a glorified monopoly game? When you die, does everything just go back in the box?” Dr. Frank Turek, author and speaker, *I Don’t Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*.

www.crossexamined.org

It is not about religion, it’s about truth.

Truth

Is Truth Important to You?

- If you were dying of a deadly but curable disease, would you want the right medication to survive?
- Would you want to know the truth about the risks before investing your life savings?
- Do you want your family and friends to tell you the truth once in a while, or all of the time?
- If you were charged with a murder you did not commit, would you want the truth to come out?

If you want truth in these areas, it appears that truth really is important to you. So what's on the other side of death? If God exists and your destination after physical death is based on the choices you make in this life, would the truth about eternity be important?

What is Objective Truth?

- It relates to the object referred to.
- It corresponds with reality.
- It is telling it like it is.
- It is true even if no one believes it.
- Jesus and the Bible claim to be objective truths.

“Truth is true—even if no one knows it. Truth is true—even if no one admits it. Truth is true—even if no one agrees what it is. Truth is true—even if no one follows it. Truth is true—even if no one but God grasps it fully.” Paul Copan, Chair of Philosophy and Ethics at Palm Beach Atlantic University, author, *True For You But Not For Me*.

“Truth is incontrovertible. Malice may attack it and ignorance may deride it, but, in the end, there it is.” Sir Winston Churchill, www.quotations.about.com

What is The Law of Non-Contradiction?

The law of non-contradiction is our built-in lie detector to help us find truth. It is a fundamental principle of thought which clearly tells us that opposite ideas cannot both be true at the same time and in the same sense. For example, it cannot be possible that both the earth is flat and the earth is round. This law is self-evident and undeniable. Knowledge of this law is crucial to understanding that truth does exist and its opposite is always false.

It's true that you are reading this book right now. You are the object in this statement. So it's true for everybody, everywhere that you are reading this book right now. It's a contradiction, or false, that you are not reading it. Since it's true that Washington D.C. is the capitol of the United States of America, any other belief, even the next closest city geographically, is contradictory and false. You have particular first and last names that are true, while any other names are false. We all took multiple choice tests in school; one answer was true while the rest were false, no matter how close to the truth they came. Truth is always narrow and exclusive, excluding its opposites.

Contradictions in a statement render the claim false. For example: "I have a gift for you and a list of work you need to do to get it." You know right away that my statement does not make sense because a gift that requires work is not a gift. Some have said to me that "truth does not exist" but in doing so, they claim it is true that truth does not exist. These statements are contradictory and thus false.

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Conclusion – Truth exists, it's important, and its contradictions are always false.

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What is The Best Way to Find Truth?

I am sure you will agree that a person can stumble into truth. We all guessed correctly on a few school tests. But guessing or hoping to find the truth by mere accident is obviously not the best way to make an important decision. The following are three popular ways people use to come to a conclusion that something is true. Which one would you pick to make a decision where truth is vital?

1. My feelings—it feels right, it gives me purpose, hope and peace of mind, so I believe it's the truth.
2. My family or someone I trust believes it, so I do.
3. Evidence, consistency, best fit to the evidence.

Approximately 95 percent of the hundreds of people I have asked this specific question pick the third option right away. But a strange thing happens when I ask the same people if they believe in God. Now the same people who just told me truth was very important and evidence was the best way to find it suddenly say their beliefs about God are not founded on the evidence, but on feelings or on what someone else believes. Therefore, it's likely that your current belief about God is not based on evidence, either. The problem is that there are sincere followers in every belief who claim to have found the truth. So is one belief correct and the only way to God, or do all roads lead to heaven? Does God exist at all? If we base our search solely on subjective evidence like feelings and personal experience, it's confusing because every belief has followers who will attest to both. If we decide to believe something because someone else does, how do we know for sure that they have found the truth? Did they examine the evidence, or are they just following their feelings or a crowd?

The only legitimate way to be reasonably sure our faith is placed in the truth is to examine the objective evidence ourselves, as we would with any major decisions. Objective evidence can be examined by everyone and does not change due to emotions, feelings or personal experience. An example of objective evidence would be scientific and historical facts.

I am not suggesting that you completely ignore your feelings, as they can be helpful when you have verifiable facts and more than one solid option. So keep your feelings handy, but I urge you to not place them above the facts. Finding the truth about God is very important, since every belief includes views about salvation and eternity. Making a wise decision based on the objective evidence is only sensible.

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Conclusion – The best way to discover truth is by examining the objective evidence.

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Can Sincere Faith Make a Belief True?

Many people think that faith is about believing something strongly enough (especially about God) so it will come true. They believe faith is more important than what they place their faith in, but they are mistaken.

The truth is—the object of a person’s faith is much more important than the faith itself.

Here is an example. We are going skydiving and I offer you a parachute or a contraption I made in my garage last night. Which one would you pick? I would hope you’d pick the parachute, because there is no evidence that my contraption works. Faith based on evidence is reasonable faith. In this example, the parachute and my contraption are the objects. If faith is more important than the object, you could strap anything on your back and jump out of the plane, but that’s not realistic. For faith to ultimately work, it must be placed in truth. To find which option has the highest probability of being true, we need evidence. If you had picked my contraption, you would be exercising blind faith.

So why would we rely on blind faith to make one of the most important decisions in our lives—God’s existence, identity and our eternity? It only makes sense to check out the facts to see if our belief is supported by evidence. When you consider a detective who solves mysteries for a living, it’s clear that if he never examines the facts, or if he files criminal charges based on feelings or what someone else believes, he would come to faulty conclusions.

To give you a mental picture of what we will be doing, let’s imagine that you wanted to walk across the ice to the other side of a frozen lake. Before you placed your faith in the ice, you would want some evidence that it would support you, because thin ice could lead to death. You might ask questions of the locals and look to see if anyone was out on the ice. You might cut a hole in the ice and check the thickness. But since it’s not possible to be one hundred percent certain the ice will support you all the way across the lake, there would come a point where you would need to exercise faith—making a decision based upon what you did know—if you ever hoped to get to the other side. In our investigation, we will follow the evidence as far as it will take us; faith will be required to make the rest of the journey. That sounds reasonable, doesn’t it?

The Merriam Webster Dictionary defines faith as “A firm belief in something for which there is no proof” but it does not say “for which there is no evidence.” <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/faith>

Faith is very important and it is required for any decision where we do not have one hundred percent proof; therefore it is essential to Christianity. The Bible states that faith connects us to the salvation God is offering through grace. Therefore, without faith it is impossible to be saved. But the Bible is speaking about faith placed in the truth, which it claims to be. Even the most sincere faith will not make my contraption perform like a parachute or make the ice thicker. It cannot change history (if Jesus did not rise from the dead, even sincere faith will not change that fact) and it definitely will not make a false belief about God true. While I know we could find adults who believe in the Greek gods Zeus and Apollo, if they aren't real, not even sincere faith will make them true.

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Conclusion – The object of faith is more important than faith. If the object is false, even the most sincere faith will not make it true.

True for You But Not for Me

The statement *true for you but not for me* has a long list of problems that tell us it is false. I bring it up because people sometimes claim that “Christianity is true for you but not for me.” People who make this statement have confused belief with truth. But belief alone does not guarantee that the matter at hand is true. Truth, on the other hand, is not a respecter of any belief that contradicts it. Truth conforms to reality and the object being referred to. The title of this book is a contradiction on purpose to get your attention: *Gravity—True For You But Not For Me*. It suggests that an objective truth like gravity does not apply to a person who does not believe in it. But since this is simply not how truth works, the title of this book is just as self-defeating as the claim, “The Bible is true for you but something else is true for me.” The following quote reveals an easy way to prove this for yourself:

“True for you but not for me is a self-defeating and therefore false statement. You can prove this one conclusively to yourself today, just drive 90 in a 55 and when the cop stops you for speeding, just say, “That’s true for you but not for me.” and speed off. Since it’s not true for you he can’t give you a ticket, right?” Dr. Frank Turek author and speaker, www.Crossexamined.org

True for you but not for me also claims that everything is true as long as someone believes it. If that’s the case, we should have all received perfect grades in school. Every answer I gave was true—for me.

It can be argued that *true for you but not for me* is even false when it comes to flavors of ice cream or the temperature in a room, because truth applies to its object. For example: you like vanilla, I like chocolate and we are in the same room and you feel cold and I feel warm. Referring to you as the object of the statement, it’s true for everyone everywhere that you like vanilla and feel cold. Referring to me as the object of the statement, it’s true for everyone everywhere that I like chocolate and feel warm. Here is a verse from a rap song that adds more clarity to the contradictory nature of our topic.

“If what's true for you is true for you and what's true for me is true for me, what if my truth says yours is a lie? Is it still true?” Lecrae, *Rebel* Album.

In opposition to how things really work, the *true for you but not for me* argument comes from a flawed understanding of how truth works and leads to the faulty conclusion, “What I believe about God is true just because I believe it.” Ironically, it’s a way people play god, by imagining God doesn’t exist or by creating a god who works for them.

In my opinion, *true for you but not for me* is really an attempt to escape the truth by denying or ignoring it. While it may work for a while, in the end the truth we have been avoiding must still be dealt with, and usually the longer we wait the higher the cost. Just ask any alcoholic, drug addict or over-spender how well denial worked for them after reality hits. Truth always surfaces and the truth about God is no exception. It’s always better to face truth early, accept it and deal with it.

“It is utterly wrongheaded to say that something is true for you but not for me. For example, what if I think fascism is true and you think liberal democracy is equally true? Should the fascist’s repression be tolerated by the believer in liberal democracy? If not, on what grounds? Why not permit Stalinism or Satanism or Nazism? Without criteria to determine truth, this relativism fails miserably.” Allister McGrath Professor of Theology Kings College, taken from Paul Copan’s book, “*True For You, But Not For Me*”.

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Conclusion – True for you but not for me is self-defeating and false. If the Bible is really true, it is true for everyone, everywhere, whether they believe it or not.

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Why Everyone’s Belief About God Cannot Be True

Many sincere and good people who have varying beliefs about God have the right to believe whatever they want. However, everyone’s belief cannot be true when it comes to God’s existence and identity. This is not uncaring or intolerant; it’s simply how truth works. If truth could contradict itself, a Christian and an atheist would both be correct about God’s existence; we know this is impossible.

Suppose you were a detective and six people showed up (an atheist, a Buddhist, a Muslim, a Mormon, a Hindu and a Christian) with different stories, all claiming to be the sole heir of a tremendous fortune. Could they all be telling the truth? No, you would immediately recognize the obvious problem. Six people claiming to be the sole heir is a contradiction and could not possibly be true. Therefore, you would check out their stories and follow the evidence to uncover the truth. At some point, their explanations would be contradictory to the facts in your investigation. Once you discover who the actual heir is, you would know for certain that the other five claims were false, no matter how close to the truth they appeared.

When it comes to God, we have a similar situation. Many people have shown up who claim to know the truth about God. On the surface it may seem as if most of them are headed in the same direction. But when we look closely, we see that they all contradict each other when it comes to

the most important points, like salvation. For example, Christianity is the sole belief that teaches salvation by God's grace, through faith alone. The others teach works (good deeds) and specific conditions as a necessity.

Contradictory Claims About Jesus, Salvation and Eternity

1. Evangelical Christians – One God, Jesus the Son is God in the flesh; salvation by God's grace through faith in Jesus alone; heaven for believers; non-believers end up in hell.

An evangelical Christian is a believer who holds to the inspiration, inerrancy, and authority of Scripture over any other teaching or tradition, the Trinity, the deity of Christ, and salvation by grace through faith alone.

2. Traditional Roman Catholicism – One God, Jesus the Son is God in the flesh; salvation by God's grace through faith in Jesus plus works, sacraments and penance here and in purgatory; heaven is the end result for true believers; non-believers in hell; claims to be the only true church.

3. Judaism – One God; beliefs about Jesus vary from great moral teacher, idol or a false prophet; just a man not the Messiah/Savior they believe is still to come; Jewish believers can sanctify their lives and draw closer to God by obeying divine commandments and good works; God will reward the good and punish the wicked; the dead will be resurrected; extreme evildoers like Hitler to eternal punishment.

4. Islam – Jesus was a prophet; salvation by belief in Allah, Mohammad and good works; true believers go to heaven; non-Muslims in hell.

5. Hinduism – Jesus was a prophet; millions of gods; salvation through good works and overcoming karma; reincarnation.

6. Buddhism – Jesus was an enlightened man; salvation by the cessation of desire through eight-fold path and works; extinguish the ego to enter nirvana, a form of heaven. Buddha was a raised Hindu and rejected Hinduism because of the caste system. He was actually an atheist but there are various forms of Buddhism.

7. Higher Power – Whatever anyone believes about Jesus, salvation and eternity is true. Every belief about God is true as long as someone believes it.

8. New Age – Jesus was an enlightened man/god; salvation not needed because we are all gods like Jesus, but don't realize it; reincarnation in new life based on works; contradictions among adherents embraced so beliefs can vary widely.

9. Mormonism – Jesus, spirit brother of Satan was once a man like all men; one of their doctrines is God was once a man like us; salvation by faith in their Jesus, being obedient to Mormonism and good works; non-Mormons get second chance after death to convert; best Mormons get their own universe and become its god; worst of the worst are cast into eternal darkness; claims to be the only true church. aka: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints or LDS.

10. **Jehovah's Witnesses** – Jesus is the archangel Michael; salvation by faith in Jesus plus works and obedience to JW teaching; most believers live eternally on a renewed Earth since they believe heaven is full; non-believers die, cease to exist; claims to be the only true church.

11. **Atheism/Humanism** – Jesus just a man; no afterlife; die, buried.

Our list indicates that New Age believers, Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses believe in Jesus, but their versions of Jesus contradict the Bible and each other. Muslims say that Jesus existed, but he did not die on the cross and rise again. Most religions say that Jesus was just a man. The Bible says that Jesus is God in the flesh and the only way to heaven. Not everyone can be correct. To come to a version of Jesus which is contrary to the Bible, people arbitrarily reject parts of the Bible they do not like and build their own Jesus. Then they add other books with teachings that contradict what Jesus taught, and with no evidence they claim that these are correct and the Bible is false. Although this list is obviously not all-inclusive, the contradictions are even more abundant when you add others.

If the evidence shows us that God does exist, we will be utilizing the law of non-contradiction, defined on page five, to eliminate those beliefs that contradict the truth. I want to reiterate that we should respect others and co-exist with them. Every person has the right to believe whatever they want, and no one has the right to force their beliefs on anyone. But the truth of the matter is simply stated in the following quote:

“Contrary beliefs can exist but contrary truths cannot.” Dr. Frank Turek, author, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*.

Narrow-Minded and Intolerant Christians

Christianity is often considered intolerant and is frequently rejected for pointing out that Jesus claimed, in John 14:6, to be the only way to heaven. But as you can see from the list on page 13 and 14, when it comes to salvation and eternity, most beliefs are exclusive. While anyone who claims that everyone's belief is true is actually saying that truth can contradict itself, which we know is impossible. Therefore the question remains: who has the truth?

It's Not Their Fault

People often have a hard time with a belief that claims to be the only way. They point out that many people believe what they do simply because of their country of birth, so it's not their fault if they are not Christians. If you were born in Saudi Arabia, you would probably be Muslim. While I agree with this statement, it does not mean their belief is true. Using this logic, we would need to say that people raised in Germany under Nazism or in the South under the Ku Klux Klan were correct, too—it's not their fault. The reality is, the origin or sincerity of one's belief does not prove that it is true or false. Only evidence can do that. This fact is supported around the world by those who have converted from their country's primary belief to Christianity, estimated at 63 million in the Philippines, 70 million in China and 38 million in Nigeria.

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Conclusion – Truth never contradicts itself, thus all the beliefs about God cannot be true.

Action Taken Upon Established Truth

My favorite definition for the Christian faith is *action taken upon established truth*. Think about this for a moment. It says that something actually happened in history that made the first believers take action. The disciples testified that Jesus proved to be trustworthy, and backed up His bold claims right before their eyes. They concluded, based on Jesus' miracles and the resurrection, that it was reasonable to trust Him regarding all that He said eternity holds.

Some people claim that you do not need evidence for a belief in God. But based on what we see in the Bible, Jesus clearly disagrees. Trusting in feelings alone or in what others believe is why so many people are led astray. The Christian faith is not an exercise in imagination, nor is it founded on feelings. It is based on real historical events seen and reported by eyewitnesses. Additionally, we have Old Testament prophecies that reveal the coming Messiah. When Jesus showed up claiming to be God, the facts say He fulfilled those prophecies, performed miracles and rose from the dead to prove His identity.

He (Jesus) presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God (Acts 1:3, emphasis added).

“But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works (miracles), that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father” (John 10:38, emphasis added).

According to the Bible, the apostle Paul (an eyewitness to the resurrection) went to the Jewish temples and reasoned with the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah. In this next verse, Paul clearly tells us that a Christian's faith is in vain if the resurrection did not actually occur:

And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain (1 Cor. 15:14).

I agree with Paul, and I would not be a Christian if the facts we can investigate indicated that something else was true. If any belief about God is false, including Christianity, then all the faith in the world will not make it true.

You may claim that people do not rise from the dead and miracles are not possible, therefore a Christian's faith must be in vain. If God does not exist, I agree. But if the facts say God does exist, you cannot rule out miracles, including the resurrection. Therefore, our next step is to examine the scientific facts to see if God exists. Later we will examine the facts to see if it is reasonable to trust the Bible's claims.

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Conclusion – The Christian faith is founded on historical events like the resurrection, which can be investigated. The disciples placed their faith in Jesus because He proved His claim to be God to them.

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Best Fits the Evidence

While we cannot prove God's existence and identity empirically (repeated testing and observation) as we can with gravity, many believe the evidence proves it is true beyond a reasonable doubt. This is the same standard that is used every day in our court system. Jim Wallace is a cold case homicide detective who converted from atheism to Christianity based on the evidence. He states on his website pleaseconvinceme.com that when he pulls a case file off the shelf, his job is to find the suspect who best fits the evidence. Imagine that you are a detective and there are twenty pieces of evidence and five suspects. If five details fit one suspect, it's not a big deal. But you would get excited if the same suspect popped up time and again as a match to the facts. Now if one suspect matched twenty out of twenty pieces of evidence, Jim would tell us this suspect is the guilty party or the most unlucky person in the world. He uses the same logic to find the truth about God's existence and identity, and so must we. So let's pull God's Cold Case file off the shelf, dust it off and see what best fits the evidence.

Jury Box

Since we determined that truth is important to you, I believe you really want to know if the facts say that God exists and the Bible is true, once and for all. To do so, you must be willing to consider the evidence in an honest and impartial manner. When it comes to God, many people practice "contempt prior to investigation." This has nothing to do with the evidence or the truth of the subject at hand. It's about rejecting something based upon emotions or as an act of the will, prior to an honest and impartial examination of the facts.

"There is a principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against all arguments and which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance-that principle is *contempt prior to investigation*." Herbert Spencer, a 19th century philosopher adapted this from an earlier quote by William Paley, an 18th century British theologian, *In A View of the Evidences of Christianity*, 1794. It is a popular phrase in AA.

To make an impartial decision, you need to set aside any thoughts of how God may have let you down, how a Christian may have hurt you, or any negative feelings about church. If you were forced to go to church as a kid and you are using this as an excuse to reject God, you are allowing those who controlled you then to control you now, by using their errors as an excuse to ignore the facts. If your life is a disaster and every Christian you have ever met failed in your eyes, it does not prove that the Bible and Jesus are false. You also need to understand that Christians do not claim to be Jesus and thus perfect. We claim to need Jesus because we recognize our imperfections.

As you consider the evidence, your goal is to see if it's convincing beyond a reasonable doubt. A reasonable doubt is based on reason and common sense after an impartial examination of all the evidence in the case. Very little in life is convincing beyond all possible doubt, including the evidence you are about to view. The truth is, if we lived our lives requiring proof beyond all possible doubt before making decisions, we would remain paralyzed in bed. There is no guarantee that our car won't crash, our food isn't contaminated, or our neighbor isn't going to shoot us. Even in the most conclusive cases offering the best evidence, jurors often walk away with a measure of doubt regarding their decision.

Contempt prior to investigation and wanting proof beyond all possible doubt are really about our will and desire to ignore the truth and do as we want, answering to no one. In interviewing a young man named Sly who claimed to be an atheist, I found he had no evidence to support his atheism. This is common for most atheists I've met, but since they are claiming to know that God does not exist, they need to back it up. I like to point out to atheists like Sly that our best minds admit mankind knows far less than ten percent of all knowledge in the universe. So if people are reasonable, they must admit that God could exist in the ninety percent we know nothing about. Three times in our conversation Sly got honest and said, "I just don't want there to be a God." To which I replied, "So what? If it's true, what you want won't matter." With Sly's attitude, do you think he would look at the evidence impartially, or would he look for ways to continue to justify his choices? If you have thoughts like Sly, you must understand that ignoring the truth won't make it go away. The best thing we can do is face the truth now so we won't collide with its consequences in eternity.

"Truth is like the sun. You can shut it out for a time, but it ain't goin' away." Elvis Presley, www.thinkexist.com

Motivation for Your Investigation

Approximately 155,000 people die around the world every day. Virtually none of us are certain of when our day will come. What is on the other side of death? Do we rot in the ground, or do we have another destination? The Bible offers only two options—heaven or hell—and it reveals these truths:

1. If it is true, it applies to you whether you believe it or not.
2. If you reject God, you will be without excuse, even if you have never read the Bible.

The Bible guarantees that God is so obvious through creation and in our conscience that those who deny Him are without excuse. Consider the following verses:

They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them (Rom. 2:15, emphasis added).

For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse (Rom. 1:20, emphasis added).

So before you scoff and say that God or hell do not exist, as some do, let's keep the claims of these two verses in mind, examine the facts, read the supporting quotes from experts in the field and weigh the evidence. Consider the following testimony of Detective Jim Wallace:

"I was an atheist for 35 years. I was passionate in my opposition to Christianity, and I enjoyed debating my Christian friends. I seldom found them prepared to defend what they believed. I became a Police Officer and eventually advanced to Detective. Along the way, I developed a healthy respect for the role of evidence in discerning truth, and my profession gave me ample opportunity to press into practice what I learned about the nature and power of evidence. Throughout all of this, I remained an *angry atheist*, hostile to Christianity and largely dismissive of Christians. But if I am honest with you, I'll have to admit that I never took the time to examine

the evidence for the Christian Worldview without the bias and presupposition of naturalism. I never gave the case for Christianity a fair shake. When I finally examined the evidence fairly, I found it difficult to deny, especially if I hoped to retain my respect for the way evidence is utilized to determine truth. I found the evidence for Christianity to be convincing.” Jim Wallace, www.pleaseconvinceme.com

www.God-Evidence-Truth.com

Does God Exist?

The Universe Had a Beginning.

The basic cosmological argument for the beginning of the universe states:

1. Everything that **comes into existence** requires a cause.
2. The universe came into existence out of nothing.
3. Therefore the universe requires a cause.

Logic and reason tell us that something that does not exist cannot bring itself into existence. For example: before you were born, could you have brought yourself into existence, or would a cause outside yourself (your parents) be required? If there was not a cause outside yourself, you would not exist now. The universe is larger, but the same obvious truth applies.

“To continue to look for a natural cause for the beginning of the universe, when natural laws did not yet exist, is like spending your life trying to prove you gave birth to your mother.” Dr. Frank Turek, author and speaker, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*.

Science is the search for causes and every effect has a cause. Here are a couple of the numerous facts that indicate the universe had a beginning:

1. Einstein's Theory of Relativity demands a beginning to time, space and matter and says they are co-relative, meaning one cannot exist without the other.
2. The undisputed Second Law of Thermodynamics, which tells us the universe is running out of usable energy and heading from order to chaos. Scientists tell us if the universe had always existed, we would be out of usable energy and in complete chaos by now.

The scientific evidence clearly shows that our entire universe (time, space, matter, energy) including all natural laws, leapt into being out of nothing. The cause of the universe must be outside of and separate from the universe itself, which is a definition of supernatural. It must be incredibly powerful, because it created everything out of nothing. It must be eternal, because it created time. It must be immaterial, because it created material. These facts fit the definition of the God of the Bible, a theistic God, a God who created and sustains the universe but is separate from it.

Consider this simple analogy I learned from Ray Comfort at livingwaters.com. When you look at a building, how do you know there was a builder? You have never seen or met him. Isn't the building itself absolute proof there was a builder? When you look at a painting, how do you know there was a painter? Isn't the painting itself absolute proof there was a painter? So when you learn that the entire universe was created out of nothing before natural laws existed, how do you know there is a creator? You have never seen or met Him. Like the building and the painting, isn't the universe itself absolute proof of a creator?

"The universe had a beginning. There was once nothing and now there is something." Janna Levin, Department of Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics at Cambridge University (emphasis added).

"The conclusion of this lecture is that the universe has not existed forever. Rather, the universe, and time itself, had a beginning in the Big Bang." Stephen Hawking, Theoretical physicist, *Beginning of Time* (emphasis added).

"The scientific evidence is now overwhelming that the universe began with a "Big Bang"." The Big Bang theory is the most widely accepted theory of the creation of the universe." Dr. Vander Pluijm University of Michigan, www.godandscience.org (emphasis added)

"Astronomers now find they have painted themselves into a corner because they have proven, by their own methods, that the world began abruptly in an act of creation to which you can trace the seeds of every star, every planet, every living thing in this cosmos and on the Earth. And they have found that all this happened as a product of forces you cannot hope to discover... that there are what I or anyone would call supernatural forces at work is now, I think, *a scientifically proven fact*." Robert Jastrow, agnostic astronomer who sat at the Hubble telescope stated this in an interview. "A "Scientist Caught Between Two Faiths" Christianity Today, August 6, 1982 (emphasis added).

"A universe that came from nothing in the big bang will disappear into nothing at the big crunch. Its glorious few zillion years of existence not even a memory." British astrophysicist, Paul Davies. www.thinkexist.com (emphasis added)

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Conclusion – The universe (time, space, matter and energy) had a beginning. By necessity, there must be an eternal, uncaused first cause for anything to exist now. God is the most logical explanation.

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A Huge Clue We See Every Day

Since we are looking for evidence, further thought on this subject would be of value. If God exists, we should be able to learn something from creation. Have you noticed that if we do not respect the truth about creation (for example, taking cover from a storm), it can kill us? *True for you but not for me* does not work with earthquakes, tornados or creation in general. Even gravity, which we all know is essential for our survival, plays a part in the deaths of approximately 150 people annually. Gravity just does what it does, every time someone steps off a cliff, falls off a ladder or gets killed by a falling coconut. So we see clear evidence that creation, which was designed for the greater good, does not show partiality. It is often said that creation is the reflection of its creator. Therefore, if the facts indicate God exists, we have learned from creation that we need to respect God and conform to His ways, instead of expecting God to respect us and conform to ours. If we do, it will go better for us, just as it does every time we respect gravity. The Bible confirms the reality of what we see in creation, including this important fact to keep in mind:

So Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality" (Acts 10:34, emphasis added).

Age of the Universe

Every once in a while I run into a person who has rejected the entire Bible because they believe all Christians insist the universe is only 6,000 year old. The truth is, there are Christians with good arguments on both sides of this debate (young versus old). Nowhere does the Bible state an exact age of the universe. Those who claim it does, do so by attempting to calculate the age of the universe from genealogies in the Bible. The Bible also never states that it is mandatory to believe either way. Therefore it is not a crucial factor in our discussion. As far as Christians are concerned, the apostle Paul said a Christian's main focus should always be Christ. So this is not a legitimate reason for a wholesale rejection of the Bible.

For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified (1 Cor. 2:2, emphasis added).

Who Made God?

Many people think they have come up with a great objection when they ask the question *who made God?* The answer is simple—no one. Only things that begin to exist require a cause. That's why people have such a hard time figuring out the mind-numbing problem of *what came first—the chicken or the egg?* We know if one did not exist before the other, neither would exist now. Since the universe is not eternal, by necessity there must be an initial uncaused eternal cause outside of the natural universe, or nothing would exist now.

The eternal God is your dwelling place (Deut. 33:27, emphasis added).

The Universe and Life Are Designed - The Teleological (design) argument for God.

1. All design requires a designer.
2. The universe and life exhibit intricate design.
3. Therefore, the universe and life require a designer.

There are only two types of causes, natural and intelligent. Common sense tells us the Grand Canyon had a natural cause and Mount Rushmore had an intelligent cause. We have a natural ability to spot intelligent design even in the simplest form, like a footprint in the sand or a heart carved in a tree. The SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence) program would be thrilled to hear even a very simple organized message from outer space on one of their radio telescopes. They would immediately know that it indicated intelligent life. Yet decades of listening have produced no solid evidence. So if a simple message from outer space or the words on this page require intelligence, what about the most intricate design known to man?

Our planet is designed specifically for life. Astrophysicist Hugh Ross maintains a growing list of 122 constants—Anthropic Principles that are set on a razor's edge. Alter any one just slightly and in most cases we would not exist. I have listed six for you to consider:

1. If the universe expanded at a rate one millionth more slowly, the universe would not exist.
2. If Jupiter was not in its current orbit, its gravitational force could not protect us from comets that could destroy the Earth.

3. Earth's rotation: if longer, temperature differences would be too great; if shorter, atmospheric wind velocities would be too great
4. If the Earth's 23 degree axle tilt was altered even slightly, temperatures would be too extreme for life.
5. Oxygen to nitrogen ratio in atmosphere: if larger, life functions would proceed too quickly; if smaller, life functions would proceed too slowly.
6. Magnetic field: if stronger, electromagnetic storms would be too severe; if weaker, no protection from solar wind particles.

Dr. Ross has calculated "the odds of these 122 constants that make it possible for our existence, being precisely as they are at 1 chance in 10^{138} power. In mathematics this means: 1 chance in 1 with 138 zeros after it." Dr. Hugh Ross, *Why I believe in Divine Creation*, www.reasons.org

To help put this number into perspective: statistical zero, where scientists usually write something off as impossible, is 1 in 10^{50} , 1 with 50 zeros after it. NOAA places the odds of being hit by lightning at 1 in 1,000,000 or 1 with six zeros after it. Your odds to win the California Super Lotto are 1 chance in 41,416,353 or a 4 with approximately 7 zeros after it.

John O'Keefe (astronomer at NASA): "We are, by astronomical standards, a pampered, cosseted, cherished group of creatures. If the Universe had not been made with the most exacting precision we could never have come into existence. It is my view that these circumstances indicate the universe was created for man to live in." Heeren, F. 1995. *Show Me God*. Wheeling, IL, Searchlight Publications, p. 200 (emphasis added).

"The laws [of physics] seem to be the product of exceedingly ingenious design. The universe must have a purpose." Paul Davies: British astrophysicist, Davies, P. 1984, *Superforce: The Search for a Grand Unified Theory of Nature* (emphasis added).

"Astronomy leads us to a unique event, a universe which was created out of nothing, one with the very delicate balance needed to provide exactly the conditions required to permit life, and one which has an underlying (one might say 'supernatural') plan." Arno Penzias, Nobel Prize in physics, quoted in *Cosmos, Bios, Theos: Scientists Reflect on Science, God, and the Origins of the Universe, Life, and Homo Sapiens* (emphasis added).

"The exquisite order displayed by our scientific understanding of the physical world calls for the divine." Vera Kistiakowsky, MIT physicist, quoted in *Cosmos, Bios, Theos: Scientists Reflect on Science, God, and the Origins of the Universe, Life, and Homo Sapiens* (emphasis added).

“Is it possible that design happens by chance without a designer? There is perhaps one chance in a trillion that "S.O.S." could be written in the sand by the wind. But who would use a one-in-a-trillion explanation? Someone once said that if you sat a million monkeys at a million typewriters for a million years, one of them would eventually type out all of Hamlet by chance. But when we find the text of Hamlet, we don't wonder whether it came from chance and monkeys. Why then does the atheist use that incredibly improbable explanation for the universe? Clearly, because it is his only chance of remaining an atheist. At this point we need a psychological explanation of the atheist rather than a logical explanation of the universe. We have a logical explanation of the universe, but the atheist does not like it. It's called God.” Peter Kreeft, Ph.D., Professor of philosophy at Boston College, www.peterkreeft.com

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Conclusion – Intricate design in the universe requires an intelligent designer.

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Complex Design of Life

One of many things naturalists cannot explain is the source of information. How could non-living chemicals have come together by accident to produce the highly complex information found in DNA? We know that all information, written languages or codes always come from an information-rich source—a mind. Minds create intelligent communication, not natural causes. Life's design displays a level of complexity far beyond anything we are aware of.

“(1) DNA is not merely a molecule with a pattern; it is a code, a language, and an information storage mechanism. (2) All codes we know the origin of are created by a conscious mind. (3) Therefore DNA was designed by a mind, and language and information are proof of the action of a Super intelligence.” Perry Marshall, Information Technology specialist, www.cosmicfingerprints.com (emphasis added).

“All instruction, all teaching, all training comes with intent. Someone who writes an instruction manual does so with purpose. Did you know that in every cell of our bodies there exists a very detailed instruction code, much like a miniature computer program? A computer program is made up of ones and zeros, like this: 110010101011000. The ways they are arranged tell the computer program what to do. The DNA code in each of our cells is very similar. It's made up of four chemicals that scientists abbreviate as A, T, G, and C. These are arranged in the human cell like this: CGTGTGACTCGCTCCTGAT and so on. **There are three billion of these letters in every human cell!**” “Well, just like you can program your phone to beep for specific reasons, DNA instructs the cell. DNA is a three-billion-lettered program telling the cell to act in a certain way. It is a full instruction manual. Natural, biological causes are completely lacking as an explanation when programmed information is involved. You cannot find instruction, precise information like this, without someone intentionally constructing it.” Francis S. Collins, director of the Human Genome Project, and author of *The Language of God*, Free Press, New York, NY, 2006, www.everystudent.com (emphasis added).

“The amount of information that could be contained in a pinhead volume of DNA, if all the information were written into paperback books, would make a pile of such books 500 times higher than from here to the moon!” Dr. Werner Gitt Creationist Information Scientist, www.creation.com

“The human eye is a truly amazing phenomenon. Although accounting for just one fourth-thousandth of an adult's weight, it is the medium which processes some 80% of the information received by its owner from the outside world. The tiny retina contains about 130 million rod-shaped cells, which detect light intensity and transmit impulses to the visual cortex of the brain by means of some one million nerve fibers, while nearly six million cone-shaped cells do the same job, but respond specifically to color variation. The eyes can handle 500,000 messages simultaneously, and are kept clear by ducts producing just the right amount of fluid with which

the lids clean both eyes simultaneously in one five-thousandth of a second.” John Blanchard, *Does God Believe in Atheists?* 2000, p. 213.

“Human DNA is like a computer program but far, far more advanced than any software ever created.” Microsoft’s Bill Gates *The Road Ahead* (emphasis added).

"Although I was once sharply critical of the argument to design, I have since come to see that, when correctly formatted, this argument constitutes a persuasive case for the existence of God.” Anthony Flew, atheist for 50 years, *There is a God*, p. 95 (emphasis added).

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Conclusion – Intricate design in life requires an intelligent designer.

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Could the Universe or Life be an Accident?

“The calculations of Oxford mathematician Roger Penrose, show the improbability of a universe conducive to life occurring by accident luck and chance is 1 chance in 10^{10123} . The phrase "extremely unlikely" is inadequate to describe this possibility. It is hard even to imagine what this number means. In math, the value 10^{123} means 1 followed by 123 zeros. This is more than the total number of atoms (10^{78} , 1 with 78 zeros) believed to exist in the entire universe. But Penrose's answer is vastly more than this: It requires 1 followed by 10123 zeros. It is impossible.” Roger Penrose, *The Emperor's New Mind*; from Michael Denton’s, *Nature's Destiny*.

“As biochemists discover more and more about the awesome complexity of life, it is apparent that its chances of originating by accident are so minute that they can be completely ruled out. Life cannot have arisen by chance.” Sir Fred Hoyle, *Intelligent Universe*.

“An honest man, armed with all the knowledge available to us now, could only state that in some sense, the origin of life appears at the moment to be almost a miracle, so many are the conditions which would have had to have been satisfied to get it going.” Francis Crick, molecular biologist, biophysicist, and neuroscientist, co-discoverer of the structure of the DNA molecule, *Life Itself*, Simon and Schuster.

“In the last 30 years a number of prominent scientists have attempted to calculate the odds that a free-living, single-celled organism, such as a bacterium, might result by the chance combining of pre-existent building blocks. Harold Morowitz calculated the odds as one chance in $10^{100,000,000,000}$ (1 chance in 1 with 100 trillion zeros after it). Sir Fred Hoyle calculated the odds of only the proteins of an amoebae arising by chance as one chance in $10^{40,000}$. The odds calculated by Morowitz and Hoyle are staggering. Mathematicians tell us that any event with an improbability greater than one chance in 1050 is in the realm of metaphysics -- i.e. a miracle.” Mark Eastman, MD, *Creation by Design*, T.W.F.T. Publishers, 1996, 21-22, www.allaboutthejourney.org

“It is a shock to us in the twentieth century to discover, from observations science has made, that the fundamental mechanisms of life cannot be ascribed to natural selection, and therefore were

designed. But we must deal with our shock as best we can and go on.” Michael Behe, Ph.D. Professor Biochemistry, *Molecular Machines, Cosmic Pursuit*, Spring 1998, p. 35.

Making Frankenstein

In the unlikely event scientists are able to create even the simplest life from non-living chemicals, would this accomplishment rule out the need for an Intelligent Creator? No, it would instead support the case for a Creator, because it demonstrates that it takes centuries of man’s intelligence to create life, rather than accident, luck and chance as naturalism states. You must remember that the facts tell us everything came from nothing. In trying to create life, scientists do not start with nothing, because they cannot even create a grain of sand out of nothing.

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Conclusion – The facts prove that the probability of the universe and life happening by accident, luck and chance are beyond impossible. Both require an intelligent cause.

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Why this is not the God of the Gaps

Skeptics accuse those who believe in God of just inserting God as the answer when the cause is unknown. This has been true at times in the past (“Thunder! The gods must be mad!”), and it may be true today for some primitive tribes. But scientists who support Intelligent Design follow the evidence where it leads. If there is a natural explanation, that’s fine, but when 100 percent of the observable evidence says a natural explanation is impossible, then intelligence is considered. Here is a perfect example: if something can pop into existence out of nothing, uncaused, then why would it only happen to the universe? Why not all kinds of things? Has it ever been observed? No—so the universe cannot be an exception. When it comes to design, have you ever seen a complex message, code, information or written instructions come from anything but a mind? Have scientists? No, so the complex message in DNA requires a mind as its source. It could not happen by accident.

"It's not just that we lack a natural explanation for the genetic code, but that such a message is positive, empirically verifiable evidence *for* an intelligent being. So we are not going on what we don't know, but what we do know." Dr. Frank Turek, Crossexamined.org, email message.

Evolution

Evolution happens, but the facts do not support macro evolution (the theory that one species evolved from another). Micro evolution is visible when a bacterium transforms to develop a resistance to an antibiotic, but it’s still bacteria. It is also visible in different breeds of dogs—but they are still dogs. There has never been solid evidence for macro evolution. If it were true, scientists would not still be looking for the first fossil record of a missing link; they would have found millions of them by now. Every time someone claims to have found the missing link, there is a big splash in the news. Then it drifts off into obscurity as it becomes apparent it was nothing more than a fossil of a fully developed animal or one of numerous hoaxes that evolutionists initially believed.

NEBRASKA MAN: This amazing discovery was found to be nothing more than a pig's tooth.

LUCY: Lucy's remains have been reclassified as an extinct ape.

PILTDOWN MAN: Proven to be a deliberate hoax. A human skull attached to an ape jaw and weathered to look old.

RAMAPITHECUS: Found to be from an orangutan.

JAVA MAN: These bones were found to be the remains of an ape and human mixed together. Its discoverer later rejected his find.

PEKING MAN: Again, a mix-up of human and ape bones.

Charles Darwin said in *The Origin of Species* that his theory rested on finding transitional fossils that have still not been found. "The number of intermediate varieties which have formerly existed on Earth must be truly enormous. Why then is not every geological formation and every stratum full of such intermediate links? Geology assuredly does not reveal any such finely graduated organic chain; and this, perhaps, is the most obvious and gravest objection which can be urged against my theory." Charles Darwin, *Origin of Species* (emphasis added).

"I believe that one day the Darwinian myth will be ranked the greatest deceit in the history of science." Søren Løvtrup, *Darwinism: The Refutation of a Myth* (emphasis added).

"The chance that higher life forms might have emerged (through evolutionary processes) is comparable with the chance that a "tornado sweeping through a junk yard might assemble a Boeing 747 from the material therein." Sir Fred Hoyle is professor of astronomy, "Hoyle on Evolution," *Nature*, Vol. 294, November 12, 1981, p. 105.

Currently more than 600 scientists have signed the following statement and the number continues to grow. "We are skeptical of claims for the ability of random mutation and natural selection to account for the complexity of life. Careful examination of the evidence for Darwinian theory should be encouraged." www.dissentfromdarwin.org

"None exists in the literature claiming that one species has been shown to evolve into another. Bacteria, the simplest form of independent life, are ideal for this kind of study, with generation times of twenty to thirty minutes, and populations achieved after eighteen hours. But throughout 150 years of the science of bacteriology, there is no evidence that one species of bacteria has changed into another." British bacteriologist Alan H. Linton, "Scant Search for the Maker," *The Times Higher Education Supplement*, April 20, 2001 (emphasis added).

"And the salient fact is this: if by evolution we mean macroevolution (as we henceforth shall), then it can be said with the utmost rigor that the doctrine is totally bereft of scientific sanction. Now, to be sure, given the multitude of extravagant claims about evolution promulgated by evolutionists with an air of scientific infallibility, this may indeed sound strange. And yet the fact remains that there exists to this day not a shred of bona fide scientific evidence in support of the thesis that macro evolutionary transformations have ever occurred." Wolfgang Smith, *Teilhardism and the New Religion*, Rockford., Ill.: Tan Books, 1988, pp. 5-6 (emphasis added). Dr. Smith taught at MIT and UCLA.

“There are too many missing links, discovery disconnects, anatomical and functional complexities, and unexplained genetic changes, and too overwhelming a number of inexplicable and improbable coincidences, for evolution to be placed among proven scientific theories. An enormous, rapidly growing, tidal wave of missing links is closing in on Charles Darwin’s beach, yet some of the shoreline residents cannot hear the roar. Some may always be deaf.” *Billions of Missing Links*, Harvest House, 2007, by Geoffrey Simmons, M.D.

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Conclusion – There is no solid evidence for macro evolution - one species changing into another.

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Why Can’t Scientists See God in the Facts?

That’s a very important question, and much of it has to do with the definition of science. The following primary definition of science in the American Heritage Dictionary, <http://education.yahoo.com/reference/dictionary/entry/science> , restricts the search to a natural cause:

- a) The observation, identification, description, experimental investigation, and theoretical explanation of phenomena.
- b) **Such activities restricted to a class of natural phenomena.**
- c) Such activities applied to an object of inquiry or study.

By definition, science rules out God before even looking at the evidence. Therefore no matter what is discovered, God cannot be the cause. We learned earlier that this is contempt prior to investigation. This is probably why they keep trying to sell us natural causes despite the highly complex design that has been discovered. This analogy should shed some light on this matter: If I were a detective who knew for a fact there were only two possible suspects to a crime, and because of personal bias completely ruled out the one who was guilty before examining the evidence, I would obviously need to ignore many of the facts and perhaps manipulate or manufacture some evidence to make it fit the innocent suspect. By ruling out God prior to their investigation, scientists are forced to maintain that everything is a product of natural causes, something the facts dispute.

The atheist and many scientists can't find God for the same reason that a thief can't find a policeman.

There is an obvious similarity between scientists and a person called for jury duty who has made a decision prior to looking at the evidence. If these scientists showed up for jury duty with this attitude, they would surely be disqualified.

You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart (Jeremiah 29:13).

Overwhelming Evidence of Bias

Some people claim you cannot believe anything a Christian writes about God because they believe the Bible is true. But just because someone is committed and passionate about a subject does not mean it is necessarily false. If it did, you couldn't trust anything you read, including scientific literature. Only the facts can reveal the truth. The following quotes indicate how some scientists reject the possibility of God prior to examining the facts, which is defined as a prior commitment to materialism or naturalism. It is clear evidence of the bias among mainstream scientists.

"Biologists must constantly keep in mind that what they see was not designed, but rather evolved." Francis Crick Nobel Prize winner for co-discovery of the Double Helix, *What Mad Pursuit*.

"We take the side of science in spite of the patent absurdity of some of its constructs, in spite of its failure to fulfill many of its extravagant promises of health and life, and in spite of the tolerance of the scientific community for unsubstantiated just-so-stories, because we have a prior commitment, a commitment to materialism. It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us to accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our priori adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counterintuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is an absolute, for we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door." Professor Richard Lewontin, a geneticist and evolutionist, *Billions and Billions of Demons* (emphasis added).

"In my opinion, using creation and evolution as topics for critical-thinking exercises in primary and secondary schools is virtually guaranteed to confuse students about evolution and may lead them to reject one of the major themes in science." Eugenie Scott, leader of the anti-creationist National Center for Science Education, Larry Witham, *Where Darwin Meets the Bible*, p. 23.

"Even if all the data points to an intelligent designer, such a hypothesis is excluded from science because it is not naturalistic." Dr. Scott Todd, an Immunologist at Kansas State University, "*Correspondence to Nature*" 401(6752):423, 30 Sept. 1999 (emphasis added).

"Ultimately it is all about the concept of 'God'. No answer can be "God probably did it" for a scientist, by definition, because God is defined as being non-materialistic or outside of Nature. Therefore, scientists commonly argue that God, if he even exists, is beyond the detection of science—that he cannot be ruled in or out of any equation." Sean Pitman M.D. www.DetectingDesign.com (emphasis added).

This next Bible verse seems fitting, as it predicts the scientists we see today, who worship evolution.

Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things (Rom. 1:22-23).

Conclusion – Many scientists display their obvious bias by ruling out God before they look at the facts.

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Peer Pressure Among Scientists

Remember as a teen the pressure to conform and fit in or be rejected? It is no different with scientists; the retribution and persecution for those who speak out against naturalism can be severe with job loss, denial of tenure and more.

See example - <http://www.discovery.org/a/2939>

Aliens Brought us Here

Even though people have claimed to have seen UFOs, there's no solid evidence from any of the SETI programs that began in the early 1960's. Some widely speculative scientists, even the champion of today's atheism, Oxford Professor Richard Dawkins, suggest (with no credible evidence) that aliens could be the cause of life on Earth. Hollywood has helped foster this theory in our imagination with their realistic science fiction movies. But even if aliens exist, it does not respond to the fact that the universe leapt into being out of nothing, and only pushes back the creation of life one step; who created the aliens? By necessity, there must be an uncaused first cause.

Could the real origin for this display of blind faith by some scientists come from their knowledge that it is impossible for non-living chemicals to come together by accident and form life? Rejecting God before they even look at the evidence, they now find themselves boxed in a corner with only aliens as a way to introduce intelligence. Aliens may exist, but they're not the best fit to the evidence.

Do any Scientists Believe in God?

Yes, many believe in God. There are people with great human intelligence on both sides of the debate about God. Since both sides cannot be right, we see man's worldly intelligence may not always be the indicator of truth. The following websites are a sample of sites supported by scientists who believe in God:

reasons.org

discovery.org

creation.com

godandscience.org

answersingenesis.org

Like all scientists, these men and women sometimes have different interpretations of the details, but they all agree that God is a necessity based on the facts.

"I was reminded of this a few months ago when I saw a survey in the journal *Nature*. It revealed that 40% of American physicists, biologists and mathematicians believe in God-and not just some metaphysical abstraction, but a deity who takes an active interest in our affairs and hears our prayers: the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." Jim Holt, "Science Resurrects God", Wall Street Journal 97 (emphasis added).

"Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind". Albert Einstein a German-born US physicist "Science, Philosophy and Religion: a Symposium", 1941.

The Moral Argument for God's Existence

While this section might be a bit long, it is imperative that you grasp this truth, therefore I urge you to read thoughtfully.

It's a universal fact everyone (including atheists) has a conscience which deals exclusively with morality and to which we feel a sense of obligation. A sane person would never consider living in total rebellion to their conscience. No one needs the Bible to know right from wrong. Our conscience acts as a warning system in an attempt to stop us from making the wrong decision by illuminating what we ought and ought not to do. The question is, how could everyone in the world have essentially the same warning system which informs them it is wrong to lie, steal and murder, unless God exists? Some argue this comes from evolution, our parents and society. I agree that morality is passed down and reinforced by them, but the question is not how we learn it, but why our conscience recognizes that some acts—like murder and rape—are unquestionably wrong.

I first want to point out that our ability to recognize evil actually supports the existence of God. To judge something as evil requires the knowledge of what is good. To judge something imperfect requires the knowledge of what is perfect. C.S Lewis explains:

"As an atheist my argument against God was that the universe seemed so cruel and unjust. But how had I got this idea of just and unjust? A man does not call a line crooked unless he has some idea of a straight line. What was I comparing this universe with when I called it unjust?" C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*.

If we were to examine the life of the one person who appeared to possess the highest level of morality among humans, we all know they would not be perfect. They would simply be closer to perfection than you or I. But what are we comparing that nearly perfect person with, to realize they fall short? We must be utilizing a higher standard that we are all aware of. Why would we have a sense of what perfect morality is if it does not exist in humans? Many believe the best explanation is that God exists and He placed morality within us, as the Bible claims.

They (mankind) show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them (Rom. 2:15, emphasis added).

Some call Christians hypocrites for not always behaving as Jesus instructed. Yet those who say this have willfully violated the true advice of their conscience, every time they have ever lied, cheated or stolen. The truth is, we are all hypocrites.

Actions vs. Reactions in Moral Issues

People recognize objective morality better by their reactions than by their actions. For example, we all know that it's wrong to lie and steal, and if we get caught we make excuses. Why make excuses if it's not wrong? When someone lies or steals from us, we immediately know it is wrong. Osama Bin Laden may have thought his belief in Allah justified his actions in crashing planes into buildings and killing innocent people, but he would immediately recognize it was wrong if we did the same to him. A great way to realize if what you want to do is right or wrong is to consider how you would react if it was done to you.

And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them (Luke 6:31).

Objective versus Individual Opinion

Some claim that morality is relative or subjective (one opinion versus another), therefore God is not necessary. Objective morality, values, and duties indicate a moral truth that rises above all people, a moral truth that still would be true even if everyone were brainwashed to believe it was not. If our conscience—our knowledge of right and wrong—is more than just our personal opinion, it must have a source that transcends (is above and beyond) mankind. Therefore, if it is in fact true that objective morality does exist, its logical source is God.

Dr. William Lane Craig of reasonablefaith.org lays out the Moral Argument for God:

1. If God does not exist, objective moral values and duties do not exist.
2. Objective moral values and duties do exist.
3. Therefore, God exists.

Next we will be examining the evidence to see if the second point is true. Is morality objective, or just opinion?

Moral Conflicts

Some say abortion is acceptable and some say it is not, which leads some to say that morality is just opinion. But this disagreement is really about when life begins. The pro-life side says life begins at conception, while the pro-choice side says it begins at birth, therefore abortion is not taking a life. Yet even those who say abortion is justifiable will passionately defend a newborn baby. Both sides agree life is valuable, but they disagree on when it begins.

On an important side note, since *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, 97 percent of the 55 million abortions in the US were done for convenience. In China and Asia, 163 million female babies have been aborted in the last 30 years because they were not boys. *Unnatural Selection*, M. Hvistendahl. Here is the reason why the pro-life side insists conception is when life begins:

“Day 22: Heart begins to beat. Week 7: Eyelids and toes form, nose distinct. The baby is kicking and swimming. Week 8: Every organ is in place, bones replace cartilage, fingerprints begin to form and baby can begin to hear. Week 12: The baby can experience pain, nerves and vocal cords complete. The baby can suck its thumb.” www.nrlc.org

Objective Morality Test

The following test will help you clearly see that objective morality does in fact exist and therefore God exists. It uses four graphic real-life examples of situations which some claim are acceptable. This leads to the assertion by others that morality is just one opinion versus another. As you read, mentally place yourself in the victim's position and decide if the actions are really wrong despite the opinions of the perpetrators.

1. You are one of the abused children.

In an 8-3-11 AFP article on the internet entitled "US Charges 72 Over 'Nightmare' Child Porn Network", horrific sexual acts done to young children are described. The accused believe that what they were doing was proper conduct and not illegal or immoral. Consider this quote:

"Dreamboard's creators and members lived all over the world—but they allegedly were united by a disturbing belief that the sexual abuse of children is proper conduct that should not be criminalized." Attorney Eric Holder.

2. You are one of those tortured and murdered.

When the Nazis were arrested and put on trial for crimes against humanity, their defense was the claim that outsiders had no right to come in and tell them how they should run their society. They were just following orders, and they claimed that torturing and murdering millions of innocent people was not wrong.

3. You are the designated non-person.

We see something very unique when we compare abortion, slavery and the Nazis' killing of the Jews. For years, America condoned slavery by designating slaves as non-persons or property. The Nazis in their day and radical Muslims today consider Jews non-persons. Today, more and more people incorrectly believe that if we got rid of the Jews, the extremist Muslims would be happy and the whole Middle East problem would be solved. If someone classified you a non-person—making it legal to take your life—would it still be wrong?

4. You are the five-month-old unborn child.

Parital birth abortion is another more sinister and brazen example of man's attempt to soothe his conscience and still have his way. The entire baby (non-person in their eyes) is delivered, with the exception of its head. Then the doctor drills a hole in the back of the baby's skull and suctions out its brains. If the baby's head was removed fully from the mother, the baby would be a person by man's law, and these few inches would finally force man to call it murder. Ironically, the judges in Roe v. Wade had to view the unborn as non-persons to permit legal abortion. If the unborn were regarded as persons, we would have a moral obligation to protect them, as they would have rights under our Constitution and the abortion issue would be dead.

"I've noticed that everybody that is for abortion has already been born." Ronald Reagan

If you followed my instructions and mentally placed yourself in the victim's role, you know absolutely that all of these actions are wrong. For a person to maintain a belief that morality is just personal opinion, they would need to say all four examples are perfectly acceptable. But let's

take it a step further and imagine that you were taught from early childhood that all four of these actions were appropriate. Would they then be legitimate just because you now believed they were, or would they still be wrong? If you conclude that just one of them is wrong, morality must be objective and man cannot be its source.

In addition, elaborate attempts to get around our knowledge of what we know is wrong, along with attempts to cover it up, make it obvious that moral law is objective. If morality was just one opinion versus another, 9/11 was not wrong. No one should be punished and everyone needs to be let out of jail. No one could make a moral stand against anything and there would be no need to define Jews, slaves and the unborn as non-persons in an attempt to cover up immoral actions.

I believe our test conclusively proves that objective morality exists. Therefore, the second point of the moral argument listed on page 44 is true; which makes the conclusion of the argument true. Therefore, God exists.

Alleged moral conflicts have a reasonable explanation if you investigate. Humans have selfish desires and tend to ignore truths that do not fit into their agenda. The Bible says we suppress the truth by denying or creating our own god to do the things we want.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth (Rom. 1:18, emphasis added).

“Some might argue: Aren't there moral conflicts as well? Some cultures permit polygamy, for instance. Yes, but marriage customs and vows that bind marriages together also prohibit adultery. While applications and expressions of moral principles may differ from culture to culture, there are basic moral principles that cut across cultural lines.” Paul Copan, www.4truth.net, www.paulcopan.com

Moral Obligations are Only to Persons

Some people claim that God is an impersonal force. One of the problems with this theory is that we never feel moral obligations to impersonal forces like gravity, only to other persons. The sense of moral obligation we experience supports the existence of a personal, theistic God, as described in the Bible.

Right and Wrong, Just and Unjust

To bring the undeniable knowledge of right and wrong to the forefront of your mind, please read the following list and sincerely consider the injustice in our world. If you have experienced injustice in your own life, bring that to mind also.

Many innocent people died on 9/11. Millions of innocent people have died in wars. Some kill others, claiming God's approval. Innocent children are kidnapped and killed. Others are randomly murdered. Adults sexually abuse innocent children. Over 30,000 children die every day of hunger and preventable diseases, 24 every minute. Wrongfully accused people are in prison right now. Simply professing to trust Jesus in strict Muslim countries can lead to imprisonment, torture and death. Some are wealthy beyond belief simply because of their family. Some are rich from crime. Many work hard and are still poor. If the items listed stir your conscience, it is because you know they are unfair and unjust. The question is, does this

profound sense of injustice that you experience when you review these facts have any meaning, or is this inner sense simply a worthless illusion?

Philosopher Immanuel Kant, in the following moral argument for God's existence, concluded that if this inborn sense of right and wrong, just and unjust has any meaning at all, the following must exist:

1. There must be justice. Since there is not justice in this life, there must be life after death.
2. For justice, there must be a judgment.
3. For perfect judgment, a perfect moral judge must exist.
4. The judge must have all knowledge, so he cannot make an error in judgment.
5. The judge must be all powerful, so he can carry out any punishment he imposes on the guilty.

Kant's conclusion points to the God of the Bible without using the Bible and further confirms the necessity of God's existence.

"Everyone knows certain principles; there is no land where murder is a virtue and gratitude a vice." U of T Professor and author J. Budziszewski, *Written on the Heart: The Case for Natural Law*.

"In moral experience we apprehend a realm of moral values and duties that impose themselves upon us. There's no more reason to deny the objective reality of moral values than the objective reality of the physical world." William Lane Craig, www.reasonablefaith.org

Moral Evil Proves There is no God

I have dealt with this objection briefly, but because it is a highly emotional objection that is often used to reject God's existence, I want to approach it again from another angle. I agree that if I only focused on the evil in the world, I too could not believe God existed. But evil simply does not disprove the existence of God, especially in the light of all of the evidence that indicates God is a necessity. Man's ability to commit evil is due to our free will, the source of all moral evil. God knew evil would exist with free will and He knew man would crucify His only Son, but He still gave us free will. To stop evil, God would need to remove everyone's free will, which would remove our ability to love. God obviously places a very high value on love. Can you imagine a world where love was not possible? The Bible promises that God will stop evil, but in His time, not ours. Here are some lyrics from a rap song by Lecrae, a young man who understands that evil originates from our free will.

"Some people say that God ain't real 'cause they don't see how a good God can exist with all this evil in the world. If God is real then He should stop all this evil, 'cause He's all-powerful right? What is evil though man? It's anything that's against God. It's anything morally bad or wrong. It's murder, rape, stealing, lying, cheating. But if we want God to stop evil, do we want Him to stop it all or just a little bit of it? If He stops us from doing evil things, what about lying, or what about our evil thoughts? I mean, where do you stop, the murder level, the lying level, or the thinking level? If we want Him to stop evil, we gotta be consistent; we can't just pick and choose. That means you and I would be eliminated right? Because we think evil stuff. If that's true, we should be eliminated! But thanks be to God that Jesus stepped in to save us from our sin! Christ died for all evilness! Repent, turn to Jesus man!" Lecrae, *Rebel* album, *Truth*.

Religion has a Terrible Record of Immorality

While it's true that men use Christianity and other religious beliefs to do evil, which is absolutely wrong, some claim that this makes the Bible untrue. However, all of the injustices done in the last 2,000 years by people who claim to be Christians do not prove the Bible is false, any more than it proves your conscience wrong because you have intentionally violated it. It only means that men are sinful and in need of God's help. For the record, history shows us that the biggest killers are

atheistic regimes like communist Russia and China, along with many others that have killed an estimated 141 million people in the last 100 years alone. In the entire 2,000 years since Christ, the number killed by those professing to be Christians is estimated on newscholars.com at 264,000.

The Crusades are often brought up as an excuse to reject Christianity by those who are not familiar with actual history. There were terrible things done in the Crusades, just as in any war. The intended purpose of the Crusades was not to force Christianity upon the unwilling, as some claim. History tells us the Crusades were a delayed response to Muslim aggression and their conquest of foreign lands. Thomas Madden, "*A Concise History of the Crusades.*" *Zenit, the International News Agency*, <http://www.churchinhistory.org/pages/leaflets/the-crusades.htm> If the Crusades had not occurred, we probably wouldn't have a choice of beliefs today. It would be Islam or your life.

"Religion does not poison man, man poisons religion." Dr. Frank Turek, www.crossexamined.org

Many who claim the name of Christ are not true Christians. The Bible tells us that God is aware of this, and they may fool us but they're not fooling God, so don't worry about it.

"Not everyone who calls out to me, 'Lord! Lord!' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter" (Matt. 7:21, emphasis added).

"Let's be honest. There are guys today who bomb abortion clinics. There are people today who establish their own compound, name it after their daddy, and are killing in the name of Christ. But here is the fundamental point. When these people kill in the name of Jesus, they are doing so in absolute defiance of the teachings of Christ. A Muslim will always bring up the Old Testament, David and Solomon. I say, that's great, but they're not my leader -- Jesus is. Jesus is God. That's the central point of Christianity. If Jesus isn't God I'm wasting my time. Back to my point—these people do these violent things in defiance of Jesus' teaching. 'Pray for those who persecute you.' When a Muslim does these things in the name of Allah, he is doing so in strict adherence and allegiance to the teachings and example of Muhammad." Dr. Ergun Caner, Muslim for half his life, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, Arlington Baptist College.

"God is responsible for the fact of freedom. Humans are responsible for their acts of freedom." http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rfd_1UAjeIA

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Conclusion – Objective morality exists; it is displayed by one’s conscience and is undeniable. It is similar to a law and all laws have lawgivers. A transcendent God is the best explanation.

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The Facts Make Sense with God

If there is no God, what’s the origin of intelligence, love, personality, feelings, common sense, the law of logic, natural laws, knowledge, the laws of mathematics, emotions and the law of causality?

Those who claim there is no God believe everything has a natural or material explanation. The problem is that none of the items in the above list are comprised of material—yet they do exist. You would also need to explain the purpose of our existence. Most naturalists would say we have no purpose. But then the question is, why do the morally right thing? What obligates us to care for others if we are simply random chemicals that came together by accident? God’s existence answers all of these questions and so much more.

Weighing the Facts, Does God Exist?

1. From the Cosmological Argument: 100 percent of the evidence says something that begins to exist requires a cause outside of itself. A cause outside of the universe would be supernatural, logically God.
2. From the Design Argument: 100 percent of the evidence tells us any design, especially the highly complex design found in the universe and life (DNA), requires a designer and only comes from a mind—God.
3. From the Moral Argument: 100 percent of the evidence says every law has a lawgiver and moral obligations are to persons, not impersonal forces. The conscience which crosses all languages, nations, genders and cultures is absolute proof of a transcendent law giver, God.

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Conclusion – God must exist!

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No Excuse as Promised

An eternal, all-powerful God is an absolute necessity based on creation and our conscience. This validates the Bible’s claim in Romans 1:20 that God is obvious and therefore man is without excuse. Can you imagine telling God you thought the intricate design of the universe came from nothing, by no cause? That life came together by accident and you didn’t realize it was wrong to violate your conscience?

Why We Cannot Rule Out Miracles

Since the solid evidence to this point indicates that by necessity, God must exist, you cannot rule out miracles. The biggest miracle in the Bible occurs in the first verse: *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth* (Gen. 1:1). The universe and life were created out of nothing, as we have just seen. If God can do that, then every miracle in the Bible is believable.

Since the evidence says God must exist, don't you think miracles—things that don't normally happen—would be a great way for God to get man's attention? This is exactly what the Bible says God did to authenticate His message and messengers.

“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know” (Acts 2:22, emphasis added).

Why are we not seeing the same kind of miracles today? Most miracles in the Bible were done to confirm a message or messenger from God. When Jesus was on the cross, He said, “It is finished” (John 19:30). God's whole revelation to us is in the Bible. There is nothing new to confirm.

“In comparing Jesus, Zoroaster, Buddha, Socrates and Muhammad, if we exclude later legendary and apologetic accounts, we find that early accounts attribute miracles only to Jesus.” Edwin M. Yamauchi, Professor Emeritus of history at Miami University "Historical Notes on the (In)comparable Christ," in *Christianity Today*, October 22, 1971, pp. 7-11, <http://www.irr.org/yamauchi.html> (emphasis added)

“But if we admit God, must we admit miracles? Indeed, indeed you have no security against it. That is the bargain.” C.S. Lewis, *Miracles*, p. 109.

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Conclusion – God exists, miracles are possible.

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www.God-Evidence-Truth.com

Can we Trust the Bible?

Is the New Testament Accurate?

The New Testament is accurate, according to most Biblical scholars. In the Baker Encyclopedia of Apologetics, 2002, Baker Books: Grand Rapids (MI), pp. 532-533, Bruce Metzger, a highly recognized scholar, is quoted as estimating the New Testament we have today as 99.5 percent accurate.

There are approximately 5,600 handwritten manuscripts (MS) in Greek, which is the original language of the New Testament. In total, there are more than 25,000 full or partial manuscripts in several languages. Due to the enormous number of texts, scholars can compare one to another and determine what the originals said. The texts have what scholars call variants, small variations, due to word placement (Jesus Christ vs. Christ Jesus, for example), spelling, proper nouns and the like. These are not errors, simply variations in the text. Because there are more than 25,000 manuscripts, there are an estimated 400,000 variants. Here are two simulated verses that vary in five places, thus five variants:

Jesus Christ died for our sin and rose again.

Christ Jesus died for your sins and arose.

The actual texts have nowhere near this number per line. If 1,000 manuscripts had 100 spelling errors each, that would equal 100,000 variants. This demonstrates why the estimated 400,000 variants discovered in the manuscripts are not that significant. Notice how even in a short verse with several variants, we can still determine what the verse says. If you had 1,000 MS with the same verse, do you think you could figure out what it says? According to Biblical scholars, inconsequential variants like these alter no meaning and account for 99 percent of the total. Only one percent of variants are of any consequence, and they do not affect Christian doctrine. Ironically, God's plan for man to disperse thousands of handwritten manuscripts in the ancient world protected it from alteration better than if one person had the original and could change it.

“While the New Testament documents do not survive or have not yet been found, we have abundant and accurate copies of the original New Testament documents – many more than for the ten best pieces of ancient literature combined. Moreover, nearly perfect reconstruction of the originals can be accomplished by comparing the thousands of manuscript copies that do survive. We have discovered manuscript fragments from the second century as early as the mid first century. There are no works from the ancient world that even come close to the New Testament in terms of manuscript support.” Turek and Geisler, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*, page 248.

“Non-believers are concerned that our New Testament Scriptures cannot be trusted, but they've come to this concern without examining the evidence. As Christians, we KNOW that we have the most reliable and attested ancient documents. You can trust that, if nothing else, we have today what the ancients had to begin with.” Detective Jim Wallace, former atheist, www.pleaseconvinceme.com

In addition to all of the manuscripts, there are more than 36,000 instances of quotation of New Testament scriptures by the early church fathers. All but eleven New Testament verses are

quoted, allowing for virtually 100 percent reconstruction of the New Testament. Norman Geisler and William Nix, *General Introduction to the Bible* (Chicago: Moody, 1986), 431.

Many critics claim the Bible cannot be accurate or true because it was written by men, and men make mistakes. But men write accurate and truthful books all of the time. Look at a dictionary or an encyclopedia. The Bible says all scripture is inspired by God—so just as you use a pen as an instrument to write a letter, God used men as instruments to record His Word.

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16).

Knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:20-21).

“The interval between the dates of original composition (of the N.T.) and the earliest extant evidence becomes so small as to be in fact negligible and the 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 N.T. may be regarded as firmly established.” Sir Frederic Kenyon, Director, principal librarian of the British museum, foremost expert on ancient manuscripts.

“The science of textual criticism is used to test all documents of antiquity--not just religious texts--including historical and literary writings. It's not a theological enterprise based on haphazard hopes and guesses; it's a linguistic exercise that follows a set of established rules. Textual criticism allows an alert critic to determine the extent of possible corruption of any work.” Greg Koukel, Host of *Stand to Reason* radio program since 1990, Los Angeles, CA, www.str.org

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Conclusion – Most Biblical scholars agree that we have an accurate copy of the entire Bible.

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Is The New Testament True?

Five compelling points say that the New Testament is true.

1. Prophetic Testimony

Many consider the approximately 2,000 Old Testament prophecies discovered to date to be God's fingerprints. Over 300 of them predicted a Messiah who would come, and these were written more than 400 years prior to the birth of Jesus. They precisely match Jesus' life, death and resurrection. Consider the following fifteen prophesies:

Prophecy	Verse Predicted	Verse Fulfilled
Born of a virgin	Isa. 7:14	Matt. 1:18, 25

Born in Bethlehem	Micah 5:2	Matt. 2:1
He would be preceded by a messenger	Isa. 40:3	Matt. 3:1-2
Rejected by His own people	Isa. 53:3	John 7:5; 7:48
Betrayed by a close friend	Psalms 41:9	John 13:26-30
His side pierced	Zech. 12:10	John 19:34
Crucifixion	Psalms 22:1, Psalms 22:11-18	Luke 23:33
Will pray for His persecutors	Isa. 53:12	Luke 23:34
Friends, family will stand afar and watch	Psalms 38:11	Luke 23:49
Garments divided by casting lots	Psalms 22:18	John 19:23-24
Will be given gall and vinegar	Psalms 69:21	Matt. 27:34
Will commit Himself to God	Psalms 31:5	Luke 23:46
Bones will be left unbroken	Psalms 34:20	John 19:33
Heart will rupture	Psalms 22:14	John 19:34
Resurrection of Christ	Psalms 16:10	Acts 13:34-37

“Peter Stoner considered the mathematical odds of one person meeting only eight prophecies and ruled out coincidence by the science of probability. We find that the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled all eight prophecies is 1 in 10 to the 17th power. That’s 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000. Stoner illustrates it by supposing that we take 100,000,000,000,000,000 silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They will cover all of the state two 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.” “Stoner considers 48 prophecies (of the 300 plus) and reports; We find the chance that any one man fulfilled all 48 prophecies to be 1 in 10 to the 157th power.” That is 1 chance in 1 with 157 zeros after it. Peter Stoner in *Science Speaks*, quoted from *The New Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, p 193, author, speaker Josh McDowell, www.josh.org

Were The Prophecies Written Prior to Jesus?

That is a very important question. The experts in the field of manuscript dating place the writings of the Old Testament books from 1445 B.C. to 425 B.C. (B.C. means *before Christ*). Scholars date the crucifixion to about A.D. 33 (A.D. means *anno domini*, year of our Lord, and in A.D. 33, Jesus was 32-33 years old). The facts indicate that all of the Old Testament prophecies were written hundreds of years prior to Jesus’ birth.

One of the earliest manuscript discoveries is a complete 24-foot Isaiah scroll dated before 100 B.C. It is part of the Dead Sea Scrolls and any reputable scholar will tell you the evidence is clear that it existed prior to Jesus' birth, yet it describes Him in detail.

But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all (Isa. 53:5-6).

The New Testament writers and Jesus use the words “It is written” (referring to the Old Testament scriptures) 72 times in the English Standard Version (ESV) of the New Testament. Jesus actually quoted from or referred to 24 of the books of the Old Testament, including the book of Isaiah. The facts are clear that the Old Testament books were written prior to Jesus' birth.

Another prophecy, in Isaiah chapter seven, states that a virgin will give birth and they will call Him Immanuel, which means *God with us*.

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel (Isa. 7:14).

In chapter nine of Isaiah, there is further information to pinpoint the child and reveal His identity. He will be born of a virgin and His name shall be called Mighty God and Everlasting Father. Jesus is the only one who can possibly fit these prophecies.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6, emphasis added).

“The Septuagint and the Dead Sea Scrolls establish a very dramatic piece of evidence for Christianity—that the Old Testament prophecies of the coming Messiah unquestionably predated the time that Jesus Christ walked the Earth. All theories of 1st Century A.D. conspiracies and prophecy manipulation go out the door when we realize that prophetic scripture like Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22 were fixed in written form at least 100 years before Christ, and probably many more.” www.septuagint.net

“The world would have us believe that our scriptures have been corrupted over time, but the evidence is clear here. Don't be fooled. More scholarship has been spent on this singular issue than on perhaps any other studies of ancient documents. Let the world think what it may; we can be confident in the knowledge that in the Old Testament is true to its history and amazingly accurate.” Detective Jim Wallace, www.pleaseconvinceme.com (emphasis added).

Robert Dick Wilson, a Biblical scholar who is fluent in more than 45 languages and dialects, concluded after a lifetime study of the Old Testament: “I may add that the result of my 45 years of study of the Bible has led me all the time to a firmer faith that in the Old Testament, we have a true historical account of the history of the Israelite people.”

http://encycl.opentopia.com/term/Robert_Dick_Wilson

Prophecy in our generation

While we are on the subject, I want to point out four specific prophecies made thousands of years ago. The Bible indicates that the first three, which have been fulfilled, will be a sign that the second return of Jesus is not far off. The fourth one is where Jesus predicts His return, yet to come.

1. The gathering of the Jews into their homeland (Eze.34:13).
2. The rebirth of Israel in a single day (Isa. 66:8-9). This occurred in 1948, almost two thousand years after the Jews lost their nation in A.D. 70.
3. The nations of the earth aligned against Israel (Zech. 12:2-3).
4. Jesus predicts His future return to judge the living and the dead (Matt. 24:29-3). No one knows the time (Matt. 24:36-37).

Consider these prophecies that are being fulfilled before our very eyes, with a warning about counterfeit Christs and false prophets included:

“Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the close of the age?” And Jesus answered them, “See that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and they will lead many astray. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places” (Matt. 24:3-7).

For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God (2 Tim. 3:2-4).

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Conclusion – 300 specific prophecies about Jesus written 400 or more years before His birth precisely reveal that Jesus is the Messiah.

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2. Embarrassing Testimony

The “Principle of Embarrassment” is one method used by historians to decide if the authors of a text are telling the truth. This principle says that if the text is embarrassing to the author or authors, it is probably true. This is because people do not fabricate events that make them look bad. As a matter of fact, they may leave such events out, in an attempt to look good.

Consider what a person who is trying to sell you a lie might do. Let’s say a man wanted you to invest your life savings with him. What kind of picture would he paint with the words and literature he offers? No problems, right? Consider if the writers of the Bible were trying to make up a God they wanted you to believe in. Wouldn’t they do the same, and claim there were no problems? Yet the Bible is filled with embarrassing details about Jesus and the disciples. His followers had many of the same problems we see Christians struggling with today. Experts say

embarrassing testimony like this would be counterproductive in a plot to falsely claim that Jesus is God. Therefore, the following embarrassing details about what some thought of Jesus could only be a true report of what actually happened. This supports the belief that the disciples told the complete unvarnished truth. Note the following claims are not supported by facts. They are simply a reporting of what some people, mainly His detractors, claimed.

Called a drunkard - John 10:19

Called a madman - John 10:20

Family thinks he is out of his mind - Mark 3:21

Not believed by his brothers - John 7:5

Called demon-possessed - Mark 3:22, John 7:20, 8:48

Thought to be a deceiver - John 7:12

Deserted by many followers - John 6:66

Crucified despite the belief that anyone hung on a tree is cursed, making it very difficult for Jews to accept – Deut. 21:23

“People do not make up embarrassing details about themselves.” Dr. Frank Turek, embarrassing testimony support adapted from Turek & Geisler’s *I Don’t Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*.

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Conclusion – If you were making up a God you wanted everyone to believe in, you would not include embarrassing details, especially about Jesus, unless it was a true reporting of what happened.

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3. Early Testimony

There are two established historical events that virtually all scholars agree on: the crucifixion of Jesus in about A.D. 33 and the destruction of the Jewish temple in A.D. 70. If you were reading a history book about Iraq and Saddam Hussein and there was no mention of the U.S. invasion and the fall of Hussein’s dictatorship, would you think the book was written before or after the event happened? The most reasonable answer would be that it was written prior to the U.S. invasion, since there was no mention of it in the book. In A.D. 66 – 70, the Jews lost their homeland when the Romans overran the nation of Israel, destroyed the Jewish temple and killed or took into captivity over a million Jews. This cataclysmic event is never mentioned in the New Testament, except when Jesus predicts it in Matthew 24:2. Many scholars believe that if Jesus’ prediction of this vast devastation had come true prior to when the New Testament was written, it would have strengthened the case for Christianity to have mentioned that His prediction had been fulfilled. Since it is not recorded, it is quite probable that most if not all of the New Testament was written prior to the temple’s destruction in A.D. 66-70. This places the New Testament writings within 37 years of the resurrection.

“There is a growing acceptance of earlier New Testament dates, even among critical scholars like John A.T. Robinson known for launching the “Death of God” movement. He wrote in his book *Re-dating the New Testament* dates placing the documents earlier than any conservative scholar ever held, and he concluded that one or two of the gospels could have been written as early as seven years after the crucifixion. At the latest, they were all composed in the lifetime of the eyewitnesses.” Dr. Norman Geisler, speaker, author or editor of over 60 books, *Baker Encyclopedia of Apologetics*.

“In my opinion, every book of the New Testament was written by a baptized Jew between the 40’s and the 80’s of the first century (very probably sometime between A.D. 50 and 70).” William F. Albright a foremost biblical Archeologist, *Christianity Today* #7.

Since the New Testament documents are referenced by other writers by about A.D. 100, they had to have been composed before then. Turek and Geisler, *I Don’t Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*, page 249.

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Conclusion – Strong evidence suggests that most if not all of the New Testament was written before A.D. 70, during the lifetime of the eyewitnesses.

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4. Eyewitness Testimony

Skeptics try to pick apart the New Testament from any angle they can. Many try to rewrite history by claiming they know more about the truth than the eyewitnesses. For example, the book *The DaVinci Code* attempts to say that Jesus never claimed to be God, that He was only a man, and that He was married and had children, all in contradiction to what the New Testament states. While *The DaVinci Code* is fiction, many of the 40 million people who purchased it don’t know the facts and believe it to be true. The disciples gave up their lives for what they claimed. Multiple eyewitness accounts to something yesterday or 2,000 years ago are still valid. One way to determine if we can trust their eyewitness claims is to see if they were telling the truth in areas we can verify. If we find their writings are fabricated points thrown together, we might not need to look further. Read the following as it attests to the accuracy and truthfulness of the Bible.

Does the Following Sound like a Made-up Story?

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness (Luke 3:1-2).

1. An exact date is given.
2. All eight people are known from history.
3. All were known to live at this exact time.

Luke wrote the books of Luke and Acts. From Acts, 84 historical details have been confirmed. Luke also reports over 35 miracles in Acts. The New Testament names more than 30 people who

are confirmed to have lived by secular sources or archeology. The book of John has 59 verified historical details. Geisler and Turek, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be Atheist*.

“Luke is a historian of first rank. This author should be placed along with the greatest of historians.” Sir William Ramsey, famous archeologist, *The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament*.

Knowing that the disciples were taught by Jesus (a man renowned for His honesty) and that everything we can verify to this point indicates the disciples have been completely truthful, should they be given the benefit of the doubt with their eyewitness reports of miracles, including the resurrection? There is no question that the disciples believe they saw the resurrected Jesus several times over forty days. They wanted you to believe, too, and this explains their meticulous fact reporting. Here are a few of many verses wherein they claim to be eyewitnesses.

And you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses (Acts 3:15, emphasis added).

He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth—that you also may believe (John 19:35, emphasis added).

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us (1 John 1:1-2, emphasis added).

For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty (2 Peter 1:16, emphasis added).

Criminal investigators often state that the testimonies at crime scenes can sometimes seem like the witnesses saw different crimes, but the details are frequently complementary, not contradictory. When they get to the main issue, the testimonies merge together: “Yes, this guy shot that guy.” If you were in Manhattan on 9/11, I am certain many initial reports would seem contradictory. Maybe some reported a different number of planes hitting the buildings, but in the end, everyone would tell you planes crashed into the Twin Towers and the buildings collapsed. Minor differences in less important details are normal, as the following jury instructions indicate:

“Minor differences in multiple eyewitness accounts are normal and jury instructions advise jurors to be aware of this fact. Did the witness’s testimony differ from the testimony of other witnesses? When weighing the conflicting testimony, you should consider whether the discrepancy has to do with a material fact or with an unimportant detail.” Criminal Pattern Jury Instruction, US Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit 2005 Ed.

There were multiple eyewitnesses, including all of the disciples, who were very familiar with what Jesus looked like. In the next five verses, which many critics accept as being written within three to five years of the resurrection, the apostle Paul lists the eyewitnesses:

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in

accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas (Peter), then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me (1 Cor. 15:3-8).

“If we are looking honestly at any event in ancient history, we are going to have to trust the ancient written record and the supporting archeology. We need to evaluate them as we would any other set of witnesses. The Biblical eyewitnesses DO measure up under these standards. They clearly wrote within close proximity to the life of Jesus, their testimony is supported externally by the archeological evidence, they have a reliable track record (also supported by the archeology) and they are without ulterior motive. While many would argue that we have to account for the life of Jesus purely OUTSIDE the Biblical record in order to be confident that we have the unbiased truth, we need to remember that the Bible itself is a reliable and trustworthy eyewitness account.” Jim Wallace, Cold Case Homicide Detective, former atheist, www.pleaseconvinceme.com

“How do we explain the fact that this movement spread like wildfire with Jesus as the Messiah, even though Jesus had been crucified? The answer has to be, it can only be, because He was raised from the dead.” N.T. Wright, Professor of NT studies, Oxford, video documentary, *The Search Continues*, www.johnankerburg.org

“Are these men (Jesus and the disciples), who helped to transform the moral structure of society, consummate liars or deluded madmen? These alternatives are harder to believe than the fact of the resurrection, and there is no shred of evidence to support them.” Paul Little, *Know Why You Believe*, Wheaton, IL, Scripture Press.

True, But Not Always God-Approved

The eyewitness reporting of exact details (including the embarrassing ones) continues throughout the Bible. Many of the details reported are often held against God as if they were acceptable to Him. Taking into account the fact that we know free will must exist for love to be possible, let me ask a question. If God does exist, do you think He approves of all the immorality, adultery, human sex slave trade, child abuse, wickedness and evil that goes on today? I believe we have 100 percent proof He does not approve, based on our God-given conscience that tells us these things are wrong. But if the Bible were being written today and things were being accurately reported, we might very well see many of the same immoral activities reflected in the text. It would not mean God approved of them. It would only reflect our often immoral character as humans and reveal the exact reason why the Bible declares we need a Savior. The Old Testament’s reporting of slavery, murder and other immoral acts is simply a written record, by its 40 different authors. This was what actually occurred during the 1,500 years in which the writings that make up the Bible were composed. (Note: the entire New Testament was written in less than 100 years of that time frame.) The inclusion of these details supports the truthfulness of the writings.

I Can't Remember Last Week

Some people think the disciples would not be able to remember the resurrection years after they saw it. But where were you and what were you doing on 9/11? You remember, don't you? That's because 9/11 was a highly impactful event. Do you think those who were directly involved will ever forget it? We remember traumatic events with much greater detail, even when we are not directly involved. But if I asked what you were doing one year ago today at this time, most would have no idea unless there was something uniquely associated with it.

So suppose it was a situation where you were directly involved and had been one of Jesus' disciples for three years. Now he has been crucified and you still do not fully understand all the things He told you. Do you think you might be emotional, depressed, confused and maybe fearful that the Roman soldiers or the Jewish authorities were coming to get you next? This is how the Bible portrays the disciples. According to psychologists, this is exactly the right atmosphere to burn a memory into your brain. The disciples were actually hiding in the upper room where they had previously met with Jesus. What if, in your state of confusion, Jesus appeared to you alive after three days, just as He had predicted? Would this impact you? Would you be overjoyed as you began to consider the fact He was dead and now He is alive? Would you suddenly see Him differently than you did before? Would you remember it for a while? Additionally, Jesus said the Holy Spirit would bring everything to the disciples' memory when necessary.

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you (John 14:26, emphasis added).

"Emotionally neutral events generally are not stored as long-term memories, On the other hand, emotionally arousing events, such as those of Sept. 11, tend to be well-remembered after a single experience because they activate the amygdala." C. McIntyre, postdoctoral researcher, University of California, www.livescience.com

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Conclusion – Impactful events, especially when we are involved, are recalled in greater detail, usually for life. The disciples could not forget.

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5. Would You Die for a Lie, Knowing it was a Lie?

I think we can all agree that if the message in the New Testament presented by the disciples was a lie, they knew it because they would have been the ones to make it up. While a young terrorist might die for something he believes is true, people do not die for something they know for certain is a lie. The disciples claimed to be eyewitnesses to the resurrection of Jesus. Even if they had never written a word, the testimony they gave with their lives and their deaths speaks volumes. Together they walked away from regular lives into lives of persecution, torture and finally brutal death for eleven of the twelve. In addition, the apostle Paul, who wrote most of the New Testament, suffered greatly and was finally beheaded because He would not deny Christ. All of this was for no worldly gain, wandering from place to place, presenting what they had witnessed as the truth.

Could you get eleven of your friends to make up a huge lie and walk away from their careers, religious beliefs, friends and families to tell the world that lie, for no worldly gain? What if you offered them the bonus of persecution, torture and a brutal death? Obviously, no one in their right mind would do that. But this is exactly what anyone would need to believe, if they claim the disciples made up the resurrection.

The disciples had no reason to make up a new religion. As Jews, they already thought they were God's chosen people. If Judaism were true, as they had always been taught, they would be headed to hell for this change in belief. The only real option is that the disciples were telling the truth and it was so significant that they refused to deny it.

Jury instructions include this question: "Did the witness have any particular reason not to tell the truth?" Ironically, in the disciples' case the answer is *yes*, as we just learned. They would have been better off to lie and deny the resurrection. Which choice makes more sense? Either they died for a lie they created, or they died unwilling to deny the truth of what they witnessed. The following indicates the ultimate price each paid. The amount of evidence for each Apostle's death varies. Some are reported in the Bible. Some are from early church fathers and other historical writings.

Peter was crucified head down in Rome in 66 A.D.

Andrew was crucified on a cross A.D. 74.

James, son of Zebedee, was beheaded by sword (Acts 12:1-9).

John was banished to the Isle of Patmos in A.D. 96 (Rev. 1-9).

Phillip was crucified at Heirapole, Phrygia in A.D. 52.

Bartholomew was beaten, crucified, and beheaded in A.D. 52.

Thomas was run through by a lance in East Indies in A.D. 52.

Matthew was stoned, slain by a sword in Ethiopia about A.D. 60.

James, son of Alphaeus, was beaten to death in A.D. 60.

Thaddeus was shot to death by arrows in A.D. 72.

Simon was crucified in Persia in A.D. 74.

Paul was beheaded in Rome in mid-A.D. 60's.

FOX'S BOOK OF MARTYRS, <http://www.ccel.org/f/foxe/martyrs/fox101.htm>

"People die for a lie they believe is true all of the time but no one dies for a lie they know is a lie." Dr. Frank Turek, www.Crossexamined.org

“The power of the Biblical record is that the Biblical eyewitnesses had NO positive motive for their story except for the fact that it was TRUE. They gained no wealth, no comfortable lifestyle, and no assurance of a painless death. Witnesses without a positive motive other than truth are THE best witnesses in the world. When you see them suffering for their testimony, you can be sure you are hearing the truth.” Jim Wallace, Cold Case Homicide Detective, former atheist, www.pleaseconvinceme.com

“Why would they die for what they knew to be a lie? A person might be deceived and die for a falsehood. But the apostles were in a position to know the facts about Jesus resurrection, and they still died for it.” History Professor Lynn Gardner, *Christianity Stands True*, College Press, 1994.

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Conclusion – People do not die for a lie they know for a fact is a lie. The disciples told the truth about the resurrection of Jesus.

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What About the Old Testament?

Based on the following statistics, it is clear that Jesus and the writers of the New Testament believed the Old Testament was true.

1. Roger Nicole maintains that the number of quotations and references in the New Testament to the Old Testament may be as high as 4,105. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 1979, Vol. I, p. 617
2. Jesus quoted from 24 different Old Testament books, affirming as true some of the most attacked events in the Old Testament. The events Jesus affirmed include the following: Creation (Mark 13:19), Noah and the flood (Matt. 24:39), Adam and Eve (Matt. 19:4-5), Sodom and Gomorrah (Luke - 10:12), Moses and the burning bush (Luke 20:37), Jonah and the great fish (Matt. 12:40). In Matthew 23, using the first and last prophets as bookends, Jesus confirmed the validity of the entire Old Testament by saying, “From the blood of Abel to that of Zechariah.” Jewish New Testament Publications, Jerusalem, 1989.
home.comcast.net/~StudyTheBible/InfoJewish.rtf

What About Those Other Gospels We Hear About?

Any detective would tell you the most reliable testimony is that which was written nearest in time to the actual event by eyewitnesses or those directly associated with the witnesses. Biblical scholars like Gary Habermas are straightforward in confirming that this is exactly what we have in the writings of the New Testament. I have heard Dr. Habermas state, “Why would we want to go to other writings dated much further from the event (2nd century or later) by people who were not eyewitnesses?”

Think about the Holocaust for a moment. Most reasonable people believe it happened and there is ample evidence to its historicity. Yet as time passes and the last eyewitnesses die, more and

more people claim it never happened. These people are called revisionists and they can be seen throughout the entirety of humankind, attempting to rewrite the truth of history in order to support their agenda. Those trying to alter the writings in the Bible were already active at the time of the apostle Paul, as revealed in Galatians, where he rebuked the error of these false teachers.

It's important to note that the Bible is not just one source, it is a collection of writings by 40 separate authors, eight of whom wrote the New Testament. From the time of Jesus until now, people have been trying to change or eliminate the Bible, yet it remains steadfastly in place. Today there are billions of copies of the Bible around the globe, making it impossible to make unnoticed changes in the major message. If you changed yours and showed it to someone on the other side of the world, they could tell by comparing it to their copy. The facts confirm we have the earliest writings from eyewitnesses and their associates in the Bible. In addition, Jesus warns multiple times of false prophets and false christs who would distort God's Word and preach lies.

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves" (Matt. 7:15, emphasis added).

"For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect. But be on guard; I have told you all things beforehand" (Matt. 24:24, emphasis added).

Does Archaeology Support the Bible?

There are thousands of historical facts in the Bible that have been confirmed by archaeology.

"It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever invalidated a Biblical reference. Scores of archaeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or exact detail historical statements in the Bible. And, by the same token, proper evaluation of Biblical description has often led to amazing discoveries." Dr. Nelson Glueck, *Rivers in the Desert*.

"I know of no finding in archaeology that's properly confirmed which is in opposition to the Scriptures. The Bible is the most accurate history textbook the world has ever seen." Dr. Clifford Wilson, former director Australian Institute of Archaeology, radio interview by the Institute for Creation Research, ICR radio transcript No 0279-1004.

"It is important to remember when comparing archaeology to the Bible, that the Bible is itself an archaeological document of the highest caliber...Of all the documents known to man, only the Hebrew-Greek Scriptures have certified their accuracy and divine authority by a pattern of prediction and fulfillment completely beyond the capabilities of man and possible only for God." Archer, *The Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*.

"Archeology has proven the Biblical writers to be correct about hundreds of other details that were once questioned, like the existence of Lysanias (Luke 3:1), the existence of court called "the Pavement" (or "Gabbatha" as mentioned in John 19:13), the existence of Pontius Pilate, the details of Roman crucifixion, the existence of the city of Iconium (Acts 14:6), the existence of the proconsul named Sergius Paulus (Acts 13), and the existence of a man named Gallio (Acts 18), to name just a few!" Jim Wallace, our familiar detective, www.pleaseconvinceme.com

"There can be no doubt that archaeology has confirmed the substantial historicity of Old Testament tradition." Dr. William F. Albright, *Archaeology and the Religions of Israel*.

Do any Non-Christian Writings Support the Bible?

Most people are not even aware of non-Christian writings and how they firmly support the testimony in the New Testament. According to Biblical scholar Gary Habermas, there are seventeen secular writings, all written within 150 years of the resurrection, which offer evidence as to the reliability of the events of the New Testament. Here are three:

"At this time there was a wise man who was called Jesus. Pilate condemned Him to be condemned and to die. And those who had become His disciples did not abandon His discipleship. They reported that He had appeared to them three days after His crucifixion and that He was alive; accordingly, He was perhaps the Messiah concerning whom the prophets have recounted wonders." Josephus (A.D.37 – 100) the greatest Jewish historian of the 1st century. *Antiquities of the Jews*, xviii.ch. 3, subtopic 3, Arabic text.

"[Christians] were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang in alternate verse of a hymn to Christ as to a god, and bound themselves to a solemn oath, not to do any wicked deeds, and never to deny a truth when they should be called upon to deliver it up." Pliny the Younger A.D. 112, *Epistles*, X.96, a letter he wrote to Emperor Trajan asking how to punish Christians for their belief.

"Hence to suppress the rumor, he falsely charged with the guilt, and punished with the most exquisite tortures, the persons commonly called Christians, who were hated for their enormities. Christus (same as Christ), the founder of the name, was put to death by Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea in the reign of Tiberius: but the pernicious superstition, repressed for a time broke out again, not only through Judea, where the mischief originated, but through the city of Rome also" Tacitus (A.D. 56- A.D. 120), Roman Historian, *Annals XV.44*, written of Nero's attempt to relieve himself of burning Rome by blaming it on Christians.

The following compilation of these writings from Detective Jim Wallace's website is a list of the facts taken from these seventeen secular sources. I have divided up compilation numerically so it is easier to read. As you read, you need to take into account that these sources were watching from a distance, therefore they did not know exactly what was happening. So for example, they use the word magic instead of miracles. The point is that these writings match numerous specific details reported in the New Testament. The only possible way they can exist is if the testimony in the New Testament is a true reporting of what transpired.

- 1) Jesus was born and lived in Palestine.
- 2) He was born, supposedly, to a virgin and had an earthly father who was a carpenter.
- 3) He was a teacher who taught that by repentance and belief, all followers would become brothers and sisters.
- 4) He led the Jews away from their beliefs.

- 5) He was a wise man who claimed to be God and the Messiah.
- 6) He had unusual magical powers and performed miraculous deeds.
- 7) He healed the lame.
- 8) He accurately predicted the future.
- 9) He was persecuted by the Jews for what he said, and betrayed by Judah Iskarioto.
- 10) He was beaten with rods, forced to drink vinegar and wear a crown of thorns and crucified on the eve of the Passover.
- 11) His crucifixion occurred under the direction of Pontius Pilate, during the time of Tiberius.
- 12) On the day of his crucifixion, the sky grew dark and there was an earthquake. Afterward, he was buried in a tomb and the tomb was later found to be empty.
- 13) He appeared to his disciples resurrected from the grave and showed them his wounds.
- 14) These disciples then told others that Jesus was resurrected and ascended into heaven. 15) Jesus' disciples and followers upheld a high moral code.
- 16) One of them was named Matthai.
- 17) The disciples were also persecuted for their faith but were martyred without changing their claims.
- 18) They met regularly to worship Jesus, even after his death.
www.pleaseconvinceme.com/index/pg79645

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Conclusion – The 17 non-Christian writings confirm much of what is written in the New Testament. If Christianity were a myth or a made-up religion, these secular writings would not exist.

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Is the Bible Filled With Contradictions?

This is a legitimate question, but the consensus from those who have really examined the Bible, is *no*. Just as a detective might initially think there are contradictions between multiple eyewitness accounts of an event, upon further examination he may find that they are complementary, not contradictory. To give you a firsthand example, on page six of this book I mention I have spoken to hundreds of people directly. On five other pages, I say thousands of people. If found in the Bible, skeptics would post it on their website and cry that it is a contradiction. Presented out of context, it does appear to be one. But if you look at page six closely you will see I stated “the hundreds of people I have asked this specific question.” In other words I have spoken to thousands of people but only asked that specific question to hundreds. Thus, this supposed contradiction ends up being complementary not contradictory, just as we see

with multiple eyewitness testimonies to any event. Context is crucial when you are reading any book, but especially in a book with forty authors written over 1500 years.

Many answers to alleged contradictions can be found here:

<http://www.bringyou.to/apologetics/bible.htm#85>

Did the Resurrection Really Happen?

A Minimal Facts Argument for the Resurrection

Some of the strongest evidence we have seen for the resurrection is the willingness of the original disciples and the apostle Paul to die for their testimony that Jesus rose from the dead. We also have the non-Christian writings we reviewed that support the resurrection. Now we will review a consensus of 1,400 scholars.

The minimal facts approach to the resurrection was originated by biblical scholar Gary Habermas (garyhabermas.com). It is based on his research of 1,400 in-depth scholarly writings regarding the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. Dr. Habermas relies only on those facts supported by multiple sources and accepted by the vast majority of scholars. The facts below, with the exception of number four, are accepted by 95 to 100 percent of the 1,400 scholars. Number four is accepted by about 75 percent:

1. Jesus died by crucifixion.
2. He was buried.
3. His death caused the disciples to despair and lose hope.
4. The tomb where He had been buried was found empty.
5. The disciples had experiences which they believed were literal appearances of the risen Jesus.
6. The disciples were changed from doubters to bold witnesses.
7. The resurrection was the central message.
8. They preached the message of Jesus' resurrection in Jerusalem.
9. The Church was born and grew.
10. Orthodox Jews who believed in Christ made Sunday their primary day of worship.
11. James converted to the faith when he saw the resurrected Jesus (James was a known skeptic).
12. Paul converted to the faith (Paul was an enemy and skeptic).

Minimal facts argument by Biblical Scholar and author Gary Habermas.
www.garyhabermas.com

The fact that such a large percentage of scholars accept these twelve points is quite compelling. One thing is certain, Jesus really existed. When it comes to number four, the empty tomb, there is some disagreement about why it was empty and if Jesus did in fact rise from the dead. As you review the following six possibilities offered through the years, consider which one you believe offers the best explanation. Keep in mind that the facts indicate God exists, therefore miracles cannot be ruled out.

1. Hallucination Theory

The problem with this theory is that Jesus appeared to more than 500 people, in different locations and circumstances (eating, walking, talking, etc.) for forty days. Hallucinations do not happen repeatedly to different groups of people for extended periods. The resurrected Jesus even told Thomas to touch him.

Then He (Jesus) said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe” (John 20:27, emphasis added).

Not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead (Acts 10:41, emphasis added).

And He (Jesus) said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have" (Luke 24:28-39, emphasis added).

2. The Witness Went to the Wrong Tomb Theory

If this was true, the Romans who had posted guards at the actual tomb could have produced the body to stop Christianity cold, but they never even suggested the possibility. If you saw a loved one's body placed in a tomb, do you think you would forget the location three days later?

3. Swoon or Apparent Death Theory

This theory says the whipping, beating and crucifixion of Jesus did not kill Him and not even his professional executioners realized it. Then His disciples mistook a severely beaten Jesus, who would have been in desperate need of a doctor, for the risen Christ. Common sense and this testimony from medical experts disagree.

"Clearly the weight of historical and medical evidence indicates that Jesus was dead before the wound to his side was inflicted and supports the traditional view that the spear, thrust between his right ribs, probably perforated not only the right lung but also the pericardium and heart and thereby ensured his death. Accordingly, interpretations based on the assumption that Jesus did not die on the cross is at odds with modern medical knowledge." William D. Edwards, Wesley J. Gabel and Floyd E. Hosmer, "On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ," *Journal of the American Medical Assoc.*, p. 255.

4. Someone Else Was Crucified in Place of Jesus

This is actually what Muslims claim, but there is no evidence to support it. Mary, Jesus' mother, was standing at the foot of the cross with John. Peter saw Him arrested and taken before Pilate, beaten and led off to be crucified. The Bible records others who knew Him and saw what was happening, including Nicodemus, who placed His body in the tomb. Don't you think someone would have said, "They killed the wrong guy?"

5. The Disciples Stole the Body

This is the only explanation the Bible says the Jewish leaders offered for the empty tomb, and in doing so they admitted the tomb was empty. But think about it—if the disciples stole the body, we are right back to the premise that they snuck by the posted Roman guards, rolled back the two-ton stone without the guards noticing, and made the entire resurrection story up to get themselves martyred. If this were the case, they died for what they knew was a lie.

6. Jesus Really Rose From the Dead

Numerous scholars believe this offers the best explanation. The main reason someone might reject this option is their prior rejection of miracles. But since the facts indicate God exists, miracles like the resurrection are definitely possible.

“You may be surprised to learn that the majority of New Testament critics investigating the gospels in this way accept the central facts undergirding the resurrection of Jesus. I want to emphasize that I am not talking about evangelical or conservative scholars only, but about the broad spectrum of New Testament critics who teach at secular universities and non-evangelical seminaries. Amazing as it may seem, most of them have come to regard as historical the basic facts which support the resurrection of Jesus”. Christian Philosopher and Theologian Dr. William Lane Craig, www.reasonablefaith.org

“I say unequivocally that the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ is so overwhelming that it compels acceptance by proof which leaves absolutely no room for doubt”. Sir Lionel Luckhoo, won 245 murder acquittals in a row, most successful lawyer in the world, according to *The Guinness book of World Records. God's Outrageous Claims*, Lee Strobel.

“Only Jesus predicted he would be resurrected after his death, and only his followers rest their faith on such an event. Jesus' death on the cross is unique not only in its manner but also in its alleged redemptive meaning. Neither Zoroaster, Buddha, Socrates nor Muhammad claimed his death would save men from their sins.” Edwin M. Yamauchi, Professor Emeritus of history, Miami University, www.irm.org/yamauchi.html

www.God-Evidence-Truth.com

Who Did Jesus Claim to Be?

The list on pages 13 -14 contains a number of contradictory beliefs for Jesus' identity. Now we will look at who Jesus Himself claimed to be:

1. Jesus Claimed to be God

In the Old Testament, God calls Himself "I Am." In the New Testament, Jesus uses the same name; the Jews realized what He was saying and picked up rocks to stone Him because they knew He was claiming to be God.

God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Say this to the people of Israel, I AM has sent me to you" (Exodus 3:14).

Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I Am," so they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple (John 8:58-59).

2. Jesus Claimed to be the Object of Prayer

Jesus claimed to be the mediator between God and man, thus He was claiming to be God. How would you respond if I asked you to pray in my name? *"Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (John 14:13).*

3. Jesus Claimed to Forgive Sins

We can all forgive someone for sinning against us personally. But of the numerous times Jesus forgave sins, He had just met the people so they had not sinned against Him personally. He was forgiving their sins against God, something only God can do.

"Son, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" (Mark 2:5-7, emphasis added).

4. Jesus Claimed to be Worthy of Honor Due God

The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him (John 5: 22-23).

5. Jesus Claimed to be the Messiah

The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he" (John 4:25-26).

Caiaphas asks Jesus, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" And Jesus said, "I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven" (Mark 14:61-62).

6. Jesus Claimed to be Equal in Authority with God

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away” (Matt. 24:35).

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Matt. 28:18).

7. Jesus Claimed to be Yahweh (LORD)

In the Old Testament, God is referred to in many ways. In the New Testament, the same attributes are applied to Jesus, suggesting that He is God in the flesh.

Old Testament	Name	New Testament
Psalm 23:1	Shepherd	Heb. 13:20
Isa. 44:4	First and Last	Rev. 1:17
Isa. 40:28	Creator	Col. 1:16-17
Isa. 62:5	Bridegroom	Matt. 25:1
Ps. 27:1	Light	John 8:12
Isa. 43:11	Savior	John 4:42
Isa. 42:8	God’s Glory	John 17:5
1 Sam. 2:6	Giver of Life	John 5:21
Deut. 32:4	Rock	1 Cor. 10:4
Joel 3:12	Judge	2 Cor. 5:10

Revelation tells us it is “The Revelation of Jesus Christ.” In Revelation 1:17-18, we see Jesus’ words claiming to be the First and Last, an Old Testament title in Isaiah 44:6 reserved for God. He also says “I was dead and behold, I am alive forevermore,” which only fits Jesus.

When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, “Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades” (Rev. 1:17-18).

8. Jesus Accepted Worship on Nine Occasions

1) Mother of James and John – Matt. 20:20

2) Possessed man - Mark 5:6

3) A blind man - Matt. 28:17

4) Doubting Thomas - Jn. 20:28

5) The women at the tomb - Matt. 28:9

6) A Canaanite woman - Matt. 15:25

7) His disciples - Matt. 14:33

8) A healed leper - Matt. 8:2

9) A rich young ruler - Matt. 9:18

Jesus was also a rabbi, and the first duty of a rabbi is to point out blasphemy. Yet Jesus never rebuked anyone who worshiped Him, and even commended Thomas in John 20:29. In contrast, the apostle John tried to worship an angel in Revelation 22:9 and was rebuked. Jesus, on the other hand, accepts worship reserved for God alone. He was more than an angel.

9. Jesus Claimed to be One with God the Father

It is clear that the Jewish witnesses had no trouble figuring out that Jesus was claiming to be God. They did not believe He was God, so in the end they crucified Him for blasphemy (claiming to be God, using God's name in vain). If He was not God, they would have been right.

"I and the Father are one." The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, "I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?" The Jews answered him, "It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God" (John 10:30-33).

10. Why Does Jesus Call Himself the Son of Man?

In the first verse below, "Son of Man" is the God figure in the Old Testament. In John 8:28 and in 82 other instances in the New Testament, Jesus calls himself the Son of Man.

I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed (Dan. 7:13-14).

So Jesus said to them, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me" (John 8:28).

No matter who you or anyone else in popular culture think Jesus is—based on the evidence, it's ludicrous to say that Jesus never claimed to be God. Format adapted from Dr. Frank Turek's video series *I Do Not Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*.

"Additionally there is an enormous difference between who Jesus claimed to be when compared to other leaders of different beliefs. Jesus claimed to be able to forgive sin, He accepted worship numerous times, and He said He was the only way to the Father. Only Jesus claimed equality with a sole, supreme deity. According to E.O. James, an authority on comparative religions, nowhere else had it ever been claimed that a historical founder of any religion was the one and only supreme deity. Only Jesus spoke on his own unquestioned authority. Zoroaster and Muhammad acted as spokesmen for God, while Socrates and Buddha urged every man to consult

his own conscience.” Edwin M. Yamauchi, Professor Emeritus of history, Miami University, <http://www.irr.org/yamauchi.html> (emphasis added).

“Indeed, it’s shocking to me how much of Jesus’ life can be established, including his radical personal claims, his crucifixion, his burial in a tomb, the discovery of his empty tomb, his post-mortem appearances, and his disciples’ coming to believe suddenly and sincerely that God had raised him from the dead. We therefore have quite solid reasons for believing in Christ on the basis of the historical facts preserved about him in the gospels.” Dr. William Lane Craig, www.reasonablefaith.org (emphasis added).

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Conclusion – Jesus’ claim to be God is supported in many ways. He gave us the ultimate proof by rising from the dead as He predicted. Therefore Jesus is God who came in the flesh.

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I thought Jesus was the Son of God

He is the Son of God; He shares the nature of God with the Father and the Holy Spirit. This is what is called the Trinity—one God but in three distinct persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A very simple but limited analogy that seems to help people understand the Trinity is H₂O. It can be water, ice, or steam—but the nature of all three is H₂O. It is the Father, Son and Holy Spirit—but the nature of all three is God. The Trinity is hard to fully comprehend, but it’s not contradictory since there are not three Gods and one God at the same time.

How could Jesus be God and Man?

The Bible tells us Jesus was a man and God incarnate; deity willingly clothed with humanity. When reading through the Bible, it is important to consider who is speaking and who the audience is. For example, many people who do not believe in the Bible claim that Jesus said, “God forgives” and think it applies to everyone. But in context, this is spoken only in reference to those who have placed their faith in Jesus. The importance of context is obvious.

The question *how could Jesus be both God and man* needs to be asked in two ways. Did Jesus get hungry? As God, no; as man, yes. Did Jesus get tired? As God, no; as man, yes. Did Jesus die? As God, no; as man, yes. Dr. William Lane Craig uses an analogy that utilizes the movie *Avatar*, to explain the two natures of Jesus:

“I explained the doctrine of Christ's being one person who has two natures and used the movie *Avatar* to illustrate the doctrine ("*Avatar*" is another word for incarnation). The movie tells the story of Jake Sully, a disabled marine who becomes an avatar among a race of extra-terrestrials called the Na'vi. He becomes physically incarnated among them as one of them. At the same time he doesn't cease to be human. So Jake has both a human nature and a Na'vi nature. In the movie these two natures have strikingly different powers. If you were to ask, "Can Jake Sully run?" The answer would have to be, "Yes and no: yes, in his Na'vi nature but no, in his human nature." “I told the audience that if you can make sense of *Avatar*, you can make sense of Christ's incarnation. For in a similar way, Christ has both a divine nature and a human nature. These natures have different powers. In his human nature Christ experienced all the limitations intrinsic

to human nature. But in his divine nature he had supernatural powers. Just as Jake Sully in his Na'vi nature became the Savior of the Na'vi people, so Christ in his human nature becomes the Savior of mankind.” William Lane Craig, Christian philosopher and theologian, debate with Yusuf Ismail, www.reasonablefaith.org

Transformed Lives

Some may consider the transformation of lives to be subjective evidence because it deals with personal experience. But based upon the incredible number of visibly changed lives and people who will personally attest to the presence of God’s power in their life, I believe it is one of the most powerful pieces of evidence for Christianity. I can personally confirm Jesus’ transforming power in my own experience. There is nothing in this world like a personal relationship with Him. No matter what happens, He is always there for the believer as He promises in Hebrews 13:5: “... *I will never leave you nor forsake you.*” He fills the void we all have and delivers a peace the world cannot hope to offer—peace with God and the hope of eternity without sorrow and pain. He loves us just as we are, and over time transforms us to become more like Him. Here are six examples of transformed lives:

“I went to a motel on Christmas Eve; I intended to end my life. I lived most of my life out of control. I had used drugs and alcohol, I was put out of my home, and my wife told me to leave. As I am sitting in that room I noticed a book lying on top of the TV. I looked down and I saw that it was a Gideon Bible and I thought who needs that? I took my hand and I swiped it off onto the floor. Well it fell at my feet, but it fell open. What I read changed my life.” Elliot, video testimony from www.Gideons.org

“I picked up the Bible and I started reading. It was Romans 12:2, I’ll never forget it. The verse says to not conform to the things of this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind. For some reason something clicked. I have to renew my mind! If I renew my mind, then my actions will definitely follow.” Bradie James, NFL Dallas Cowboys, www.Iamsecond.com

“Being able to turn to Jesus during this crazy moment in my life it gave me a sense of peace and confidence and I think that is just one thing that kept me alive.” Bethany Hamilton, on being able to turn to Jesus after a shark attack took her arm, www.Iamsecond.com

“I believe in Christ, I believe He’s first in my life, family’s second and everything else is after that. And I wouldn’t be where I am today because everything I tried to do on my own, well it almost cost me everything. So I put Christ first in my life today. Josh Hamilton, Texas Rangers, www.Iamsecond.com

Before long, Lecrae was embroiled in a world filled with drugs, theft, alcohol and gang activity. “I didn’t fit in anywhere. I was just a misfit of a person,” he said. Little did he know that his view on life would soon be jolted, opening his eyes to the One who valued his life as significant. The One who cared enough to die for him. The One who is behind his music. LeCrae Moore, Christian rap artist, www.Iamsecond.com

Vitor Belfort is living a dream. He is a Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) hero from Brazil with a beautiful celebrity wife and millions of followers around the world. Life must be easy for him, right? It is a road to God that was marked by pain at every step. But he has no pain now—

only joy and peace through a relationship with Jesus that he knows can be shared by others. Vitor Belfort, www.Iamsecond.com

Best Fits the Evidence

The following summary of conclusions is a logical argument for God's existence and identity. It follows the evidence to a final verdict:

1. Truth exists; its contradiction is always false.
2. The universe leapt into being out of nothing and requires a supernatural cause outside of itself.
3. The universe and life display highly complex design and require a highly intelligent designer.
4. The existence of the objective moral law, verified by our conscience, requires a moral law giver.
5. Points 2, 3 and 4 prove the absolute necessity of God's existence. Therefore God exists.
6. Since God exists, miracles are possible.
7. Based on manuscript evidence, the New Testament is 99 percent accurate.
8. Based on the facts, the New Testament, including the reports of the resurrection, is true.
9. The New Testament teaches that Jesus is God.
10. Jesus claimed to be God and verified it through miracles and the resurrection.
11. Therefore, Jesus is God.
12. Whatever God teaches is true.
13. Jesus taught the whole Bible is true.
14. Therefore, it is true that the Bible is the Word of God and anything that contradicts it is false.

Points adapted and modified from Turek & Geisler video series/book *I Do Not Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*, p. 375

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Conclusion – God exists, The Bible is true, Jesus is God.

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Your Verdict

I believe the evidence strongly indicates that God exists and that Jesus is God in the flesh. But even in a jury trial with the most conclusive evidence, jurors do not always agree. This is your decision, and I want to make it crystal clear what you will be deciding. Imagine for a moment that you are seated on the jury in a crowded courtroom. All of the facts in the case have been presented and in a few moments you and the other jurors will begin your deliberation. As you get up to exit the courtroom, you intentionally take one last look at the defendant. As His eyes meet yours, you notice His gentle smile. It is Jesus of Nazareth, a man acclaimed through the centuries for His honesty and ethical teaching. He professes to be God in the flesh. You suddenly realize that your decision ultimately comes down to whether or not you believe His claim. The facts support God's existence. Is Jesus God?

Former atheist and author C.S Lewis was at one time in the same position you are in now. He believed Jesus' extraordinary claims totally eliminated the option that Jesus was just a good man or good teacher. Therefore, only three possible options remain. As an argument coming from a once devout atheist who had no desire to believe in God, this quote is worth thoughtful consideration.

Lord, Liar, Lunatic

"I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to." C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*.

The evidence convinced Lewis to set aside his pride, leave atheism and become a Christian. But it was not without an inner struggle. He even wrote a book called *The Most Reluctant Convert* where he admits that it was not in his plans to place his faith in Jesus. He simply could not deny the facts, which revealed that Jesus is God. Lewis understood that the truth is often in opposition to our feelings. But he made a decision that the truth was the only place he wanted to reside, even though it meant humbling himself and changing his course in life.

When we're young, we think love is all about feelings. When we mature, we realize that love is a choice, often made in spite of feelings. Truth is no different.

Case Closed

Remember the story on page 12 where the six people showed up claiming to be the sole heir to a fortune? When the investigation was complete and the truth was discovered, it was absolutely certain that the other five stories could not be true. If you believe the facts indicate that Jesus is God, examining every other belief would be futile. All other beliefs contradict the Bible, and therefore must be false. I have researched many other beliefs, and none offer anything remotely close to the verifiable historical facts Christianity offers. Furthermore, none have founders who claimed to be God and who proved it by rising from the dead. In our brief review, we have just scratched the surface of the vast amount of evidence which fits the God of the Bible like a glove. If anyone claims that another belief about God is true, ask them for the evidence.

www.God-Evidence-Truth.com

So What?

Since we have discovered that the evidence supports the Bible as true, it only makes sense to investigate why Christians think it is so important, and how it applies to you personally. Before we start, you need to remember that truth is what it is, whether we like it or not. This truth might initially be offensive and you may not immediately understand or accept it. But what we are going to review next is the key to understanding the Gospel, which is the main message of the entire Bible.

The most common mistake that people make is thinking that their actions or good deeds are enough to get them into heaven. Most come to this conclusion through a comparison of themselves to other people, who they believe have committed bigger sins. If I stole once—so what? Someone else is a bank robber. If I lie, it's not all the time. If I go twelve miles per hour over the speed limit, it's okay because someone else is going twenty over. If I hide my income and lie to the IRS, others have done worse (and the IRS are crooks anyway).

Other times, people compare themselves to their own past behavior and how much they have improved. I used to lie and steal, but now I do not. I used to drink and drive, but not now. I don't swear any more. People tend to live by the rule *well at least I am not as bad as that guy* to rationalize their sins. However, the Bible does not say that God grades on a curve by comparing us to others, His standard is perfection. Consider this analogy that describes why a diagnosis of your true condition before God is crucial:

Let's say you went to the doctor and you leave the exam room with the impression that you are healthy. As you leave, the nurse approaches you and hands you several medications for cancer. Would you take them? I wouldn't. Taking the medications without a diagnosis would be foolish.

The same truth applies to the gospel message, which can seem foolish without a true knowledge of our diagnosis before God. How do we obtain this diagnosis? In the following verse, the apostle Paul tells us. The knowledge of our sinful condition comes through our personal examination of God's law, not by comparing ourselves to other people or how we behaved in the past.

For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin (Rom. 3:20, emphasis added).

In essence, the law provides the diagnosis of our condition before a Holy and Perfect God. In James 1:23-25, God's Law is compared to a mirror. We are concerned with our outward appearance, but God is concerned with what's inside as evidenced by our conscience. His law acts as a mirror reflecting what's in our hearts.

For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart (1 Sam. 16:7, emphasis added).

The following test is based on God's law and may seem harsh by humanity's low standard, but it will clearly diagnose your moral condition before a Holy God.

Just imagine you are in the doctor's office again. The correct diagnosis, and therefore your life, depends on your truthfulness. For your own benefit, set aside your pride, listen to your conscience and be totally honest before God. Admit to Him and yourself how many times you have broken the five commandments listed below (you can find the full Ten Commandments in Exodus 20).

Do You Think You Are a Good Person by God's Standard?

1. How many lies have you told in your life?
2. Have you ever stolen something, even as a child? Hid income to avoid taxes, illegally downloaded music or movies, took items from work, been dishonest on an insurance claim?
3. Have you ever used God's name in vain? Using God's name frivolously or as curse word is a form of blasphemy.
4. Have you committed adultery? Jesus said that just looking with sexual lust is adultery in God's eyes (Matt. 5:28). Ever done that?
5. Have you ever murdered anyone? Jesus said hate or strong dislike for someone qualifies as murder in God's eyes (Matt. 5:21-22). Ever done that?

Consider also any secret thing you have done in your life that you know God cannot condone. God knows it all anyway.

Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known (Luke 12:2, emphasis added).

And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account. (Heb. 4:13, emphasis added).

Once you clearly see and accept the truth of your condition before God, the Gospel will make sense.

God knows our thoughts.

By human standards, you and I might be able to say we are pretty good. But compared to God's standard of perfection, my conscience tells me I am guilty of being a liar, thief, blasphemer, adulterer and a murderer at heart. What about you? If you have been honest, you know that God's law has just diagnosed your guilty condition before Him. If you are still minimizing and justifying your actions, think for a moment about how wrong you know it is when someone lies to or steals from you. Or how crazy it is to think God would allow unrepentant liars, thieves, blasphemers, adulterers or murderers into heaven. Since you are guilty, would you be headed to heaven or hell? Most people I speak to will admit that they are headed for hell, but a few are resistant. I like to ask them, "Do judges send the guilty to Disneyland, or do they go to prison?" The Bible warns us that God's prison is hell. Considering the solid evidence for God and the Bible, does it concern you that if you died today, the Bible states that you would end up in hell?

It should concern you greatly. Even though people have conjured up all kinds of jokes about the devil and movies about the big party in hell, the Bible warns of a place that is eternal, void of God's presence and filled with evil and torment. We do not know exactly what it will be like, but Jesus warned us repeatedly to avoid hell at all costs. We do know that everyone there rejected the truth of God and will forever live with the tormenting knowledge of a choice they cannot change.

In reading the following verses, you must remember that the evidence says that God does exist. Plus the Bible checks out extremely well as far as we can investigate the facts. There is no other belief that displays the entire picture and has such a firm foundation in fact. The main emphasis of the Bible is to warn us of God's required judgment of sin and tell us how to avoid this judgment. This is where you need to consider the question. If everything to this point indicates it is true, is it at least possible that this could be true too? These verses describe what Jesus came to save us from. They describe hell.

“Shame and everlasting contempt” Daniel 12:2

“Everlasting punishment” Matthew 25:46

“Weeping and gnashing of teeth” Matthew 24:51

“Fire unquenchable” Luke 3:17

“Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish” Romans 2:8,9

“Everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord” 2 Thessalonians 1:9

“Eternal fire...the blackness of darkness forever” Jude 7,13

Revelation 14:10,11 tells us the final, eternal destiny of the sinner: “He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone...the smoke of their torment ascended up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day or night.”

<http://www.needgod.com/009ih.shtml>

When you commit a crime, you give the law the right to apprehend and punish you. Right now, you are like a fugitive who has broken God's law countless times. God is unavoidable in the end.

Most people have no objection to the thought of hell and punishment for murderers, rapists and serial killers. After all, who would expect God to welcome an unrepentant serial killer with open arms? However, hell for all unrepentant sinners makes sense, since the Bible states God is just and sin cannot go unpunished. It's not the existence of hell that most people have a problem with; it's who is going there. Yet these same people will agree it makes perfect sense that God's standard would be much higher than human standards. Our conscience confirms this. By human standards, telling a lie is not that bad, but our God-given conscience disagrees. This is proof that God absolutely does not approve of telling lies. *Conscience* means *with knowledge*, so when we lie, we do it with knowledge that it's wrong. Like it or not, God's standard is much higher than ours. God is the Creator and we are the creation.

You turn things upside down! Shall the potter (Creator) be regarded as the clay (creation), that the thing made should say of its maker, “He did not make me”; or the thing formed say of him who formed it, “He has no understanding?” (Isa. 29:16).

In Luke 13:3 and 5, Jesus, offers only two options—repent or perish. In other words, He is saying that God's perfect standard and the Gospel are the unchanging truth, whether we like it or not. He is advising us to repent and believe the Gospel, and He warns us if we do not, we will perish. If the Bible is telling the truth, it is not going to change because we believe something

else, any more than the truth of gravity is going to change if we step off a cliff. We know that this is how truth works. God's plan, described in His Word, is simply a true explanation of the way it is. The next six verses are Jesus speaking. I urge you to listen.

"... unless you **repent**, you will perish in the same way." (Luke 13:5, emphasis added).

"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; **repent and believe in the gospel**" (Mark 1:15, emphasis added).

Repent—Come to your senses accepting God's truth as reality, humble yourself and turn to God, admit your sins, and throw yourself on God's grace and mercy, found only in Jesus Christ.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God" (John 3:16-18, emphasis added).

"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life" (John 5:24, emphasis added).

"I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins" (John 8:24, emphasis added).

Then they said to him, "What must we do, to be doing the works of God?" Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent" (John 6:28-29, emphasis added).

Why Did Jesus Come?

Notice in the following list how clear the message is. Jesus came to save sinners, and we all qualify.

To save sinners - 1 Tim. 1:15

To call sinners to repentance - Mark 2:17

To seek and save the lost - Luke 19:10

To give Himself as a ransom for sinners – Matt. 20:28

To bear witness to the truth - John 18:37

To do the will of His Father - John 6:38

To be a Light in the world - John 12:46

To judge the world - John 9:39

To proclaim and preach the Gospel - Mark 1:38

To die on the cross - John 12:27

To fulfill the law – Matt. 10:34-35

To please the Father who sent Him - John 20:21

To pay for our sins - 1 John 4:10

To be the Savior of the world - John-3:16-18

To redeem us from the law's curse – Gal. 4:4-5

To demonstrate God's love - 1 John 4:10

Frequent Objections

I have given the Good Person test directly to thousands of people and I want to respond to a few of the objections I occasionally receive.

1. **God forgives everyone.** The Bible does not teach that everyone is forgiven, only those who place their faith in Jesus.

2. **I'm not a liar. I'm just human like everyone.** But consider how many murders it takes to be a murderer or rapes to be a rapist? Only one, right? Since most people tell me they have told an innumerable number of lies, how many lies does it take to be a liar? Is there a certain number and a bell goes off? If you are still uncertain, what would you call me if I told you an obvious lie?

3. **I don't believe in hell.** So what? The facts support the Bible. If it is true, it applies to you—whether you believe it or not.

4. **I refuse to believe in a God who would threaten me with hell.** If you were asleep and I pounded on your door to wake you and tell you your home was on fire, it would not be a threat, it would be a warning given because I feared for your life. In the same way, Jesus is not threatening us. Out of love He is warning us of the facts. He cares about our eternal destiny and He wants us to make the right choice. Stop resisting and run to Jesus, who loves you and can save you. Using an exaggerated form of speech called hyperbole to stress the seriousness of our decision, Jesus warns:

“And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire” (Matt. 18:9).

5. **I do not want to believe in a God who would use fear to bring me to Him.** The truth is, God loves you and therefore is warning you of what is absolutely certain to happen, if you ignore or reject His counsel. If I took you to the top of the Empire State Building and hung you over the railing of the observation deck, would you refuse to respect gravity because you felt fear when you looked down? There are some things it makes sense to fear, and this knowledge has often kept you alive in your life. The Bible actually says:

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction (Prov. 1:7).

Jesus goes against our natural inclination and out of love, warns us to not even fear men who can kill us, in comparison to God who can take our life and cast us into hell.

“I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him!” (Luke 12:4-5, emphasis added).

Think about the respectful fear you have for gravity every time you carefully approach the edge of a cliff or look over the railing of a high balcony. This is an indication of how we need to respect the Creator of gravity, God. This is the type of fear Jesus is speaking of when He says to fear God, the Creator of the universe. The good news is that the Bible also says God loves you and desires to save you from the condemnation your sin has placed you under. If you do feel fear, let it motivate you. Run to God, the only one who can save and protect you.

6. It doesn't bother me if I am headed to hell. The Bible speaks of eternal torment. Would you want to go to heaven if you had a choice? Of course you would. The Bible tells us the good news—God wants to save you.

Who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2:4).

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance (2 Peter 3:9).

7. What about those who have never heard of Jesus? I can't believe God would send someone to hell simply for not believing in Jesus. It is true that some may not have heard of Jesus, but we've learned that the Bible says God is obvious to everyone through creation and their conscience. Consider if you were up in a plane and chose to jump out without putting on a parachute. The primary reason you would die is not because you failed to put on a parachute, it's because you violated the law of gravity. We have a similar situation with sin, since every person has violated God's law written on their conscience. Our acts of lawbreaking are the reason the Bible says we are presently headed for hell. Jesus is the Savior—a parachute that God is freely offering to save us from the laws condemnation. If someone declines to put on the parachute) that's their choice.

When we consider those who may have never heard of Jesus, this is one of those places where we need to let faith step in. We know that God's nature is the pinnacle of morality as displayed in Jesus' life and teachings. We can also see His unconditional love for us displayed in the ultimate sacrifice He made to save us. Therefore, Christians, by faith, believe God will deal with anyone that does not hear of Jesus in the fairest manner possible.

In addition, the Bible indicates that young children who die go to heaven. There are recent reports from the Middle East that 50 percent of the Muslims who are turning to Christ, are coming because of dreams and visions, indicating that God can reach people anywhere.

<http://www.lausanneworldpulse.com/worldreports/595/01-2007>.

Another possibility suggested by Dr. William Lane Craig of reasonablefaith.org, is that those who never hear, could have been placed where they are by God, because He knew they would reject Him even if they did hear. Since you are not one of those who have not heard, the best thing you can do is get right with God and then go and tell someone.

8. I cannot believe because someone I loved died not believing in Jesus and this would mean they went to hell. I understand how you feel; I also have loved ones who have died and whose destination I am unsure of. But if you had died first and experienced the reality of hell, like the man in the following story told by Jesus, wouldn't you desire with all of your heart that no one else you knew would end up there? What about your family and friends who are still alive?

Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment (Luke 16:27-28).

9. The evidence makes me think, but I want to check things out some more before I decide. That's great! I encourage you to do your own investigation right away. Just make sure that this is not another excuse to avoid God. You could be one of the 155,000 people that will die today.

10. God has blessed me with fame or fortune in this life. I am sure He is pleased with me as I am. This faulty logic leads to the conclusion that God is pleased with the wealthy criminals in the world, and not pleased with those who ignore wealth and sacrifice their lives to help others, or with Jesus and the disciples who were poor. Everyone needs to repent and trust Jesus. The act of humbling oneself and doing so can be much harder for the rich:

And Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God" (Matt. 19:23-24).

11. But I Know I Am a Good Person

Some people insist passionately that they are good enough in God's eyes. Usually these are people who have led a good life by human standards and therefore they are what most would consider good people. Naturally, they are very reluctant to think that they could be headed to hell. Based upon my interactions with thousands of people, those who continue to defend their own goodness have minimized God's commandments in their minds and are continuing to compare themselves to other people. They tend to believe that God will weigh each person's good actions against their bad, and in doing so He will find them acceptable. Unfortunately, this is not God's standard. Resistance to this truth often comes from pride, which the Bible says is an abomination to God. Those who continue in their pride will never recognize their desperate need to accept God's saving grace. I have been very prideful in my life, so hopefully what I have chosen to present next will help you see God's position more clearly. Jesus distinctly points out the error of any person who believes he is good enough for God in the following parable.

"Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted" (Luke 18:10-14).

The Pharisee believed he was good enough, so his pride led him to conclude that God must be satisfied with him, especially in comparison to other men. In contrast, the tax collector admitted his sin before God and threw himself on God's mercy and grace. Jesus tells us it was the tax

collector who humbled himself and was forgiven, not the man who would have been perceived as a good person by his peers.

Attempting to justify yourself before God requires you to judge others. To conclude that you are good enough (like the Pharisee), you need to know what is not good enough and what is best. When you insist that you are good enough, you saying some are *not* good enough. God, on the other hand, wants to save everyone from judgment and condemnation. God has leveled the ground at the foot of the cross by saying that all sin is wrong and all sinners need the Savior.

Some people who continue to maintain their goodness before God are unhappy with the possibility that people could lead a life of sin and then at the last second deceive God by saying a prayer. If this is you, don't worry. God welcomes all into heaven, but a prayer that does not include humble, sincere repentance of the heart and true faith in Jesus will not fool God. This is simply another excuse to reject God's offer. It does not matter what anyone else does, it only matters what you do, especially when it comes to God.

I will admit that it is much easier for those of us with a history of obvious sins to see our need for the Savior. This is exactly why prostitutes and thieves gravitated to Jesus, and those who thought they were good enough stayed away. But the truth is, even the best of us fall short. Here is an analogy:

Let's suppose you entered a high jump contest being held at the Superdome. You are a very good athlete and feel positive about your chances. Then you notice Michael Jordan and other premier athletes who will be involved and your hopes sink. Everyone is then led out onto the playing field where the instructions are given. To everyone's shock, you are told that the only way a person can win is to jump and touch the ceiling of the Superdome. Despondent, you glance over at Jordan and the other athletes and notice that they are downcast, just like you. No one can jump and touch the ceiling, no matter how good they are. It is impossible!

In the analogy, Michael Jordan and the other athletes are a parallel to the most righteous men alive and the ceiling is God's perfect standard. Even the best can never reach it on their own power, as pointed out multiple times in the Bible. Here are Jesus' words:

And he answered them, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:2-3, emphasis added).

Those who think they are good enough would never imagine that the men who crucified Jesus could be forgiven and saved. But as Jesus was on the cross looking down at those mocking and insulting Him—those guilty of severely beating and crucifying Him—He clearly displayed His love for them by stating the opposite of what we would.

And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

People get it wrong and think it's about being good enough, when in reality it's about being lost and not knowing it. Jesus came on a rescue mission to seek and save the lost—every sinner. The only way you cannot be saved is to reject the Truth (Jesus) who is right before your eyes.

“You're always telling me that you don't need to change, that you're fine with who you are. When I look at you, I see you filling your life with all that you can find. Hoping and wishing this world can bring you a little peace of mind. Well, stop looking, 'cause He's right in front of your eyes.” Shawn McDonald, *Don't Walk Away*.

The Fall of Man

To further amplify the point that everyone needs Jesus as their Savior, I want to point out how exacting God's law is when it comes to sin. The general description of humanity's descent into sin is called the *fall of man*. I like to compare the situation to the law of gravity, where it only takes one step off the edge of a cliff to begin the fall to your death. God's natural laws, like gravity, were established for the greater good, but they do not respect individuals—we must respect *them*. It makes sense that the same would be true with God's moral law, which the Bible calls the law of sin and death. The Bible says it only took one sin for us to step off the cliff of perfect morality and find ourselves falling, with no hope of saving ourselves.

For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it (James 2:10, emphasis added).

Although this sounds harsh, it means it only took one sin to separate us from God. He provides this warning for our benefit so we will take action and seek the solution. The main themes of the Bible are God's holiness, our sinfulness, and God's plan to save us. He loves you, and the only way He can save you is with your cooperation. The only way you will cooperate is to understand and accept the truth of your sinful condition. At this point in our study, it makes sense to thoughtfully consider another warning for those who reject God's offer, involving sins mankind doesn't really consider that bad.

“But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death” (Rev. 21:8, emphasis added).

The Bible is crystal clear. Even if you have led a completely sacrificial life doing good for others like Mother Theresa, you still fall short of God's perfect standard. You need to repent and trust in Jesus by accepting the payment He made for our sins on the cross. Those who do not will be required to pay for their own sins, eternally separated from God in hell.

The Bible says that Jesus came to justify us—to make us right with God. To maintain that you are good enough is self-justification. It's telling God that you do not need His help. He can only help you when you admit you cannot help yourself and call to Him.

For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law (Rom. 3:28).

Faith Steps into the Picture

Remember my analogy of walking across the ice to the other side of a frozen lake? Before we started to cross, we checked out the facts as best we could. But eventually we needed to add faith to what we had discovered if we wanted to get to the other side. That's where we stand now with God and the Bible. The evidence has given us answers to many questions, and up to this point, the Bible and God have checked out. We have verified truths about Jesus and now we need to

decide if we want to trust Him with the things He claimed, which cannot be verified. This is where faith needs to take over. Knowing the Bible says you are headed to hell doesn't sound like a blessing at first, but think of it this way—if you had a deadly but curable disease and did not know it, you would never seek a cure. But once you have the diagnosis, the fear of death would motivate you to set aside everything else to seek a doctor with the cure. When you found him, you would need to heed his advice to survive. In the same way, let the diagnosis of your sinful condition motivate you to set aside any distractions. Listen to God, who loves and cares for you and has the cure for your condition—the good news that Jesus paid for your sins on the cross. It's the ultimate proof and an undeniable testimony that God loves you and wants to save you.

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die. but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Rom. 5:6-8).

We do not place our faith and trust in Jesus primarily for a better life. We trust in Him to be made right with God. It's the "Great Exchange" in which Jesus freely exchanges His righteousness for our sinfulness.

Have You Met Grace?

When we discover our guilt before God, our first reaction might be to try to fix ourselves by doing better. But think of a man who committed numerous crimes and didn't get caught for years. He knows what he did was wrong, so he reforms his life. One day, years later, there is a knock on the door—it's the police. The law has caught up with him and even though he has reformed, his crimes must still be punished. We see a clear example of this with Nazi war criminals who are still being arrested and prosecuted today, after years of hiding. The same is true with all of the numerous sins we have already committed. The Bible says they cannot go unpunished and good deeds now, while well-intentioned, are not the answer. The Bible offers an amazing solution: the gift of salvation by grace, God's undeserved favor.

Grace alone is crucially important to grasp, and Biblical Christianity is the only belief in God that claims that salvation is by grace alone. The next verse clearly teaches that the only way we can be saved is by the grace of God. If you went to work, did nothing and still got paid, that's grace.

*For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the **gift of God**, not a result of works, so that no one may boast (Eph. 2:8-9, emphasis added).*

Grace and works are contradictory, as the apostle Paul points this out in the next verse:

But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace (Rom. 11:6).

The entire book of Galatians, Acts 15 and a multitude of other verses deal with the false teaching that works need to be added to God's grace to merit salvation. The Galatians were fooled by a

counterfeit gospel that closely resembled the true Gospel. They were told something like, “Yes, believe in Jesus—but you must also do these things in order to be saved.” Two beliefs in particular that may appear to be Christian when viewed from a distance would be Mormons and Jehovah’s Witnesses. But the truth is, both contradict the Bible in several areas, add additional teachings that they put on a par with the Bible and offer a message comparable to what misled the Galatians: teaching that works are required in addition to grace. Traditional Roman Catholicism puts traditions on par with scripture and adds works and penance to grace as a requirement for Salvation. Some sincere and wonderful people practice these beliefs and my intention is not to offend anyone but the truth is our goal. If you question the doctrine of grace alone through faith alone, I encourage you to thoroughly study the Bible for yourself.

As we get closer to the truth, the beliefs that remain will fit many pieces of the evidence. But at this point I want to remind you again of those multiple choice tests you took in school. One answer was correct and the others were wrong *no matter how close to the truth they came*. We know for certain that truth does not contradict itself. Since grace and works contradict each other, both beliefs cannot be true. Since we are searching for a truth that carries eternal consequences, I must point out these contradictions just as Paul did in the next verses, when he strongly rebukes the Galatians for adding works to the true Gospel of grace. Then he says that adding works severs a person from the grace of Christ. This is because grace is canceled out when works are required. The evidence we have examined is for what the Bible teaches. In this section I have listed only a portion of the Bible verses that tell us we are saved by grace and not by works. If you think about it, anyone who says that works are required is also saying what Jesus did on the cross was not enough.

I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed (Gal. 1:6-8).

You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace (Gal. 5:4).

In the following verse, Paul tells us if we could earn our righteousness and thus entrance into heaven by doing good, Christ died for nothing.

I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose (Gal. 2:21).

Lastly, a clear example of salvation by grace alone can be seen in a conversation between Jesus and the two thieves being crucified on the crosses next to Him. The first part of the dialogue is between the two thieves, one humble and one rebellious unto death.

But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man (Jesus) has done nothing wrong” (Luke 23:40-41).

The second part is when the same thief turns to Christ, admits his guilt and places his faith in Him.

And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." And he (Jesus) said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:42-43, emphasis added).

Obviously, the thief who humbled himself and threw himself on God's mercy could not accomplish any good works before he died, yet Jesus said "today you will be with me in paradise." Here are a few more of the numerous verses that teach salvation by grace alone: Romans 3:28-30; 4:5; 5:1; 9:30; 10:4; Galatians 2:16; 2:21; 3:5-6; 3:24; Ephesians 2:8-9.

Grasping grace alone can be tough. Therefore, let me end this subject on a personal note that might help. I too struggled with the thought there must be something I needed to do. Finally, I made a decision to do the only thing I could—take God at His Word. I accepted that I can never be good enough based on God's standard, and it is impossible to earn a gift. If salvation is a gift as the Bible promises, the only option anyone has is to trust God and accept it.

"I CANNOT get to Heaven on the basis of anything that I have done. I need to come to God with an open heart and confess that it is not because of who I am, but because of what He's done; not because of what I've done, but because of who He is. God Alone. Faith Alone. Anything else would be an insult to the Giver of Life." Jim Wallace, former atheist, homicide detective, www.pleaseconvinceme.com

Grace is Not an Excuse

The Bible says that we need Jesus to save us from God's wrath towards sin—this confirms that God's law is good and endures. Paul preached grace, yet he often had to instruct believers that grace is not a license to sin.

What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! (Rom. 6:15).

Although it's clear that the Bible says good works cannot save anyone, Jesus taught us to do good. Our conscience confirms this. A Christian's actions verify the reality of their faith, which is not visible apart from good works. A true saving faith in Jesus is authenticated by what a person does. In a similar way, Jesus established His identity and authority to forgive sins, something which could not be seen, by performing visible miracles. His works verified that He was the Messiah, and our works verify our claim of faith and trust in Him. So first, place your faith in Jesus, and then do good works out of gratitude.

But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works (James 2:18, emphasis added).

"Good works are a fruit of our salvation, not a root of our salvation." Andrew Womack, www.awmi.net

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Small Town Judge

The Good Person test revealed our guilty condition before God. In John 14:6, Jesus discloses He is the only solution for our situation and the only way to the Father. The following analogy will clarify why Jesus' payment for our sins was necessary and why it makes Him the only way for mankind to be saved.

Imagine you live in a very small town where there is only one judge, who is also your father. He is an ethical judge who always enforces the law. You are his favorite child. You help family and friends whenever they need it, get top grades in college, hold down a good job to support your young family and give to charity. Then one night you go out with friends and drink too much. On your way home you're arrested for DUI and reckless driving. In one instant you are in big trouble with the law.

Your day in court arrives, and if found guilty you face the option of a \$5,000 fine or six months in jail. Since your father is the only judge in town, you must stand before him. As he gazes down at you from the bench, imagine the awful dilemma you have placed him in. He loves you dearly but he is an ethical judge, bound to uphold the law.

According to the Bible, God is in a similar position with us. He loves us dearly but His just nature is fully aware of every wrong thought and action we have ever committed. He knows for certain that we are guilty.

Finally, your father offers his review of the evidence, indicates you are guilty and asks if you have anything to say for yourself. You say, "Dad, I know I am guilty but I just messed up this one time. You know I am a good person." You remind your dad of all the good things you have ever done and how this is the only mistake you've made. Then you begin to plead with him. "Dad, there are a lot of people much worse than me. I do not have the \$5,000 for the fine and if I go to jail, I will lose my job, get kicked out of school and my family will be destitute." You pause, then blurt out: "Please overlook the law this one time and let me go."

The question is, can he do it and remain ethical? According to the thousands I have asked, the answer is a definite "NO." They all agree that if he let you go, he would be corrupt.

The judge says, "Son, you know I love you dearly, but you also know I must uphold the law. I would be corrupt if I ignored it and let you go. I find you guilty as charged." Somewhat in shock, you resign yourself to the thought that you are headed off to jail for six months. Then you notice your father standing at your side without his judge's robe, holding \$5,000 in his hand. Amazingly, he is offering to pay your fine. You need to make a decision.

1. Reject the offer and pay for your crime in jail.
2. Accept the offer and go free.

No matter which choice you select, the law is fully satisfied and the judge remains ethical. He imposed the penalty required by law, and now he offers to pay your fine. He found the only way to fulfill his love for you and to satisfy the law's requirement of justice at the same time. This is a picture of what the Bible says God chose to do for mankind and why Jesus' payment on the cross for our sins is the only way to freedom. God's perfect moral nature requires all sin to be

punished; God's loving nature wants to save you from that punishment. The only way God could possibly satisfy both of His natures was to pronounce our guilt, as His just nature requires, then take our punishment Himself, paying for our sins in full. He offers to freely exchange His righteousness for our sinfulness as a gift. A legal and binding transaction took place on the cross when the requirement of the law was fulfilled through Jesus' payment for our sins. Now you need to make a decision.

1. You can reject the offer and pay for your own sins.
2. You can accept the offer and go to heaven.

Perfect Justice collided with Perfect Love and Love won at the cross. Yes, God does forgive sins—but only for those who freely repent and place their faith entirely in Jesus, accepting the required payment He made on the cross. The only thing that stands in the way of your salvation is *you*. In this next verse God tells you which choice to make.

I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live (Deut. 30:19).

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The Gravity of Your Decision

If you have never seen the movie *Bruce Almighty*, I suggest you rent it. While it is simply a fictional story, it gets a couple of things right, which makes it perfect for this comparison. In the movie, Bruce (Jim Carey) takes over God's (Morgan Freeman) job of running the world for a short period of time. As God, the only thing Bruce cannot do is override a person's free will. He learns two things quickly: It is impossible to satisfy everyone's contradicting desires, and mankind's free will prevents God from forcing people to love him. Bruce proves this to himself with his girlfriend Grace (Jennifer Aniston). No matter how much he loves her, she can still reject his love.

God is in a similar position with us. God cannot perform the logically impossible. He cannot make a one ended stick, a square circle, or please everyone's contradictory desires—for example, not everyone can be the richest person on earth. And He certainly cannot force a person with free will to accept His love, help and salvation. Therefore, our free will holds unbelievable power. You need to decide if you want to trust God, who knows all things and loves you, or continue to trust your own limited knowledge. The gravity of your decision is immense.

I realize that many face an internal struggle when they consider trusting Jesus. I feared the change I might need to make, and I feared that God did not love me. After all, He knew everything I had ever done. Initially, I believed the lie that I needed to clean up my life before God would accept me. I realize now I was just using this as an excuse to ignore God and continue in my ways. This is not about being perfect and forcing yourself to dramatically change by your own willpower. It is about accepting the truth of your sinful condition and being willing to let God change you over time. The men and women described in the Bible were real people, just like you and me. They had emotions and feelings just as we do, and occasionally they stumbled and fell short. You will not be an exception. But God will transform you from the inside out at His pace, with His power, and your cooperation. I often do not sense that anything is happening. But when I look at myself now, even though I may not be where I would like to be, I am definitely not where I used to be. Do not fear; come just as you are, no matter what you are doing or what you have done.

"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose." Jim Elliot, missionary who gave his life sharing the gospel.

Upon accepting Christ, the Bible says you are immediately justified or made right with God. Justification is a one-time act of God where he places us in a right relationship with Him, solely because of what Jesus accomplished on the cross. Then God, who loves you just as you are but refuses to leave you that way, begins His process of sanctification. This is a continuing act of God (specifically the Holy Spirit) conforming us more and more to Christ-likeness. Justification happens once. Sanctification is progressive. When you first trust Christ, you still have the same old computer program in your brain, filled with the same thoughts. This can often lead to the same errors you have made for years, so you need to be patient and trust God. His process of sanctification will take time.

No Christian is better than anyone else, but like a person who accepts the evidence that the plane is going down and puts on the parachute, they are better off.

God's Talking—Are You Listening?

Listen to the still, small voice inside of you. Ask God if Jesus is the truth, then thoughtfully read these next verses. **After each one, pause and consider what it says to you:**

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23).

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 6:23).

God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Rom. 5:8).

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6).

And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. (Acts 4:12).

Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3, emphasis added).

If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame" (Rom.10:9-11).

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Reasonable Faith

It's normal to still have questions and doubts, but that shouldn't keep you from deciding to trust Jesus. Remember, I never said the evidence would prove the Bible is true beyond all possible doubt; however, I believe the evidence indicates it is true beyond all reasonable doubt. The only thing proven beyond all possible doubt is our guilt before a Holy God.

If our airplane was about to crash and I handed you a parachute, wouldn't you have fears about using it, even though you knew beyond a reasonable doubt that parachutes work? But if you trusted those fears and never put the parachute on, you would surely die. On the other hand, if you trusted what you did know about parachutes and put it on, you would most likely live. The same logic applies to God. You now know more about the facts than many Christians. I beg you to trust Jesus. He will never let you down.

"...he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Heb. 13:5).

"...And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:20).

You must freely repent, turning to the one and only living God. Put on the Savior as you would a parachute, so you're ready for your jump into eternity.

If your desire is to accept Jesus and to receive the salvation that He offers, but you do not know what to say, the words are not as important as your heart. The Bible compares our relationship with God to a marriage in which we have been the unfaithful partner. Consider a man who has really hurt his wife, realizes the huge mistake he has made, and wants her back. No one would need to tell him what to say. He would just cry out from his heart in repentance, promising to turn from his wayward path while asking for forgiveness. Do the same with God. Humble yourself, admit your sins and turn to God's saving grace. It does not matter who you are, your age, or what you have done. The apostle Paul, the author of the majority of the New Testament, was persecuting and killing Christians up until the very moment God saved him. Come just as you are. God will not reject a humble heart. Here is a short prayer to guide you:

"Lord God, I admit I am a sinner in desperate need of your saving grace. I believe Jesus Christ is God in the flesh and He died on the cross to pay the penalty for my sins in full. He then rose again and defeated death. I thank you and I accept your gift of forgiveness and salvation. I commit to following you, Lord Jesus. I pray for Your will, not mine to be done.

You do not need anyone's help to trust Jesus, but if you have questions or feel led to talk to someone directly, call 1-800-NEEDHIM or www.chataboutjesus.com

If you have made a decision for Christ, welcome to God's family. I sincerely believe you have exercised reasonable faith based on the facts. I urge you to continue your study of the evidence by going to my website, www.god-evidence-truth.com, where I direct you to many resources. I have discovered that the more I learn, the more precious God's Word is to me. If I have questions that generate doubt, I dig into them through reputable sources. Every time I examine the facts, the truths of God and the Bible stand firm.

You also need to realize that Jesus is your only example and that God's power is in His Word. John 1:1 tells us "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*" (emphasis added). To hear from God, you need to read the Bible. Start reading in the Gospel of John and ask God to help you understand, then read the other three Gospels and the rest of the New Testament.

Like a compass that always points north, let the Bible be your compass that always points to the truth. Know what it says, follow it and never get lost again.

While a person can be saved without going to church, I suggest strongly that you find a good Bible-believing church. Don't expect it to be perfect. If any church was perfect and any of us showed up, we would ruin it. In reality, church is a hospital for sinners, not a museum for saints. Find a small group Bible study and some like-minded, believing friends. I also find tremendous value in a good Christian radio station or Christian music that will feed your spirit and help to keep your thoughts on God.

If you have seen yourself in the light of God's truth, you will be able to intimately relate to the following lyrics written by the reformed slave trader John Newton. Compared to God, he could clearly see the wretchedness that dwelled within him, and therefore the amazing grace of God.

*Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.
T'was Grace that taught my heart to fear.
And Grace, my fears relieved.
How precious did that Grace appear
The hour I first believed.
Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
'Tis Grace that brought me safe thus far
and Grace will lead me home.
The Lord has promised good to me.
His word my hope secures.
He will my shield and portion be,
As long as life endures.
Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess within the veil,
A life of joy and peace.
When we've been here ten thousand years
Bright shining as the sun.
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we've first begun.*

Not sure yet? Critical points to remember

If you are unsure, I encourage you to candidly ask God if Jesus is the truth. Keep your eyes and ears open over the next couple of weeks, and He will confirm it for all who are sincere. But remember:

1. God's truth applies to you, whether you believe it or not.
2. God's standard is perfection.
3. We all fall short, and Jesus is our only hope.
4. Ten out of ten people die, so don't take too long to decide.

Please let me know if this book made a difference in your life and if you placed your faith in Jesus. It's not about religion, it's about truth. Enjoy the journey!

May God Richly Bless you,

Michael Edwards

www.God-Evidence-Truth.com

Don't forget to email me at godevidencetruth@yahoo.com and go to my website at www.God-Evidence-Truth.com where you can find **a free video linked E-Book version of this book that expands of many of the subjects throughout the book.** The site also contains answers to questions and an online video showing you an easy way to share your faith using this book. Printed copies of this book can be ordered on the website for a donation of \$1 or less per copy, including shipping to your location when purchased in orders of twenty or more. You can send the e-book version to friends and family for free, but many people do not like to read online. I suggest the printed books; they are being offered at our cost and they are a real value considering their purpose.

Many thanks to Dr. Frank Turek and Dr. Norman Geisler for their book *I Do Not Have Enough Faith to Be Atheist*, which led to a portion of the basic formatting for my presentation of the established facts. Their book contains an overall in-depth study of the facts that I believe every Christian and true seeker of God should read. Buy it at impactapologetics.com or Amazon.com.

Everyone deserves the chance to examine the facts and make a reasonable decision. Please pass this book on.