



THE BIBLE'S PROOF

DAVID CLOUD

The Bible's Proof
Copyright 2002 by David Cloud
ISBN 978-1-58318-124-9
April 2018

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Published by Way of Life Literature
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Printed in Canada by
Bethel Baptist Print Ministry

Table of Contents

Introduction	5
The Person of Jesus Christ	6
The Testimony and Resurrection of Jesus Christ	7
The Bible's Unity	24
The Character of Its Authors	28
Fulfilled Prophecy	29
The Bible's Accuracy	33
The Bible's Candor.....	38
The Bible's Indestructibility	39
The Bibles Appeal	43
The Bible's Doctrine.....	44
Way of Life Literature Publications	46

The Bible's Proof
David W. Cloud

Introduction

The individual must accept that the Bible is the Word of God by faith, for “without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6).

At the same time, Bible faith is not a blind leap into the dark. It is confidence in the Record that God has given, for “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17). The writers of the Bible explain to us that they were not delivering cunningly devised fables but a divinely-inspired record based on “many infallible proofs” (Acts 1:3; 2 Peter 1:16).

Following are some of the objective, time-proven reasons why we can have complete confidence in the Bible.

The Person of Jesus Christ

One of these reasons is the Person of Jesus Christ who is presented in the Bible.

Everything about Him is unique: His virgin birth, His sinless life, His amazing miracles, His wonderful teaching, His brilliant answer to every question, His compassion even toward those who hated Him, His sacrificial death on the cross for man's sin, His bodily resurrection, His ascension back to Heaven, His offer to grant forgiveness of sins and eternal life to any sinner of any nation who believes on Him, His power to change the lives of those who believe.

The Jesus presented in the Bible is altogether lovely and unique. He claimed to be the only God and Saviour, and He proved it by His miracles and by His resurrection from the dead.

No novelist could create the Christ of the Bible!

Thus one reason we believe the Bible is the Word of God is its central figure, Jesus Christ.

The Testimony and Resurrection of Jesus Christ

The testimony and resurrection of Jesus Christ prove that the Bible is the Word of God.

Christ taught that the Bible is the infallible Word of God.

He quoted from every part of the Old Testament as the Word of God. Some of the Old Testament people and events that Christ referred to are the creation (Mk. 13:19), Adam and Eve (Mt. 19:4-6; Mk. 10:6-7), Cain and Abel (Mt. 23:35; Lk. 11:50-51), Noah and the flood (Mt. 24:37-39), Abraham (Jn. 8:39-40), the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Lk. 17:28-29), Lot's wife turning to salt (Lk. 17:32), Moses and the burning bush (Mk. 12:26), manna from Heaven (Jn. 6:31-32), the brazen serpent in the wilderness (Jn. 3:14-15), Jonah and the whale (Mt. 12:39-41; Lk. 11:29-32), Nineveh repenting at Jonah's preaching (Lk. 11:32), Solomon and the queen of Sheba (Lk. 11:31).

Christ often quoted from the book Isaiah and said the historical prophet Isaiah wrote it, not an unknown group of men as some critics claim. In John 12:38-41, Jesus quoted from both major sections of Isaiah and said both were written by the same prophet named Isaiah.

Of the authority of the Old Testament, Jesus said,

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled” (Mat. 5:17-18).

In this passage Jesus taught that the Old Testament is perfect even to the very letters.

He further said that “the scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35). He was saying that nothing written in

the Scripture can be set aside or ignored. It is authoritative to every detail; it is a chain with no weak links.

Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, and His resurrection gives infallible witness to this claim.

The Bible says there are “many infallible proofs” of Christ’s resurrection (Acts 1:3). In fact, it is one of the best documented events of ancient history. Bible-believing Christianity is not blind religious faith!

Jesus and the Bible and Christianity rise or fall on Christ’s resurrection!

The Bible’s accounts of Jesus claim to be historical, eyewitness accounts (Luke 1:1-4; 2 Peter 1:15-16; 1 John 1:3). If the accounts are not historically accurate, then they can rightly be rejected.

Christ staked His authority on the resurrection (at least seven times He said He would die and rise from the dead -- Matthew 16:11; 17:9, 22-23; 20:18-19; 26:32; Luke 9:22-27; John 2:18-22).

Paul said that the Christian faith depends on Christ’s resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:14-17).

Four great evidences for the resurrection of Christ

1. The character of the Gospel accounts

The Gospel accounts themselves give every evidence that they were written by eyewitnesses who believed what they wrote and who were speaking the truth without embellishment and myth-making.

Consider the details of the accounts.

“John’s Gospel is characterized throughout by the personal touch; it has all the marks of the evidence not only of an eyewitness, but of a careful observer ... The running of the disciples, the order of their arrival at the sepulchre and their entry, the fact that John first stooped down and looking through the low doorway saw the linen clothes lying, while Peter,

more bold, was the first to enter ... the description of the position of the linen clothes and the napkin ... this can surely be nothing else than the description of one who actually saw, upon whose memory the scene is still impressed, to whom the sight of the empty grave and the relinquished grave-clothes was a critical point in faith and life" (E. Day, *On the Evidence of the Resurrection*, pp. 16-17).

Consider the candor of the accounts. When someone invents a religion, he glorifies its leaders, but the Gospels paint the founders of Christianity as very weak (e.g., Peter having to be rebuked by Christ as Satan--Mat. 16:23; Peter denying Christ thrice; the disciples fleeing and hiding; Thomas and others doubting Christ even after He appears to them).

Further, if men had made up the accounts of Christ's resurrection, they would *not* have said that the women were the first to believe. In that day women had no authority in the eyes of society. They could not even testify in a court of law in those days, except on rare occasions (J.P. Moreland, *Scaling the Secular City*, p. 168). The account of the women believing first is not something that would have been written unless it actually happened and the writers were committed wholeheartedly to recording the truth and nothing but the truth. This striking candor is powerful evidence that the Gospels are true, unvarnished accounts.

2. The empty tomb

That the tomb of Jesus was empty is proven by two facts:

First, the Jewish leaders had to invent the lie that the disciples had stolen His body (Mat. 28:11-15). If Jesus' body was located anywhere, they would have searched it out and produced it.

Second, just weeks after the crucifixion, only a stone's throw from the empty tomb itself, Peter publicly proclaimed the resurrection and 3,000 believed, followed a little later by "a great company of priests" and "a great number" more

(Acts 2:37-42; 6:7; 11:21). If anyone could have produced the body or come up with a reasonable account for it being missing, they would have!

The following are theories that have been proposed to account for the empty tomb:

“The field of biblical criticism resembles a vast graveyard filled with the skeletons of discarded theories devised by highly imaginative skeptics. ... One might think that so many repeated failures ... would lead the opposition to abandon their efforts, but not so. They continue unabated, and men are still wracking their brains, working their imaginations overtime, and parading a vast amount of erudition and ingenuity in their, to us, futile attempts to destroy the impregnable rock of historical evidence on which the Christian faith in the resurrection stands proud and unshaken” (John Lilly).

Some say Jesus just swooned and recovered in the cool of the tomb.

This is refuted by the fact that the professional soldiers had ascertained that he was dead (John 19:31-34).

Further, how could a near-dead man remove the heavy stone and convince his followers that he had risen from the dead? Consider what Christ endured: severe beating; nails piercing His hands and feet; spear piercing His side (John 19:34); great loss of blood and bodily fluids.

Some say that the women went to the wrong tomb.

In *The Historical Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, Kirsopp Lake claimed that the women were confused in the dark and went to the wrong tomb. Not only is this contrary to what the Gospel accounts say, it makes no sense whatsoever. If the women had gone to the wrong tomb and reported that Christ had risen based on that mistake, the matter would soon have been cleared up. First, the disciples were not stupid. They would not have given their lives for the

testimony of a few geographically-challenged women. They would have checked out the story thoroughly and would have come to the truth of the matter. Further, the Jewish leaders would have made certain that the matter was cleared up by producing the right tomb, and the body!

Some say the disciples were hallucinating.

If they were hallucinating, it was a mass hallucination, because Paul said that the resurrected Christ was seen by above 500 people at once (1 Cor. 15:5-8)!

When Paul wrote the epistle of 1 Corinthians, most of these eyewitnesses were still alive. Paul was not writing about things that had happened long ago.

Josh McDowell observes: “Let’s take the more than 500 witnesses who saw Jesus alive after His death and burial, and place them in a courtroom. Do you realize that if each of those 500 people were to testify for only six minutes, including cross-examination, you would have an amazing 50 hours of firsthand testimony? Add to this the testimony of many other eyewitnesses and you would well have the largest and most lopsided trial in history” (“Evidence for the Resurrection”).

It has been rightly said that “this theory makes Christ a fraud and his disciples near idiots.”

“Somehow the rugged fisherman Peter and his brother Andrew, the characteristically doubting Thomas, the seasoned and not too sensitive tax gatherer, Matthew, the rather dull Philip, intensely loyal but a little slow of apprehension, do not fit easily into the conditions required for an absolutely unshakable collective hallucination. And if it is not both collective and unshakable it is of no use to us. The terrors and the persecutions these men ultimately had to face and did face unflinchingly, do not admit of a halfhearted adhesion secretly honeycombed with doubt” (Morison).

Some say they saw someone disguised as Jesus (e.g., Hugh Schonfield, The Passover Plot)

This is too ridiculous to waste time refuting. Having spent three years with Jesus, wouldn't the disciples know Him? They might be confused for a moment or even a short while, but eventually they would recognize that the individual was an impostor.

Some say the body was stolen.

This was the story invented by the Jewish leaders. They paid the guards to lie and to say that the disciples stole Jesus' body (Mat. 28:11-15). This is an impossible story.

First, if they were asleep how could they know what happened to the body, or if stolen, who stole it?

Second, sleeping on guard duty brought the death penalty in that day. That one of the guards might fall asleep is perhaps conceivable, but that all of them would fall asleep is not. As Richard Dickinson observes: "That without an exception all should have fallen asleep when they were stationed there for so extraordinary a purpose, to see that that body was not stolen, lest it should be said that the crucified Jesus had risen from the dead, may be possible; but it is not credible: especially when it is considered that these guards were subjected to the severest discipline in the world. It was death for a Roman sentinel to sleep on his post. Yet these guards were not executed; nor were they deemed culpable even by the rulers, woefully chagrined and exasperated as they must have been by the failure of their plan for securing the body" (*The Resurrection of Jesus Christ Historically and Logically Viewed*, 1865).

(That the guard was a Roman guard is clear from the passage. The Greek word for "watch" in Matthew 27:65, *koustodia*, is the word for a Roman sentry. A.T. Robertson says that "ye have a watch" is present imperative and refers to "a guard of Roman soldiers, not mere temple police." In Matthew 28:12 they are called "soldiers," which would not be

the case if they were temple police. Further, Matthew 28:14 indicates that they were Roman guards, because they were afraid of what Pilate would do if he heard of the matter.)

Third, by their actions it is evident that the Jewish leaders didn't believe their own story. They didn't call the disciples to examine them when they found out the body was missing, and they made no effort to find the body. John Chrysostom, in the fourth century, observed that the story of the stealing of the body actually establishes the resurrection. "For this is the language of men confessing, that the body was not there. When therefore they confess the body was not there, but the stealing is shown to be false and incredible--by their watching by it, and by the seals, and by the timidity of the disciples--the proof of the resurrection even hence appears incontrovertible" (*The New Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, p. 264).

Further, who could have stolen Christ's body?

The Jews certainly didn't steal it, because they wanted to prove that He did not rise.

The Roman government certainly didn't steal it, because the government sealed the tomb and had no reason to steal it and thus allow the Christians to say He had risen.

Joseph of Arimathea certainly didn't steal it. He was Jesus' disciple and had no motive to steal His body. Further, he couldn't have stolen it alone, because he couldn't have removed the great stone, so he would have needed help, and doubtless someone would have reported the deed sooner or later.

The disciples certainly didn't steal it. First, they were hiding in fear for their lives. Second, they had no opportunity, because the tomb was sealed and guarded. Third, they had no leader who could have envisioned and accomplished such a thing. Their leader, Peter, was a broken man at that point and had given up his discipleship to Jesus to go back to fishing (John 21:3). Fourth, they would have been fools to have suffered and died for a lie! The disciples didn't suffer for

what others had seen, such as Muslims who die for the Koran, but they died for what they had professedly seen themselves (Acts 4:18-20). Fifth, it would have been impossible for such a large number of people to have kept the secret hidden. "Even if it had been possible, and the disciples the men to do it, the subsequent history of Christianity would have been different. Sooner or later, someone who knew the facts would have been unable to keep them hidden" (Frank Morison, *Who Moved the Stone?*). Sixth, a great moral religion like we find in the New Testament, which exalts truth and honesty, could not have been founded upon a despicable deception.

"It is the complete failure of anyone to produce the remains, or to point to any tomb, official or otherwise, in which they were said to lie, and this ultimately destroys every theory based on the human removal of the body" (Morison).

We must not forget exactly what the early Christians suffered for their testimony that Christ had risen from the dead.

They were denounced by family and friends, hated by and considered the enemies of society, tortured, kept imprisoned for years in dark, rat-infested cells. Their property confiscated; they were crucified, burned alive, torn apart by wild beasts, chopped into pieces, roasted on racks; their tongues were torn out and their eyes put out. The also had to endure the torture and death of beloved family members.

"Their master had recently perished as a malefactor, by the sentence of a public tribunal. His religion sought to overthrow the religions of the whole world. The laws of every country were against the teachings of His disciples. The interests and passions of all the rulers and great men in the world were against them. The fashion of the world was against them. Propagating this new faith, even in the most inoffensive and peaceful manner, they could expect

nothing but contempt, opposition, revilings, bitter persecutions, stripes, imprisonments, torments, and cruel deaths. Yet this faith they zealously did propagate; and all these miseries they endured undismayed, nay, rejoicing. As one after another was put to a miserable death, the survivors only prosecuted their work with increased vigor and resolution. The annals of military warfare afford scarcely an example of the like heroic constancy, patience, and unblenching courage. They had every possible motive to review carefully the grounds of their faith, and the evidences of the great facts and truths which they asserted; and these motives were pressed upon their attention with the most melancholy and terrific frequency. It was therefore impossible that they could have persisted in affirming the truths they have narrated, had not Jesus actually risen from the dead, and had they not known this fact as certainly as they knew any other fact. ... If then their testimony was not true, there was no possible motive for its fabrication” (Simon Greenleaf, *An Examination of the Testimony of the Four Evangelists by the Rules of Evidence Administered in the Courts of Justice*, 1846).

Some say the disciples made up the accounts.

This would mean that they all suffered and died on the basis of a lie, which makes no sense. It is one thing to found a religion or cult when you will benefit from it materially, but it is quite another thing to invent one if you will only suffer for it.

Further, as we have already noted, it is obvious from their very nature that the Gospel accounts were not made up. They are filled with lifelike detail and they are too candid to be mythical.

Some say Jesus rose spiritually but not bodily.

Jesus specifically refuted this by eating and letting the disciples touch Him (Luke 24:37-43).

Frank Morison set out to discredit the Gospel accounts of Christ's resurrection, and instead he concluded that the only thing that can satisfy the historical facts is that Jesus actually did rise from the dead.

We agree and we find it much easier to believe in Christ's resurrection, than to believe in the attempts to discredit it.

"The simple faith of the Christian who believes in the resurrection is nothing compared to the credulity of the skeptic who will accept the wildest and most improbable romances rather than admit the plain witness of historical certainties. The difficulties of belief may be great; the absurdities of unbelief are greater" (George Hanson, *The Resurrection and the Life*).

The reason why there are so many theories that attempt to discredit the Gospel accounts is that men are willfully blind sinners who do not want to submit to God (2 Corinthians 4:4).

Further, the unbelief of "Christian preachers" such as Kirsopp Lake was prophesied in Scripture.

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of" (2 Peter 2:1-2).

3. The eyewitnesses

Paul used the eyewitnesses of the resurrection as an irrefutable evidence (1 Cor. 15:5-8). He says the risen Christ was seen of more than 500 brethren at one time.

And it is not only the Gospels and the New Testament Epistles that give eyewitness testimony of Christ's resurrection.

Clement of Rome (d. 99) was taught directly by some of the apostles and we have his letter to the church at Corinth.

Polycarp (69-159) personally knew the apostle John and other believers who were eyewitnesses of Jesus' resurrection, and we have his letter to the church at Philippi dating to about AD 115.

4. The changed lives

“Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where THE DISCIPLES WERE ASSEMBLED FOR FEAR OF THE JEWS, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you” (John 20:19).

Something dramatic happened to turn the disciples from fear to courage.

Consider the testimony of Peter

After denying Christ the night of His arrest, Peter was a defeated man. He determined to go back to fishing (John 21:3). A few weeks later, the man who had denounced Christ before a handful of Jews on the eve of Christ's crucifixion, preached boldly to a multitude of them on the day of Pentecost and 3,000 were converted. What could have wrought such a mighty change other than that he had become convinced that Jesus had risen from the dead?

Consider the testimony of James, Jesus' half brother

Jesus' brothers were opposed to Him during His lifetime (John 7:7), but after Jesus rose from the dead, James believed and became a leader in the church at Jerusalem (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; Gal. 1:19). James' conversion was prompted by Christ's resurrection appearance to him (1 Cor. 15:7).

Consider the testimony of Paul

What converted Paul from being a bitter enemy of Christ to being one of His most zealous followers? From an earthly perspective, Paul had absolutely nothing to gain and everything to lose by following Christ. He admitted that he

had “profited in the Jews’ religion above many” (Gal. 1:14). Paul testified that it was the resurrected Christ who convinced him (Acts 22:3-21).

As a zealous Pharisee and leader of Christ’s enemies among the Jews, Paul was in a position to know all about the story about the disciples stealing the body. Had he thought that Jesus’ dead body actually lay hidden somewhere, he would never have believed in the resurrection. It is obvious that even he did not give any credence to this story.

Consider the testimony of lawyers and judges

Thomas Sherlock wasn’t a lawyer but he was trained in law. He was a Cambridge-educated theologian in the Church of England, and he wrote a classic book that examines the evidence for the resurrection of Christ from a courtroom perspective. It is titled *The Trial of the Witnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus* (1729). Sherlock wrote the book to rebut Deist Thomas Woolston’s skeptical book *Discourses of the Miracles of Jesus Christ*.

“Within the framework of a courtroom proceeding in which the Apostles are on trial for faking the Resurrection, Sherlock pits Woolston’s own arguments against his own powerful defense of the ‘accused.’ Applying the logic and reason of the law to the Bible, this is a provocative and original interpretation of the story of Jesus’ life and death” (Bookkilden.no).

Simon Greenleaf, Royall Professor of Law at Harvard University, was one of the most celebrated legal minds of America. He was the author of the three-volume *A Treatise on the Law of Evidence*, which is “still considered the greatest single authority on evidence in the entire literature on legal procedure” (Wilbur Smith, *Therefore Stand*, p. 463). After a thorough examination, Greenleaf concluded that Jesus did rise from the dead. In 1846 he published *An Examination of*

the Testimony of the Four Evangelists by the Rules of Evidence Administered in the Courts of Justice.

“All that Christianity asks of men is, that they would be consistent with themselves; that they would treat its evidences as they treat the evidence of other things; and that they would try and judge its actors and witnesses, as they deal with their fellow men, when testifying to human affairs and actions, in human tribunals. Let the witnesses [to the Resurrection] be compared with themselves, with each other, and with surrounding facts and circumstances; and let their testimony be sifted, as if it were given in a court of justice, on the side of the adverse party, the witness being subjected to a rigorous cross-examination. The result, it is confidently believed, will be an undoubting conviction of their integrity, ability and truth” (*An Examination of the Testimony of the Four Evangelists*).

Lord Darling, former Chief Justice of England, said:

“The crux of the problem of whether Jesus was, or was not, what He proclaimed Himself to be, must surely depend upon the truth or otherwise of the resurrection. On that greatest point we are not merely asked to have faith. In its favour as living truth there exists such overwhelming evidence, positive and negative, factual and circumstantial, that no intelligent jury in the world could fail to bring in a verdict that the resurrection story is truth” (cited from Michael Green, *Man Alive*, 1969, p. 54).

Lord Caldecote, Lord Chief Justice of England, testified that,

“[A]n overwhelming case for the Resurrection could be made merely as a matter of strict evidence. ... [Christ’s] Resurrection has led me as often as I have tried to examine the evidence to believe it as a fact

beyond dispute” (cited by Irwin Linton, *A Lawyer Examines the Bible*, p. xxiv, xxv).

Edmund Hatch Bennett was dean of the Boston University School of Law for more than 20 years, as well as a judge in the Massachusetts Probate Court. In 1899 he wrote *The Four Gospels from a Lawyer’s Standpoint*. He begins by saying:

“... this paper is the result of an effort, on my own part, to ascertain whether or not, independently of the exercise of a devout Christian faith, independently of any appeal to our religious sentiments, the truth of the story told in the four Gospels could be satisfactorily established by a mere reasoning process, and by applying the same principles and the same tests to the Gospel narratives that we observe in determining the truth or falsity of any other documents, or any other historical accounts.”

Bennett makes the following argument:

“These stories began to be published not long after the alleged crucifixion. Many persons were then living who could have easily refuted the statements of the evangelists had they been untrue. The enemies of Jesus were still alive and active. The Scribe and the Pharisee, the Priest and the Levite, still smarted under his repeated denunciations. They had the disposition, the opportunity, and the incentive to deny the story of the miraculous birth, the spotless life, the marvelous works, the sublime death, the astounding resurrection, and the glorious ascension of our Lord, had the then published description of these events been totally fabulous. But so far as we know, no person then living ever uttered a protest against these accounts, and for two thousand years they have been received and treated as veritable history.”

Irwin Linton, a Washington D.C. lawyer who argued cases before the Supreme Court, published *A Lawyer Examines the Bible: An introduction to Christian Evidences* in 1929.

“Lawyers regularly sift through testimonies in order to separate falsehood from truth. A unique feature of this book is its weighing of testimonies in support of the Bible. Linton points out that lawyers ask witnesses seemingly trivial details because, while the main outlines of false testimony can be agreed upon in advance, the innumerable trifling details cannot. Apparent contradictions between the Resurrection accounts prove the absence of collusion, and the fact that they can be resolved adds credibility to the testimonies. So, far from being fatal, the apparent contradictions between the Gospel accounts of the Resurrection turn out to be support for the authenticity of the event. On this, Linton cites Paley: ‘The existence of the difficulty proves the want or absence of that caution which usually accomplishes the consciousness of fraud; and the solution proves that it is not the collusion of fortuitous propositions which we have to deal with, but that a thread of truth winds through the whole, which preserved every circumstance in its place’” (*A Lawyer Examines the Bible*, 1949 edition, p. 75).

J.N.D. Anderson (Sir Norman Anderson) is dean of the faculty of law in the University of London and director of the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies. He wrote *Christianity the Witness of History: A Lawyer’s Approach* (1969).

“The most radical theory of all is to dismiss the whole story as deliberate invention. But there is scarcely a single intelligent critic who would go so far. The adverse evidence is overwhelming. Think, first, of the number of witnesses. Paul tells us that in 56 A.D. the majority of some 500 original witnesses were still alive; and we must remember that most of the early records went out, as it were, with the collective

authority of the primitive Church. Think, too, of the character of the witnesses. Not only did they give the world the highest moral and ethical teaching it has ever known, but they lived it out, as even their opponents were forced to admit. Again, think of the phenomenal change which these men underwent because of this alleged invention. Is it conceivable that a deliberate lie would change a company of cowards into heroes, and inspire them to a life of sacrifice, often ending only in martyrdom? Surely psychology teaches that nothing makes a man more prone to cowardice than a lie which preys on his conscience? Is it likely, moreover, that even in disillusionment or agony not a single one of these conspirators would ever have divulged the secret?" (Anderson, "The Evidence for the Resurrection," London: Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 1950).

Albert Roper was a prominent Virginia attorney, a graduate of the University of Virginia law school, and one-time mayor of Norfolk. He made a thorough investigation into the evidence for the resurrection of Christ, asking the question, "Can any intelligent person accept the resurrection story?" At the end of his research he concluded, "Can any intelligent person deny the weight of this evidence?" He wrote the book *Did Jesus Rise from the Dead?*

Consider the testimony of those who have been converted trying to refute the Bible

The following are a few examples:

Gilbert West (poet): *Observations on the History and Evidences of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ* (1747)

George Lyttleton (English statesman): *Observations on the Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul* (1747)

William Ramsay (Scottish archaeologist): *The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament* (1915)

Frank Morison (lawyer): *Who Moved the Stone?* (1930)

Josh McDowell: Evidence That Demands a Verdict (1972)

Lee Strobel (journalist for *Chicago Tribune*): *The Case for Christ* (1988)

(For the testimony of these men see the report “Men Who Were Converted Trying to Disprove the Bible” at www.wayoflife.org.)

Conclusion

As we have seen, Christ testified that the Bible is the infallible Word of God, and on His authority alone we would trust the Bible and reject the skeptics.

The Bible's Unity

The Bible's unity proves that it is the Word of God.

The Bible was written by at least 40 different authors representing some 19 different occupations (shepherd, soldier, farmer, fisherman, tax collector, medical doctor, king, etc.) who lived during a period covering some 1,600 years. That is approximately 50 generations. The first 39 books of the Bible were written in the Hebrew language over a period of about 1,000 years. There was then a 400-year gap when no Scriptures were written. After that, the last 27 books of the Bible were written in the Greek language during a period covering roughly 50 years. The writers of the Old Testament could not have collaborated with one another and the writers of the New Testament could not have collaborated with those of the Old Testament.

Yet the Bible is one book that fits together perfectly, has one all-encompassing theme, and contains no contradictions or errors. There is nothing else remotely like this in all of man's history.

The one message of the Bible from beginning to end is the eternal plan of God in Jesus Christ.

The earliest books of the Bible teach the same doctrine about God, creation, man, life, death, salvation, and judgment as the last books of the Bible.

The genealogy of Jesus Christ appears in the first book and can be traced throughout the rest of the Bible.

Prophecies of Christ begin in Genesis and appear throughout the Old Testament. As we will see, His entire life was pre-written in Scripture thousands and hundreds of years before His birth.

The first prophecy of Christ appears in Genesis 3:15. God said to the serpent,

“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”

Note some lessons:

First, Christ will be the Seed of the woman. This is a prophecy of the virgin birth. It refers to something supernatural. A woman does not naturally have seed and cannot naturally bear a child without the seed of the man. Normally children are called the seed of their fathers, but Jesus had no earthly father. Compare Galatians 4:4, which says Christ was “made of a woman.” It was through the virgin birth that Christ came into the world as a sinless man to make atonement for sin. Sin entered the world through the man Adam (Rom. 5:12), but Christ is not a son of Adam.

Second, Christ will be bruised in His heel by the serpent, who is the devil. This is a prophecy of Christ’s first coming and His death on the cross. It is described as a bruising of the heel because it was not permanent, since Christ rose from the dead. The prophecy of Isaiah 53:5 says that Christ was “bruised for our iniquities.”

Third, Christ will bruise the serpent’s head. This is a prophecy of Christ’s second coming. A head wound refers to a deadly wound, which signifies the complete defeat of the devil’s program and his eternal judgment. “The Messiah, the eminent seed of the woman, should bruise the head of the old serpent the devil, that is, destroy him and all his principalities and powers, break and confound all his schemes, and ruin all his works, crush his whole empire, strip him of his authority and sovereignty, and particularly of his power over death, and his tyranny over the bodies and souls of men; all which was done by Christ, when he became incarnate and suffered and died” (John Gill).

After Christ first appears in the prophecy of Genesis 3:15, He is revealed ever more fully as other prophets added to the Scripture through the centuries.

- He will be of the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:8-12).

- He will be of the seed of David (2 Samuel 7).
- He will be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2).
- He will be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14).
- He will be rejected by the Jewish nation (Isaiah 53:2).
- He will bear the penalty for man's sins (Isaiah 53:6).
- He will be crucified (Psalm 22:16).
- He will be buried in a rich man's tomb (Isaiah 53:9).
- He will rise from the dead (Psalm 16:10).

All of these prophecies, and many more, were fulfilled perfectly in the life of Jesus Christ.

Most of the prophecies were written hundreds of years apart. Genesis, for example, was written by Moses in about 1490 BC. Samuel was written about 1090 BC. Psalm 22 was written by David in about 1075 BC. Isaiah was written about 750 BC. The authors had no way to collude. The prophecies had to have been given to them by Someone who existed beyond place and time who could see the end from the beginning.

Many other prophetic themes are woven throughout the Bible. The prophecies are so clear and precise that they can be systematized to predict the future. For example, Israel's return to her land in the 20th century was anticipated by Bible believers in the 18th and 19th centuries. (See "Testimonies That Israel Would Return," www.wayoflife.org.) Many large volumes have been written on systematic Bible prophecy, such as *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy* by J. Barton Payne (1973, 754 pages) and *Every Prophecy of the Bible* by John Walvoord (1990, 685 pages).

Some have claimed to have found mistakes in the Bible, but I have studied it for 45 years (an average of probably eight hours a day) and each time I have examined a supposed error or contradiction, I have found that the Bible is true and the critic is wrong. (See our book *Things Hard to Be Understood: A Handbook of Biblical Difficulties*.)

Typically, I have found that Bible critics aren't skilled in Bible study and interpretation. They are like men who criticize architecture without having studied the discipline.

The Character of Its Authors

The character of the Bible's authors prove that it is the Word of God.

The Bible testifies that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21), and an examination of the lives of the Bible's writers proves this testimony. These were holy, serious men. They came from all walks of life. They were men of good reputation and sound mind. They were not enriched by the prophecies they gave. Far from it; some were impoverished and many were viciously persecuted and killed for the testimony they held. Moses, the author of the first five books of the Bible, chose to live a life of terrific hardship in the service of God as opposed to the millionaire's life he could have lived as the adopted son of Pharaoh. Many Bible writers made similar choices. Their motivation certainly was not covetousness and worldly advantage. These were not perfect men, but they were holy men. They all claimed that God had put His hand upon them to speak His Word. The lives they lived, and the testimonies they held, and the deaths they died gave evidence that they were telling the truth.

Fulfilled Prophecy

Fulfilled prophecy proves the Bible to be the Word of God.

The Bible contains a vast amount of prophecy, much of which has been fulfilled. The Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecies by J. Barton Payne lists 1817 specific prophecies, 1239 in the Old Testament and 578 in the New. The predictions are precise and detailed, and the fulfillment is exact.

Isaiah says that fulfilled prophecy is evidence of divine inspiration, and this should be obvious since only God knows the future (Isaiah 41:21-23).

The God of Israel challenges the idols to prove their divinity by foretelling the future. No pagan religious book has ever done this. The so-called prophecies of Nostradamus, for example, are so vague that they could mean almost anything. The same is typically true for astrological forecasts. Bible prophecy, on the other hand, is clear and precise, and its prophecies have never failed.

Prophecies Pertaining to Jesus Christ

Jesus' entire life was written down in the Old Testament before He was born. There are 191 Messianic prophecies. The following examples are from three great prophecies: Psalm 22; Micah 5:2; and Isaiah 53:

His birthplace (Micah 5:2 - Luke 2:4-7)

His rejection by the Jewish nation (Isaiah 53:2 - Mat. 27:22)

His betrayal by a friend (Psalm 41:9 - Mat. 26:14-26, 47-49)

His trial and death

- The perversion of justice (Isaiah 53:7-8 - Mat. 26:57-60; 27:11-14)

- Numbered with transgressors (Isaiah 53:12 - Mat. 27:20-22, 38)
- The piercing of his hands and feet (Psalm 22:16 - John 19:16-18)
- The words spoken on the cross (Psalm 22:1 - Mat. 27:46)
- The mocking of the people (Psalm 22:7-8 - Mat. 27:39, 41-43)
- The people sitting and staring (Psalm 22:17 - Mat. 27:36)
- No bones broken (Psalm 22:17 - John 19:33-36)
- The soldiers gambling for his garments (Psalm 22:18 - Mat. 27:35)
- His burial in a rich man's tomb (Isaiah 53:9 - Mat. 27:57-60)

We know that these prophecies were written before Christ was born, because copies of the Old Testament books were found in the Dead Sea caves dating to at least 100 and more years B.C.

Prophecies Pertaining to Israel

The continued existence of Israel is one of history's most amazing stories, and it was prophesied in Scripture in great detail.

Israel's history was prophesied by Moses and recorded in the book of Deuteronomy about 4,000 years ago. God warned that if Israel broke His law she would be "plucked from off the land" and scattered "among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other" (Deut. 28:63-64). There the Jews would "find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind: And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life" (Deut. 28:65-66).

This is an accurate description of Israel's history from the first century until now. Jerusalem was conquered in 70 A.D. by the Roman armies under Titus. The Jewish temple was

destroyed and the city walls were torn down. Sixty-five years later Jerusalem was plowed under on the order of Emperor Hadrian in response to the Jewish rebellion led by Bar Kochbar. The Jewish people were scattered to the ends of the earth and found no rest. They were hated by the Muslims and hounded and persecuted by the Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic Church for a thousand years. Hitler's regime tried to destroy them. Giving preference to the Arabs, England tried to keep them from returning to their land after World War II. They are the object of hatred until this very day. Most of the world is opposed to Israel and the reporting in secular publications about the Middle East crisis is generally slanted against her.

All of this was foretold in Bible prophecy, but the prophecy also said that Israel would be brought back into her land and that she would remain a nation even after all of this, and that is exactly what happened in 1948. Never before in the history of the world has a nation of people been scattered throughout the world and persecuted for 2,000 years and then come back together as a nation with their ancient language intact. This is a divine miracle.

Bible prophecy describes the restoration of Israel in two parts. First, she would return to the land in a position of unbelief. Then she would be converted. The amazing prophecy in Ezekiel 37:1-14 describes Israel's restoration in these two stages. She is described as a valley of bones that are resurrected.

“Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you and ye shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord” (Ezekiel 37:4-6).

In verses 11-14, Ezekiel states that this vision pertains to the restoration of Israel to her land and to her repentance toward God. The dry bones symbolize Israel in her scattered, spiritually dead condition. When Ezekiel prophesies, the bones are brought back together and given life and become a great army, and this happens in two stages (verse 7-10). First the bones are given sinews and flesh, and next God breathes upon them and they live.

The first part of the prophecy has been fulfilled. Israel has been back in her land as a nation since 1948, but she is there in unbelief and spiritual death. She continues to reject her Messiah, Jesus Christ. She has no temple and priesthood and no true worship. She lives in constant fear.

But she is back in the land just as the Bible prophesied. In 1800 there were only six thousand Jews in Palestine, but by 2000 there were over five million (John Ecob, *Amillennialism Weighed and Found Wanting*, Herald of Hope, p. 44-45).

During the Great Tribulation God will grant repentance unto Israel and will breathe spiritual life into her and she will live.

The continued existence of Israel is a fulfillment of Bible prophecy. It is a very great miracle and an irrefutable evidence of the divine inspiration of the Bible. (For more on this see our illustrated book *Jews in Fighter Jets: Israel: Past, Present, and Future*.)

The Bible's Accuracy

The Bible's factualness and scientific accuracy proves that it is the Word of God.

Everything the Bible says is true and factual.

My first friend in the Lord grew up in an agnostic home and attended a state university. All along he assumed that evolution was scientifically proven and that the Bible was mythical. But after he read a book showing that the scientific basis of Darwinian evolution has never been established, he decided to read the Bible for himself. He said that the thing that struck him was that the Bible is true to life.

That is my testimony, as well. Everything I have ever seen or experienced conforms to the Bible's teaching, fits the Bible's teaching.

For example, the Bible says man is a sinner, and that is not difficult to confirm. Just look at the world! When asked for his opinion on original sin, Samuel Johnson, the famous British lexicographer, replied,

“With respect to original sin, the inquiry is not necessary, for whatever is the cause of human corruption, men are evidently and confessedly so corrupt, that all the laws of heaven and earth are insufficient to restrain them from crimes.” David Berlinski, a Princeton-educated “secular Jew,” says, “One need hardly be a Christian to appreciate the wisdom in these remarks” (*The Devil's Delusion*, p. 33).

The Bible is true not only in its statements about man, but also in its statements about everything. Though the Bible is not a scientific manual, it is scientifically accurate, even from its earliest pages, which were written nearly 4,000 years ago.

Following are some examples of the Bible's scientific accuracy, beginning with statements from the pages of Job,

probably the oldest book in the Bible. The late Henry Morris, who had a Ph.D. in hydraulic engineering, said:

“These references are modern in perspective, with never a hint of the mythical exaggerations and errors characteristic of other ancient writings ... perhaps of even greater significance is the fact that in a 4000-year-old book filled with numerous references to natural phenomena, there are no scientific mistakes or fallacies” (*The Remarkable Record of Job*).

Job said the earth is hung upon nothing (Job 26:7). This is obvious to our modern generation, as we have seen the actual pictures of the earth hanging in space, but to previous generations it was not obvious and there were many commonly-held myths about the earth sitting on the back of Atlas or a turtle or an elephant, etc.

Job said the air has weight (“the weight for the winds,” Job 28:25). It was not until the 17th century that Galileo discovered that atmosphere has weight, and the modern science of aerodynamics is based on this scientific fact. Further, the weight of air is important in the function of the earth’s weather. “The ‘weight of the winds’ controls the worldwide air mass movements that transport the waters evaporated from the oceans inland over the continents” (Morris, *The Remarkable Record of Job*).

Job described the springs of the sea (Job 38:16). Man had no way to know about the fresh-water springs on the ocean floor by firsthand observation until recent times. Modern science has discovered that there are thousands of underwater springs that add millions of metric tons of water to the oceans each year.

Job understood that light has a way and that darkness has a place (Job 38:19). “That is, light is not to be located in a certain place or situation. Neither does it simply appear, or disappear, instantaneously. Light is traveling! It dwells in a ‘way,’ always on the way to someplace else. Though usually traveling in waves, sometimes it seems to move as a stream of

particles, but it is always moving. When light stops, there is darkness. Thus, darkness is static, staying in place; but light is dynamic, dwelling in a way” (Morris).

The Bible says that the light creates wind (Job 38:24), but it is only in recent times that modern weather science has discovered that wind is created as the sun heats up the surface of the earth, causing the hot air to rise and cooler air to fall, creating weather systems.

Job describes the amazing hydrological cycle (evaporation, atmospheric circulation, condensation, precipitation, runoff) (Job 36:27-28; Ecc. 1:7; Jer. 51:16). The process of evaporation and condensation was not discovered until the 17th century and not well understood until the 20th.

The Bible says plants and animals reproduce after their kind (Genesis 1:11, 12, 21, 24, 25). This is in perfect harmony with everything that can be observed and tested by modern science. There is great variety within kinds, different types of roses and dogs, but there is no reproduction between kinds, between roses and dandelions or dogs and penguins. Breeding experiments have demonstrated that there are genetic barriers that restrict change. The fruit fly has been used in genetic experiments since the early 1900s. Tens of millions of fruit flies have been bombarded with x-rays, doctored, and poisoned. The result has been a variety of mutant fruit flies but no evidence that the fruit fly could evolve into some other type of insect or animal. This is proof of the Bible’s 3500-year-old statement that all creatures reproduce according to kind.

The Bible says the heavens cannot be measured and the stars are without number (Genesis 22:17; Jeremiah 31:37). Before the invention of the telescope, man could see only a few hundred stars with the naked eye, but the very first book of the Bible says they are without number. This has been confirmed by modern science. There are 300 billion stars in our Milky Way galaxy alone. In 1999, observations by NASA astronomers, using the Hubble Space Telescope, suggested

that there are 125 billion galaxies in the universe. The most up-to-date star count was announced in July 2003 as 70 sextillion observable stars (70,000,000,000,000,000,000,000). This was the conclusion of the world's largest galaxy study, the Two-Degree Field Galaxy Redshift Survey, which is considered 10 times more accurate than previous ones. The team of scientists did not physically count the stars. Instead they used some of the world's most powerful telescopes to count all of the galaxies in one region of the universe and to estimate how many stars each galaxy contained by measuring its brightness. They then extrapolated these figures out to the whole universe visible through telescopes. This massive figure, of course, probably accounts for only a tiny percentage of the actual stars.

The Bible says there are paths in the sea (Isaiah 43:16; Psalm 8:8). Since the 19th century the ocean currents or paths have been charted and ships travel these paths just as trucks travel on roads. Writing in the mid-1800s, Matthew Fontaine Maury, Superintendent of the U.S. Navy's Depot of Charts and Instruments in Washington, D.C., observed, "There is a river in the ocean: in the severest droughts it never fails, and in the mightiest floods it never overflows; its banks and its bottom are of cold water, while its current is of warm; the Gulf of Mexico is its fountain, and its mouth is in the Arctic Seas. It is the Gulf Stream" (Maury, *The Physical Geography of the Sea*, 6th ed., 1856, p. 25). Since then, other sea paths have been discovered.

The Bible says the life is in the blood (Leviticus 17:11). That was written about 3,500 years ago, but it was not understood scientifically until recent times. For centuries doctors used "blood letting" as a healing method. George Washington, America's first president, probably died prematurely because of this bogus practice. Modern medicine has learned what the Bible has taught all along, that the life of the flesh is in the blood. The amazing system of vessels and capillaries transports the marvelous blood cells

with their life-giving oxygen and other necessary elements to every part of the body. The blood also forms a major part of the infection fighting and clotting systems, which are necessary for the “life of the flesh.”

The Bible is not a book of science, but wherever the Bible touches on science it is accurate. This proves its divine origin, because all other ancient books are filled with gross scientific blunders. Even science books written a mere 100 years ago are filled with errors.

The Bible's Candor

The Bible's candor proves that it is the Word of God.

When men write biographies of their saints and heroes, they commonly omit or whitewash their faults. For example, Muslims allow no criticism of Muhammed. But the Bible exhibits its divine quality by showing man as he is. Even the best of men in the Bible are described with all their faults. We read of Adam's rebellion, Noah's drunkenness, David's adultery, Solomon's apostasy, Jonah's pity party, Peter's disavowal of his Master, Paul and Barnabas' petty strife, and the disciples' unbelief in the face of Christ's resurrection. The Bible was written by Jews, yet it candidly describes the faults of the Jewish people: their stubbornness and unbelief that caused them to have to wander in the wilderness for 40 years; their idolatry during the period of the judges; their rebellion that caused them to be rejected from the land and scattered throughout the earth for two millennia; their rejection of the Messiah.

The Bible's Indestructibility

The Bible's indestructibility proves that it is the Word of God.

Above all other books combined, the Bible has been hated, vilified, ridiculed, criticized, restricted, banned, and destroyed, but it has been to no avail. As one rightly said, "We might as well put our shoulder to the burning wheel of the sun, and try to stop it on its flaming course, as attempt to stop the circulation of the Bible" (Sidney Collett, *All about the Bible*, p. 63).

In A.D. 303, the Roman Emperor Diocletian issued an edict to stop Christians from worshipping Jesus Christ and to destroy their Scriptures. Every official in the empire was ordered to raze churches to the ground and burn every Bible found in their districts (Stanley Greenslade, *Cambridge History of the Bible*). Twenty-five years later his successor, Constantine, issued another edict ordering fifty Bibles to be published at government expense (Eusebius).

In 1778, the French infidel Voltaire boasted that in 100 years Christianity would cease to exist, but within 50 years the Geneva Bible Society used his printing press and house to publish Bibles (Geisler and Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible*, 1986, pp. 123, 124).

Robert Ingersoll once boasted, "Within 15 years I'll have the Bible lodged in a morgue." But Ingersoll is long dead, and the Bible is alive and well.

The communist regimes in Russia and China tried to destroy the Bible and its influence, but they have been completely unsuccessful. There are more churches in Russia today than ever before in its history, and the presses cannot print enough Bibles to satisfy the insatiable demand in communist China.

The liberal skeptics in the 19th century tried to destroy the authority of the Bible by claiming that it is full of myths and that it is historically inaccurate. They claimed that writing didn't exist in Moses' day. They doubted the existence of Ur of the Chaldees, of the advanced ancient city-states and religious towers mentioned in Genesis 10-11, of complex legal codes in that era, of camels in Palestine in the days of Abraham, of King David and King Solomon, of the Hittites and the Philistines, of Sargon and Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, to name a few. They said that the book of Acts was filled with historical inaccuracies.

In all of these cases and hundreds more, the skeptics were proven wrong and the Bible was proven right, as we have documented in "The Bible Critics Were Wrong" at www.wayoflife.org. A graphical edition is in *Bible Times and Ancient Kingdoms*, PowerPoint 25, available from Way of Life Literature.

In fact, many who have set out to disprove the Bible have been converted, instead. The following are a few examples:

Gilbert West, an English poet who was included in Samuel Johnson's *Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets*, while a student at Oxford set out to debunk the Bible's account of Christ's resurrection. Instead he proved to his own satisfaction that Christ did rise from the dead and published *Observations on the History and Evidences of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ*.

George Lyttelton, an English Statesman, author, and poet who was educated at Oxford, determined to prove that Paul was not converted as the Bible states. Instead, Lyttelton wrote a book providing evidence that Paul's conversion was real and that it is evidence that Jesus actually rose from the dead. The book was titled *Observations on the Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul*.

Frank Morison, a lawyer, journalist, and novelist, set out to write a book to disprove the resurrection of Christ. Instead

he was converted and wrote a book in defense of the resurrection entitled *Who Moved the Stone?*

Simon Greenleaf, Royall Professor of Law at Harvard University and one of the most celebrated legal minds of America, determined to expose the “myth” of the resurrection of Christ once and for all, but his thorough examination forced him to conclude that Jesus did rise from the dead. In 1846 he published *An Examination of the Testimony of the Four Evangelists by the Rules of Evidence Administered in the Courts of Justice*.

William Ramsay, a renowned archaeologist and New Testament scholar, began his historical research in Asia Minor with the assumption that he would find evidence to disprove the Bible’s historicity. He concluded, though, that the book of Acts was written during the lifetime of the apostles and that it is historically accurate. His discoveries led to his conversion to Christianity.

Josh McDowell was a skeptic when he entered university to pursue a law degree, but he accepted a challenge by some Christians to examine the claim that Jesus Christ is God’s Son. He says, “I decided to write a book that would make an intellectual joke of Christianity.” He traveled throughout the U.S. and Europe to gather evidence to prove his case, but instead he was converted to Christ and wrote a book defending the Bible entitled *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*. McDowell concluded:

“After trying to shatter the historicity and validity of the Scripture, I came to the conclusion that it is historically trustworthy. If one discards the Bible as being unreliable, then one must discard almost all literature of antiquity. ... I believe we can hold the Scriptures in our hands and say, ‘The Bible is trustworthy and historically reliable’ (*The New Evidence*, p. 68).

Dr. Richard Lumsden, professor of parasitology and cell biology, was dean of the graduate school at Tulane

University and trained 30 Ph.D.s. When he was challenged by a student about the evidence for evolution, he sought to refute the student by demonstrating evolution's scientific evidence. Instead, he became convinced that the evidence is lacking. This led to an examination of the Bible, which led to his conversion to Jesus Christ.

Lee Strobel, who has a law degree from Yale, was an atheist when he worked as a journalist for the Chicago Tribune. After his wife's conversion to Christ, he determined to use his investigative skills to prove that the Bible is not true. He says, "I plunged into the case with more vigor than with any story I had ever pursued. I applied the training I had received at Yale Law School as well as my experience as legal affairs editor of the Chicago Tribune." Strobel became convinced that the Bible is true and that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. He has written many books defending the Christian faith, including *The Case for Christ: A Journalist's Personal Investigation of the Evidence for Jesus* and *The Case for the Resurrection*.

"Down through the years, the Bible has been a mighty anvil that has worn out the puny hammers of the scoffers" (*Christian Home Bible Course*).

The Bibles Appeal

The Bible's universal appeal proves that it is the Word of God.

In spite of the aforementioned attacks, the Bible is the most popular book in the world, by far. Some books have been translated into a few dozen languages, but the Bible in whole or in part has been translated into every major language of the world, plus most minor ones--more than 2,450 so far. Translation work is progressing in another 2,000 languages. Compare this with other religious books. The Hindu scriptures have been translated into 46 languages, and the Muslim Quran into about 40.

The Bible's Doctrine

The Bible's doctrine of salvation proves it is the Word of God.

The Bible is the only religious Scripture that teaches the doctrine of salvation by grace. Every other one teaches salvation by works. Hinduism says salvation is attained by practicing dharma and working out one's karma. Islam says salvation is by surrender to Allah and obedience to his commands. Buddhism says salvation is by reaching nirvana through life works and meditation and asceticism. If you visit the Buddhist monastery at Boudhanath in Kathmandu any time of the day you will find Buddhists walking clockwise, fingering their prayer beads and twirling their prayer wheels. They do this because they are trying to work out their salvation.

The Bible, on the other hand, says that salvation is God's free gift to sinners. This gift was very costly for the Giver. It was purchased with a great price, which was the atoning sacrifice of God's Son on the cross. But for the sinner it is free.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

The Bible says there is nothing that the sinner can offer God in order to atone for his sins. What could we offer? Righteous works? The Bible says our righteousnesses are as filthy rags before God's great holiness (Isaiah 64:6). Money? What would the God of creation do with our pathetic currency? A pure heart? The Bible says the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked (Jeremiah 17:9).

“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade

as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away” (Isaiah 64:6).

How, then, could we purchase our own salvation?

No, salvation is the free unmerited gift of a loving and deeply compassionate God. As the Christian hymn says, “We owed a debt we could not pay; He paid a debt He did not owe.”

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

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