

EVIDENCE FOR BIBLICAL RELIABILITY
& WHY TO BELIEVE
Audio CD Script from EBR-CD
Compiled on Sept. & Oct. 2010

This 35 page script is a summary of over 40 articles on this site/CD and 25 other resources.

INTRO

Hello, my name is Brooks Harris. Welcome to this presentation entitled “Evidence For Biblical Reliability & Why To Believe.” Over the next several minutes I’d like to share with you a short testimony of my search for truth, and a summary of about 40 articles which highlight what I have learned about the Christian faith.

Now days many people get caught up believing whatever they are told instead of researching for themselves to see what to believe. They get caught up in feelings and emotions without trying to find out what is true. A common philosophy today is that there is no absolute truth, and truth is relative to each person. Each individual and culture must decide for themselves what they believe to be true. Therefore the idea is that there is no ultimate authority which declares what is true.

So how do we determine what is true if we cannot prove it? As in a court of law, we look at the available evidence to see what it indicates or supports. The more evidence there is to support an idea, the better the case for its truthfulness. But we must be very careful how we analyze the evidence. So is there evidence to support the truth of the Bible? Well to tell you the truth, there is much evidence which shows that God does truly exist and that His Word, the Holy Bible, is very reliable. **O3**

Let me begin by giving you a short testimony of my beliefs. Although I was brought up in church, I had doubts about God’s existence due to my scientific beliefs. I considered myself an agnostic - I did not know what to believe. I am a scientific person and I thought I needed proof. Preachers would tell me that I just needed to believe by faith, but I wanted proof. Although I knew many stories in the Bible, I was ignorant of the reliability of the Bible and ignorant of the overwhelming evidence for the reality of God and for His creation.

In 1999 I began studying scientific evidence for the origins of Life, the origins of the Species, the origins of Man, the origins of the Universe, and much more evidence for biblical reliability. Before long my eyes were truly opened. I understood so much. I was no longer ignorant. Over ten years of research, I had found logical, understandable answers to many questions.

I have researched several books, viewed many tapes, CD’s, and web sites, and listened to many programs on how science, history and many other evidences support the Holy Bible. I have found some of the best and most concise articles which demonstrate how reliable the Bible truly is. This presentation you are about to hear is a summary of just some of the information I have learned. It will demonstrate to you that Christianity is very unique and is the most logical religion, and that the Holy Bible is by far the most reliable religious book. You will also realize what I have come to realize. And that is that there is no excuse for not believing in the existence

of God, the truth of Jesus Christ, and the reliability of the Bible.

Now, I know that there many people who believe that it is not reasonable or logical to believe in God. Intellectually they can not understand why to believe. The Bible even says that to such people the Bible will seem foolish to believe. I have read and heard works from enough skeptics to realize that no matter how much evidence I show for the reliability of the Bible, some people will always find supposed reasons for why not to believe. They will find parts of this presentation in which they disagree, and they will focus only on those areas, and ignore all the other evidence, in order to convince themselves, and others, that they are right. If you do not want to believe in God or in the reliability of the Holy Bible, you will look for and accept reasons to doubt.

Unfortunately, I have heard that even many seminaries spend a lot of time teaching that the Bible is not totally inspired by God and that it is not totally trustworthy. But as you will see, it is very reasonable and logical to believe in God, to accept Christianity and to trust the Bible.

I have learned that - what I believe does not matter if I am wrong. What does matter is “What is True” and truth does exist. Just because we believe something, this does not make it true. If God is real and the Bible is reliable, then what happens if we die and we do not believe in God? We will have to accept the consequences no matter what we believe. MWV

Often liberal students and professors in universities will present seemingly credible arguments for the non-existence of God or Jesus. But those who argue that the Bible cannot be trusted, speak largely on the basis of unjustified assumptions, bias, and/or simple ignorance of the facts. For those who are open-minded, the evidence is more than sufficient to establish belief.

Most people do not realize how much evidence there is to support the reliability of the Bible. Most Christians do not even realize that many modern evidences strongly support the Genesis account of creation as well as most other scientific and historic accounts throughout the Bible. CC

It has been said that God created two masterpieces: the 1st is His World - the creation of heaven and earth and all that is within them, and the 2nd is His Word - the Holy Bible.

Christianity alone is based on verifiable historical truth. The Bible states in Romans 1:20 that no one has any excuse for disbelief in the one true God because God clearly makes Himself known to everyone through what He has made (His creation).

God also makes Himself known through His Word, the Bible. He challenges us to examine and test it. Each person is responsible to investigate the Bible’s claim of authenticity. Our eternal destiny depends upon it. U & MIP (p.7) & CLE (Jan. 1st)

Each person should be able to tell why they believe what they believe. 1 Peter 3:15 even states that you should always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. You should be able to explain why you believe or why you do not believe.

Please do NOT take my word for anything. Our world is filled with deception because too many people believe what they hear without checking the facts. I urge you to search the Scriptures and evidence for yourself, and form your own convictions with God's word. **Z & DJC**

This presentation is a summary of several articles, but much more information on the reliability of the Bible may be obtained by reading several articles on my "Evidence For Biblical Reliability" CD or on my blog site found at - <http://biblicalreliability.blogspot.com>. Also see on my blog site a written transcript of this audio presentation with references to each section. My blog site address is located on the label and insert of this CD.

Now, let's look at some evidences. In the first half of this presentation we will review the **SHAPES** of Biblical Reliability to shape your acceptance of the Bible. That is S.H.A.P.E.S. which stands for evidence from **S**cience, **H**istory, **A**rchaeology, **P**rophecy fulfilment, **E**pistles or Manuscript preservation and **S**tructure & Statistics. In the last half of this presentation I will be presenting much more evidence from other areas.

I am going to present these **SHAPES** evidences in reverse order starting with **S**tructure & Statistical evidence.

STRUCTURE - STATISTICS - UNITY - CONTINUITY - HONESTY

The Bible is unparalleled in its structure. The Bible is uniquely compiled of 66 different books which compliment each other as one cohesive book. Four hundred silent years separated the 39 books of the Old Testament from the 27 books of the New Testament. Yet, from Genesis to Revelation, they tell the one unfolding story of God's plan of salvation for mankind. This salvation is through the person of Jesus Christ (John 14:6). Jesus Himself testified that He was the theme of the entire Bible. **G & ATQ** (p.17) The Bible is a **History** book about **His Story**.

Together, the 66 different books of the Bible give consistent answers to the most important questions we can ask: Why are we here? How can we come to terms with our fears? How can we get along? How can we rise above our circumstances and keep hope alive? How can we make peace with our Maker? The Bible's consistent answers to these questions show that the Scriptures are not many books but one. **I & CE**

The Bible is unique in its continuity. If just 10 people today are picked who were from the same place, born around the same time, spoke the same language, and made about the same amount of money, and were asked to write on just one controversial subject, they would have trouble agreeing with each other. But the Bible stands alone. It was written over a period of nearly 1600 years by more than 40 writers from all walks of life. Some were fishermen; some were politicians. Others were generals or kings, shepherds or historians. They were from 3 different continents (Africa, Asia and Europe), and wrote in three different languages (Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek). They wrote on hundreds of controversial subjects yet they wrote with agreement and harmony. They wrote in dungeons, in temples, on beaches, and on hillsides, during peacetime and during war. Yet their words sound like they came from the same source. So

even though 10 people today couldn't write on one controversial subject and agree, God picked 40 different people to write the Bible - and it is consistent on its teachings on many important issues and controversial subjects and stands the test of time. **D**

We have more than 14,000 manuscripts and fragments of the Old Testament of three main types: 1st there are approximately 10,000 from the Cairo Geniza (storeroom) find of 1897, dating back as far as about A.D. 800; 2nd there are about 190 from the Dead Sea Scrolls find of 1947-1955, the oldest dating back to 250-200 B.C.; and 3rd there are at least 4,314 assorted other copies. The short time between the original Old Testament manuscripts (completed around 400 B.C.) and the first extensive copies (about 250 B.C.) - coupled with the more than 14,000 copies that have been discovered - ensures the trustworthiness of the Old Testament text.

The same is true of the New Testament text. The abundance of textual witnesses is amazing. We possess over 5,300 manuscripts or portions of the (Greek) New Testament - almost 800 copied before A.D. 1000. The time between the original composition and our earliest copies is an unbelievably short 60 years or so. The overwhelming *bibliographic* reliability of the Bible is clearly evident. **C & HHE**

The Bible is surprisingly **honest** about the events and people it reports on. Usually books written by men in ancient times *only* recorded positive attributes of their leaders and battles they won, but not the Bible. God showed absolute honesty by recording the flaws and failures of the leaders and heroes of the faith.

The Bible is painfully honest. It shows **Jacob**, the father of its "chosen people," to be a deceiver. It describes **Moses**, the lawgiver, as an insecure, reluctant leader, who, in his first attempt to come to the aid of his own people, killed a man, and then ran for life to the desert. It portrays **David** not only as Israel's most loved king, general, and spiritual leader, but as one who took another man's wife and then to cover his own sin, conspired to have her husband killed. At one point, the Scriptures accuse the people of God, the nation of **Israel**, as being so bad they made Sodom and Gomorrah look good by comparison (Ezekiel 16:46-52). The Bible represents human nature as hostile to God. It predicts a future full of trouble. It teaches that the road to heaven is narrow and the way to hell is wide. Scripture was clearly not written for those who want simple answers or an easy, optimistic view of religion and human nature. **I & CE**

[The Survival of the Bible is also amazing.] The books of Moses were written 500 years before the earliest Hindu Scriptures. Moses wrote Genesis, 2,000 years before Muhammad penned the Koran. During that long history, no other book has been as loved or as hated as the Bible. No other book has been so consistently bought, studied, and quoted as this book. While millions of other titles come and go, the Bible is still the book by which all other books are measured. While often ignored by those who are uncomfortable with its teachings, it is still the central book of Western civilization. **I & CE**

Most of the foundational ideas upon which most societies are built find their beginnings in Genesis - the first book in the Bible. Genesis gives the beginnings of the universe, life, man, plant and animal "kinds", the Sabbath (or 7 day week), death, marriage, family, language, cities, literature, art, sin, redemption, and sacrifice. Also Biblical history, beginning with the creation week, coincides very nicely with evidences, not speculations, of our world's ancient history when

viewed from a Biblical perspective.

The Bible is an accurate account **of**, our earliest history, God's laws and instructions for us to live by, God's expectations of us, and His promises for us. The Bible teaches about Jesus's life, His sacrifice and death on the cross for our sins, His bodily resurrection and ascension into heaven and His promise to return for His believers. **A**

Some people argue that the Bible is "old fashioned" and says nothing about **our day and age**. But the Bible is God's instruction manual for us today, giving us *Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth* such as accurate and ageless guidelines on how to live healthy, joyful, successful lives. It wisely teaches us how to handle many problems we regularly face in our lives such as financial, health, family, social, emotional, and relationship problems. The Bible provides God's detailed instructions for how we are to deal successfully with the practical affairs of everyday life and teaches skillful living in the multiple aspect of everyday life. It touches upon every facet of human relationships such as our relationships with God, parents, children, neighbors, and government, and teaches how to prevent and correct ungodly lifestyles. **A**

The Bible gives us a proper perspective on all vital human issues including marriage, raising children, finances, government, the judicial system, equal rights, aging, poverty, health, work, ecology, education, entertainment, etc. The basis for the world's laws and ethics all originate in God's Word. Even the seven-day week has become the worldwide standard pattern. Even a skeptic has to stand in awe of the Bible's unique influence and profound insight. **CLE** (Jan.29)

Accurate, confirmable information, written in simplistic terms so most common people can understand, is found throughout the Bible on topics as genealogy, archaeology, geology, anatomy, epidemiology, biology, and many others. From our studies concerning the fossil record, embryology, comparative anatomy, and the indescribable complexity and organization of living creatures, we see that each one testifies to the creative genius of God that passes all understanding. The Bible tells us (in Romans 1:20) that no one has an excuse for not believing that God is the Master and Creator of all things, because from the things that God has created, we can easily see evidence, *today*, of His existence, of His divine power, of His infinite intelligence, and of His divinity. **A**

MANUSCRIPT PRESERVATION-COPYING METHODS-SURVIVAL-CIRCULATION

That was some of the **S**tructural & Statistical evidence for the reliability of the Bible. Now we will look at our next section from our SHAPES acronym: in reverse order, which is epistle, or manuscript, preservation.

How can we know if the original manuscripts of the Bible have been accurately transmitted to us?

As for epistle, or manuscript, preservation, the Bible text is far more accurately preserved than any other text of ancient history. Although we do not have any original text, manuscript copies of the Bible are far more numerous, far more accurate, and written far closer to the

original manuscripts than any other comparable writings from the ancient world. A

The Bible was written on material that deteriorates and so it had to be copied and recopied by hand for hundreds of years before the invention of the printing press. This copying did not diminish the accuracy of the original Hebrew Bible because of the unique nature of the copying process.

The Jews preserved Scripture as no other manuscript has ever been preserved. They meticulously kept track of every letter, syllable, word, sentence, and paragraph by counting each separate division, on every page, and comparing all of the tallies with the original before allowing the page to be put into use. Scribes, lawyers, and massorettes were special classes of men within Jewish culture whose sole duty was to preserve and transmit these documents with perfect fidelity. If you compare the Bible with *all* other ancient writings, you will find it has more copies of the original manuscript, with less variation between manuscripts, than any other 10 pieces of classical literature combined.² H & EDV (p. 19) & CLE (Dec 10th)

The 1947 discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls demonstrated unequivocally the fact that the Jews were faithful in their transcription of Biblical manuscripts. In a cliff-top cave of the northwest rim of the Dead Sea, at Qumran, a broken jar yielded documents that had been hidden by a monastic religious community for 2,000 years. I & CE

What is the Significance of this discovery? Previous to the Dead Sea Scrolls, the earliest known manuscript of the Old Testament was the Masoretic Text (dating about A.D. 900) and two others (dating about A.D. 1000) from which, for example, the King James version of the Old Testament derived its translation. Perhaps most would have considered the Masoretic text as a very late text and therefore questioned the reliability of the Old Testament wholesale. The Dead Sea Scrolls eclipse these texts by 1,000 years and provide little reason to question their reliability, and further, present only confidence for the text. The beauty of the Dead Sea Scrolls lies in the close match they have with the Masoretic text. This is demonstrable evidence of reliability and preservation of the authentic text through the centuries. F & TEB

These texts include one complete Old Testament book (Isaiah) and thousands of fragments, representing every Old Testament book except Ester. The copy of Isaiah was one of the most important finds. It revealed a document that is essentially the same as the book of Isaiah that appears in our own Bibles. The Dead Sea scrolls discredited the claims of those who believed that the original Bible had been lost to time and tampering. F & TEB

So the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls provides evidence for these 3 areas:

1st is Confirmation of the Hebrew Text, AND

2nd is Support for the Masoretic Text, AND

3rd is Support for the Greek translation of the Hebrew Text (which is called the Septuagint).

Since the New Testament often quotes from the Greek Old Testament, the Dead Sea Scrolls furnish the reader with further confidence for the Masoretic texts in this area where it can be tested. F & TEB

There are over 24,000 ancient manuscripts containing various portions of the **New** Testament. Except for extremely minor variations, these copies agree word for word. [Variations between manuscripts have occurred but most are spelling and word order changes or relationships between nouns and definite articles. No essential Christian belief is affected by any variation in the Bible manuscripts, and] No other ancient document even begins to approach such massive authentication. By comparison, the *Iliad* by Homer, has the second highest number of surviving manuscript copies - totaling only 643. No one doubts the authenticity or accuracy of the *Iliad*, yet the Bible, with far more evidence in its favor, is under constant attack. One wonders, why the hostility? **H & EVD** (p. 39) & **NDV** (pp.33-116) & **CLE** (July 21st)

The Bible is unique in withstanding attack. No other book has been so attacked throughout history as the Bible. Down through the centuries there have been a great many Bible burnings. In A.D. 300 the Roman emperor Diocletian ordered every Bible burned because he thought that by destroying the Scriptures he could destroy Christianity. Anyone caught with a Bible would be executed. But just 25 years later, the Roman emperor Constantine ordered that 50 perfect copies of the Bible be made at government expense. The French philosopher Voltaire, a skeptic who destroyed the faith of many people, boasted that within 100 years of his death, the Bible would disappear from the face of the earth. Voltaire died in 1728, but the Bible lives on. The irony of history is that 50 years after Voltaire's death, the Geneva Bible Society moved into his former house and used his printing presses to print thousands of Bibles.

The Bible is unique in its circulation too. The invention of the printing press in 1450 made it possible to print books in large quantities. The first book printed was the Bible. Since then, the Bible has been read by more people and printed more times than any other book in history. No one who is interested in knowing the truth can ignore such an important book.

The Bible is also unique in its translation. The Bible has been translated into over 1,400 languages. No other book even comes close.

The Bible has also survived tremendous criticism. No book has been more attacked for its accuracy. And yet archeologists are proving every year that the Bible's detailed descriptions of historic events are correct. **D & TEB**

God said in the Bible that His Word would never pass away. His Word has far more supporting evidence than any other book in history. God gives us overwhelming evidence (which archaeology continues to verify) that Scripture has been accurately maintained, reproduced, and passed down through the ages. Only the Bible can make this claim. **H & EVD** (p. 39) & **NDV** (pp.33-116) & **CLE** (July 21st)

PROPHETIC ACCURACY - PREDICTIVE ABILITY

Next in our SHAPES acronym: in reverse order, is Prophetic evidence, its Fulfillment, Accuracy and Predictive Ability.

There are remarkable evidences of hundreds of Bible prophecies having been fulfilled, specifically and meticulously, often long after the prophetic writer has passed away. The Bible records predictions of events that could not be known or predicted by chance or common sense. Psalm 22, written about 1000 BC, is an amazing prophecy that describes the crucifixion of Christ, 1000 years before His death. It describes in graphic detail the sufferings of Christ, long

before death by crucifixion was even known or practiced by the Romans or Jews. Crucifixion was invented by the Persians to be the most painful, most agonizing, most humiliating, and slow way for someone to die. It was so gruesome that it was against Roman law for a Roman citizen to die by crucifixion.

Approximately 27% of the entire Bible contains prophetic material. The recently discovered Dead Sea Scrolls, written more than a century before Jesus was born, contain hundreds of predictions of Jesus' birth, life and death which all came true. Totally accurate prediction of the future is the domain of the Bible exclusively. The Bible is like no other book in prophecy fulfillment. Many more prophecies throughout the Bible are yet to be fulfilled too. Through fulfilled prophecy, God has given sufficient evidence of His existence and of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures.

In the days of Moses, the Bible predicted events no one wanted to believe. Before Israel went into the Promised Land, Moses predicted that Israel would be unfaithful, that she would lose the land God was giving her, and that she would be dispersed throughout all the world, regathered, and then re-established (Deuteronomy 28-31). Also, Central to Old Testament prophecy was the promise of a Messiah who would save God's people from their sins and eventually bring judgment and peace to the whole world. **I & CE** These Old Testament prophecies were all fulfilled through Jesus Christ in the New Testament.

The Bible records predictions of events that could not be known or predicted by chance or common sense. Surprisingly, the predictive nature of many Bible passages was once a popular argument (by liberals) *against* the reliability of the Bible. Critics argued that the prophecies actually were written after the events and that editors had merely dressed up the Bible text to look like they contained predictions made before the events. Nothing could be further from the truth, however. The many predictions of Christ's birth, life and death were indisputably rendered more than a century before they occurred as proven by the Dead Sea Scrolls of Isaiah and other prophetic books as well as by the Septuagint translation, all dating from earlier than 100 B.C.

C & HHE

Old Testament prophecies concerning the Phoenician city of **Tyre** were fulfilled in ancient times, including prophecies that the city would be opposed by many nations (Ezek. 26:3); its walls would be destroyed and towers broken down (26:4); and its stones, timbers and debris would be thrown into the water (26:12). Similar prophecies were fulfilled concerning **Sidon** (Ezek. 28:23; Isa. 23; Jer. 27:3-6; 47:4) and **Babylon** (Jer. 50:13, 39; 51:26, 42-43, 58; Isa. 13:20-21).

Since Christ is the culminating theme of the Old Testament and the Living Word of the New Testament, it should not surprise us that prophecies regarding Him outnumber any others. Many of these prophecies would have been impossible for Jesus to deliberately conspire to fulfill - such as His descent from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Gen. 12:3; 17:19; Num. 24:21-24); His birth in Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2); His crucifixion with criminals (Isa. 53:12); the piercing of His hands and feet at the crucifixion (Ps. 22:16); the soldiers' gambling for His clothes (Ps. 22:18); the piercing of His side and the fact that His bones were not broken at His death (Zech. 12:10; Ps. 34:20); and His burial among the rich (Isa. 53:9). Jesus also predicted His own death and

resurrection (John 2:19-22). Predictive Prophecy is a principle of Bible reliability that often reaches even the hard-boiled skeptic!

It is Statistically preposterous that any or all of the Bible's very specific, detailed prophecies could have been fulfilled through chance, good guessing, or deliberate deceit. When you look at some of the improbable prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, it seems incredible that skeptics - knowing the authenticity and historicity of the texts - could reject the statistical verdict: the Bible **is** the Word of God, and Jesus Christ **is** the Son of God, just as Scripture predicted many times and in many ways. **C & HHE**

There are even several prophecies pertaining to **our day and age**. Jesus said there would be a future generation with certain characteristics to indicate that the end is near. During this generation all the signs of His coming will converge. Those who are true Christians will be able to read the signs and warn others as Noah did. Today it would seem that those signs are indeed converging for the first time since Christ ascended into heaven. **ET & WA** (p198)

According to many prophecies in the Bible, we are living in the end times. Daniel 12:4 states that in the end times "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." It was not until this generation that Daniel's words could have possibly been understood. For the first time since the Scriptures were written, we can understand many parts of Scripture in the light of current world events. Daniel was surely talking about our generation - the age of speed and travel and knowledge. Until recent times, the horse was the fastest form of travel, and the rate that human knowledge is doubling, has increased exponentially over the past few generations. **ET & WA** (p205-206)

Listen to the next few sentences and see how it sounds like **our day and age**. It is recorded that in the last days, there will be false Christs; wars and rumors of wars; nation rising against nation; famines; disease; false prophets who will deceive many; and lawlessness. The gospel will be preached in all the world and there will be persecution against Christians in all nations. There will be earthquakes in various places. Men's hearts will fail them for fear of the future; they will be selfish, materialistic, arrogant, and proud. Homosexuality will increase; there will be blasphemy, cold-heartedness, intemperance, brutality, rebellious youth, ungodliness, pleasure-seeking, much hypocrisy and hatred of those who stand up for righteousness. False Bible teachers will have many followers, be money-hungry, and slander the Christian faith. It also says that men will scoff and say that there was no such thing as the flood of Noah. **TEB** (p.42-43)

Also there will be the restoration of Israel as a nation, and the return of Jerusalem to the Jews. Since many prophecies appear to be in the process of being fulfilled, it makes you wonder how close we are to the return of Jesus and God's next destruction.

ARCHAEOLOGY

Now Archaeological evidence is next in our SHAPES acronym: in reverse order.

After over a century of detailed, scientific archaeological excavations, no discovery has

ever disproved a Biblical reference. Many archaeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or exact detail thousands of historical statements in the Bible, as specific places, persons and events. In general, Biblical history, from the time of Abraham onward, has been adequately supported by archaeological study. It has been said that every alleged error or contradiction in Scripture has been proven a truthful statement once sufficient archaeological or other information has been discovered. A

Places and cultures recorded in the Bible are being confirmed at a staggering rate. The Bible is even being used now as a reference to locate cities in the Bible which are now lost and buried. B

Over and over again, comprehensive field work (archaeology) and careful biblical interpretation affirms the reliability of the Bible. It is telling when a secular scholar must revise his biblical criticism in light of solid archaeological evidence.

For years critics dismissed the Book of Daniel, partly because there was no evidence that a king named Belshazzar ruled in Babylon during that time period. However, later archaeological research confirmed that the reigning monarch, Nabonidus, appointed Belshazzar as his co-regent while he was away from Babylon.

One of the most well-known New Testament examples [of a secular scholar having to revise his biblical criticism in light of solid archaeological evidence] concerns the Books of Luke and Acts (written by Luke - a non-Jewish doctor in the 1st century). A scholar and biblical skeptic, Sir William Ramsay, trained as an archaeologist (in the late 1800's) and then set out to disprove the historical reliability of this portion of the New Testament. However, through his painstaking Mediterranean archaeological trips, he became converted, as - one after another - of the historical statements of Luke were proved accurate. Every single reference which could be verified was totally accurate. Therefore archaeological evidence thus confirms the trustworthiness of the Bible. C & HHE

HISTORIC & GEOGRAPHICAL ACCURACY

Next in our SHAPES acronym: in reverse order, is Historical evidence.

The worldwide flood is a fact of the past as revealed by archaeology, geology, and the Bible. Archaeologists have found flood stories in the form of inscriptions made on monuments and tablets. Today nearly all cultures of different people groups around the world have similar historical stories of an all-destroying flood with only a few people saved on a floating vessel. Such common historical accounts suggest a single common society which shared the same history before its later dispersion as recorded in Genesis. [Even the ancient Chinese character for “boat” or “ship” is a combination of the 3 symbols which are “a vessel or container”, “the number eight”, and “mouths or people.” Therefore the character for “ship” in ancient Chinese was “eight people on a vessel,” just as there were 8 people on Noah’s Ark.]

The presence of fossils and sedimentary rock layers around the world are consistent with the effects of a worldwide flood too. Every ancient civilization seems to have appeared suddenly (most beginning in an advanced state), approximately 5,000 years ago, about the same time the Bible states that the worldwide flood ended and people were spread around the world. These are indications of true history recorded in the Bible.

As for historic accuracy, through research of ancient, non-Christian, genealogies and chronicles of the people of the Middle East and Europe, names of individuals, families, peoples, and tribes listed in the Table of Nations in Chapters 10 & 11 of Genesis, have been found to be accurate. **B & [CLE (Feb. 24)& SFT (II-6)]**

The Bible's genealogical record traces the names of real people from Adam to Jesus Christ giving a continuous historical record from the first man to the present era to show that the stories of Genesis are true and not just symbolic made-up stories. There are several secular genealogical records from Europe which can trace their lineage back to Noah and his sons. The life spans of many of the early patriarchs are also recorded in the Bible to record how long it has been since the creation of Adam. Many of the events, people, places, and customs in the New Testament are confirmed by secular historians who were almost contemporaries with New Testament writers. Also early A.D. secular, non-Christian sources confirm the life of Jesus, His miracles, and His death by crucifixion. Jesus was a true person in real history.

Unlike writings from other world religions which make no historical references or which fabricate histories, the Bible refers to historical events and assumes its historical accuracy. The Bible is *not only* the inspired Word of God, it is also a history book - and the historical assertions it makes have been proven time and again.

Many of the events, people, places, and customs in the New Testament are confirmed by **secular** historians who were almost contemporaries with New Testament writers. Secular historians like the Jewish Josephus (before A.D. 100), the Roman Tacitus (around A.D. 120), the Roman Suetonius (A.D. 110), and the Roman governor Pliny Secundus (A.D. 100-110) make direct reference to Jesus or affirm one or more historical New Testament references. Early church leaders such as Irenaeus, Tertullian, Julius Africanus, and Clement of Rome - all written before A.D. 250 - shed light on New Testament historical accuracy. Even skeptical historians agree that the New Testament is a remarkable historical document. Hence, it is clear that there is strong *external evidence* to support the Bible's manuscript reliability. **C & HHE**

Down through the ages, many have doubted the historical and geographical accuracy of the Bible. Yet modern archeologists have repeatedly unearthed evidence of the people, places, and cultures described in the Scriptures. Time after time, the descriptions in the biblical record have been shown to be more reliable than the speculations of scholars. The modern visitor to the museums and lands of the Bible cannot help but come away impressed with the real geographical and historical backdrop of the biblical text. **I & CE**

The Miracles in the Bible indicate a divine origin of the Bible.

Israel's exodus from Egypt provided a historical basis for believing that God revealed Himself to Israel. If the Red Sea did not part as Moses said it did, the Old Testament loses its authority to speak in behalf of God. The New Testament is just as dependent upon miracles. If Jesus did not rise bodily from the dead, the apostle Paul admits that the Christian faith is built on a lie (1 Corinthians 15:14-17). To show its credibility, the New Testament names its witnesses, and did so within a time-frame that enabled those claims to be tested (1 Corinthians 15:1-8). Many of the witnesses ended up as martyrs, not for abstract moral or spiritual convictions but for their claim that Jesus had risen from the dead. While martyrdom is not unusual, the basis on

which these people gave their lives is what's important. Many have died for what they believed to be the truth. But people do not die for what they know to be a lie. **I & CE**

SCIENCE

Now let's look at just some of the evidence from SCIENCE, which is last in our SHAPES acronym: in reverse order

Although the Bible was written during a time when many fanciful ideas about the world were prevalent, it shows itself unique in its views of creation, nature and God.

The statements in the Bible concerning scientific matters are on a different level from the other literature of its time. The Scriptures entertain no fanciful ideas of science and of the natural world, but even the learned Greek philosophers had ridiculous notions about light, creation and astronomy.

The Vedas, which are the Hindu Scriptures, teach that "the moon is approximately 150,000 miles higher than the sun and shines with its own light, that the earth is flat and triangular, and that earthquakes are caused by elephants shaking themselves under it!"

It was Ptolemy who suggested that the earth was flat. We read statements such as these and laugh, but there are no absurd statements in the Bible similar to these. **N & ATQ** (p.194)

The Bible is filled with scientific and medical facts, written thousands of years before man discovered them. The fact is that as science advances, it discovers what was said thousands of years ago in the Bible. **L** (p.6, 16) & **TEB**

The Bible contains many references to nature and natural processes, and thus frequently touches on the various sciences. Those who say that the Bible is not a book of science have not read it very attentively. Although the writers do not use modern scientific terminology, they use everyday language in **simple terms** which all readers can understand. The so-called scientific mistakes of the Bible are not mistakes at all, the writers have been found to be amazingly accurate. **MIP** (p. 250)

The Bible is the only ancient book with documented medical prevision and scientific foreknowledge. Acts 7:22 states that, "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians..." So **Moses** was well educated in Egyptian science, but he did not record in the Bible any of the "Now-known Dangerous or Ineffective" ancient Egyptian medical practices [such as: smearing the blood of worms mixed with donkey dung into open wounds; and applying the fat from horses, crocodiles, and snakes mixed with donkey teeth and honey to the scalp in order to grow hair; and drinking water poured over stone idols in order to cure snake bites.] Moses recorded only sound medical practices which were not understood until recently. Several places in the Bible we find scientifically accurate ideas about the physical universe which scientists did not discover until recent times.

[Here are just a few of the Bible's insights:

* Leviticus 11:35 warns against touching or bringing any cooking utensil in contact with **dead animals**.

*Leviticus chapter 13 details the first procedures for medical **quarantine** in order to prevent the

spread of contagious disease.

* Leviticus 15:13 calls for the prevention of disease by the **washing** of the body and clothes under “**running water**” (verses still water). And in

*Deuteronomy 23:12-13, Moses even writes of the need for proper **sewage disposal**.

(Such practices seem common sense to us today, but for many centuries these warnings were ignored because people did not understand the reasons for them. Unfortunately many thousands of people have suffered and died, often at young ages because of their ignorance and refusal to trust the Bible) Even nineteenth century doctors were woefully ignorant of these procedures [causing unnecessary premature deaths to many of their patients]. So how could a man trained in Egyptian medical nonsense have written about such modern procedures unless he was inspired by God?] A [& CLE (Dec. 4) & TSG (p.156-159)]

The scientific reasoning for germs and sanitation was not understood by man until recent times, but God taught man thousands of years ago, in simple terms anyone could understand, how to take care of himself, like washing hands in **running water** instead of standing water, for example.(see Leviticus 15:13) B & M & TEB

Also medical science has only recently discovered that **blood clotting** in a newborn reaches its peak on the eighth day, then drops. The Bible consistently says that a baby must be circumcised on the eighth day. L & TEB Doctors **now** give baby boys vitamin K, to enhance blood clotting soon after birth, so they can circumcise them much sooner. Modern science shows that God’s instructions and warnings for us are accurate and purposeful.

Also Solomon described, in Ecclesiastes, a **cycle of air currents** two thousand years before scientists discovered them. (The Bible states at Ecclesiastes 1:6 that) “The wind goes toward the south, and turns about unto the north; it whirls about continually, and the wind returns again according to his circuits.” L & TEB

Although the idea of a complete **water cycle**, or the hydrologic cycle, (involving evaporation, clouds, and rain) was not fully understood by science until the seventeenth century, [both Solomon and Isaiah wrote about it in the Bible thousands of years ago]. In Amos 9:6, written over 2000 years ago, it states “He ... calls for the waters of the sea, and pours them out upon the face of the earth.” Also in Ecclesiastes 1:7, King Solomon informs us that “All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, there they return again.”

It has also been found that the dimensions that God gave Noah for his ark are perfect **dimensions for sea dwelling ships**. When a ship builder built a ship after the same pattern in 1609, it revolutionized shipbuilding. By 1900, every large ship on the ocean followed a similar design to Noah’s ark. L (p. 13-15) & TEB

Most modern scientific evidence and dating methods support the creation account in the Bible and reveal many problems with the theory of Darwinian Evolution. This evolution theory predicts that life evolved from non-living matter (or **spontaneous generation**) in a primordial soup of chemicals by accidental, random chance. But evidence shows that spontaneous generation, does not occur - life always comes from previous life. Even Laws of Probability

indicate that spontaneous generation is virtually impossible.

Evolution predicts that all living things gradually evolved from very simple organisms to very complex ones. For example, since proteins are simpler than DNA, proteins had to evolve long before DNA developed. But evidence shows that the Genetic Code in living organisms is far too complex to have occurred by chance; and since protein is only made by DNA, and DNA is made up of proteins, both had to have been together at the same time to exist. DNA and protein could not have evolved separately, so they must have been created at the same time.

Also according to the theory of evolution we should be able to find many fossils of transitional forms of organisms between all organism kinds. Organisms should have evolved from one kind of organism into another completely new kind with many varieties at different stages between the two kinds. Supposedly fish evolved into amphibians which evolved into reptiles which evolved into birds and mammals.

But, again, modern scientific evidence demonstrates that all life, even a single cell, is so complex, so organized and so well designed that it is obvious **life had to have been created** instead of just have happened by chance. Evidence indicates that all organisms suddenly appeared completely formed and reproduced only after their own kind, just as the Bible indicates. Evidence does not support any organism evolving from a different kind of organism. Also fossils of so called “simple” organisms have been found to be very complex, organized, & completely formed. Transitional forms of organisms, *living* or *fossilized*, are lacking. Fossil records show organisms completely formed - not part one organism & part another. There are many different varieties within each kind of organism, but only “like” kinds can reproduce with each other and they do not make new kinds. Lizards stay lizards and dogs stay dogs. There are vast differences in the structure and genetic make-up of each organism kind making this evolutionary process impossible. Also so many plants and creatures are so **unique in their design** and unlike any other organism that evolutionists have no idea how or why they evolved or from what organism they evolved (such as the Duck-billed Platypus).

For the evolutionary process to have worked, very complex systems and structures would have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications in the anatomy of existing organisms. But it has been discovered that there are many large, complicated, very **complex systems and structures** in nature which could not have functioned if only partially formed, and **several very unique creatures** which could not have functioned if only partially formed, so they had to be complete from the very beginning instead of having slowly evolved, piece by piece, by trial and error over long periods of time. Ten times, in the creation account in Genesis, it is stated that God created, or made, each organism “according to its kind.” It does not say that God made one kind of organism to evolve into other kinds.

Also Darwinian evolution predicts that many mutations would be required to allow each organism to evolve into a new organism. But we now know that better than 99% of mutations are harmful to organisms, usually causing them to die out. Incomplete, non-functioning systems in mutating organisms would be a hindrance and a disadvantage to the organism, making it less likely to survive, not more likely to outlast their non-mutated relatives. For example, if a lizard evolved into a bird over thousands of years, it would have been part-lizard and part-bird at one time. How could a creature with part-leg and part-wing survive to produce offspring if it could no longer run well and could not yet fly? And if creatures adapted to better themselves, how could

such a creature be considered better than its non-mutated relatives?

Scientific evidence supports the idea that God created every “kind” (what we might think of as a “family or genus”) of plant and animal with the ability to **reproduce only its same “kind”** (not mutate or evolve into other “kinds”). God created several specific “kinds” with each “kind” having great potential for variations within its kind (what we might think of as “species”). Modern science has shown that many species (or variations) of each genus have occurred through reshuffling of their existing genes, and through genetic mutations, gene pool isolation, and natural selection. We not only do not see the evolving of “one kind into another kind” in nature today, but we also have no confirmed evidence of transitional “in-between” kinds living today or in the fossil records. To many people the special design of all organisms demonstrates the awesome intelligence, power and creativity of God.

The theory of evolution predicts that the earth and universe gradually came into an orderly existence by random, chance, natural processes. In this theory all processes of creation must be of natural origins; there is no room for the belief in any supernatural involvement, as the Bible teaches. Darwinian evolution is fundamentally an anti-theistic theory, designed to relegate God to only a secondary role in creation or even to eliminate Him altogether. According to the theory of evolution, supposedly several billion years ago nothing existed then there was a “Big Bang” which caused all the stars, sun, and eventually planets. The Bible’s account of when things originated, differs greatly from the evolutionary view. Such as, which came first: the sun or earth, oceans or land, the sun or plants, and birds or lizards. Modern scientific evidence drastically supports the creation story as recorded in the Bible, but does not support Darwinian evolution. There is also an on-going debate as to whether the earth and universe are very old or relatively young. To learn more, see my blogsite and research the problems with radiometric dating methods and the evidence for a young earth.

Also according to the theory of evolution, since the “**Big Bang**,” the universe has evolved into an orderly mass of cosmic systems. But inanimate objects don’t arrange themselves into an orderly fashion. It requires intelligence to arrange things. Therefore, since the universe shows orderly cosmic systems, there is evidence for an intelligent designer, or God. Also evidence shows that the entire universe is slowly deteriorating and becoming less organized, not more organized. Even the “Law of Entropy” (*or the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics*) states that things left alone will deteriorate over time instead of improve. We see that today. If you leave things alone, they slowly deteriorate. It requires intelligent input to keep things from deteriorating.

The Word of God teaches that the earth was specially designed for man, and the earth itself, with its unique suitable environment, proclaims the same thing. Those who insist that the earth gradually came into an orderly existence by random, chance, natural processes are overlooking the fact that many things have to be within strict limits for life to exist. Here are just a few examples: the temperature range (not too hot and not too cold); the oxygen levels (as well as many other elements); the size of the earth, sun and moon; the rotation of the earth and its gravitational pull. **The Laws of Probability** indicate that it is virtually impossible for such a complex environment to have evolved by chance.

Now, what about the origin of man? According to the theory of evolution, the first

appearance of man was millions of years ago. {But if a great flood did wipe out everything on the earth about 5,000 years ago, as the Bible states, then the oldest human records should only date back about 5,000 years. This is exactly what we find.} Our oldest written records date back only about 5,000 years. <The lists of kings of ancient Egypt and Sumeria, as well as other early civilizations, all begin at about 2,500 years before Christ (or about 4,500 years ago). Even most historians today place the beginning of civilization at about 5000 B.C., but much of this is based on radiocarbon dating, or other uniformitarian techniques, rather than actual records. >

{Also all civilized cultures on Earth seem to have appeared suddenly approximately 5,000 years ago. Even more revealing is the fact that most ancient cultures began in an advanced state. There is no trace of “primitive” generations leading up to the sudden explosion of advanced civilizations across the world. The sudden appearance of advanced civilizations supports what the Bible states: man was made in God’s image (Genesis 1:26). *Man did not evolve from an ape-like creature.* From the beginning, man was a rational, creative, and very intelligent being. Anthropology, the science of origin, culture, and the development of human beings, confirms this fact.}

Think about this. <The present growth rate of the human population is nearly 2% per year and the present population is about 6 billion people. At the rate of 2% per year, 6 billion people could have been generated in only 1,100 years! > But at a conservative growth rate of only ½% per year (reduced to accommodate for plagues, diseases and wars) the present human population could have been reached in only 4,000 to 5,000 years, which coincides nicely with our population starting after Noah’s flood. (Imagine what the population of man would be, if man really had first appeared over one million years ago and grew at a rate of **only** ½% per year. It has been estimated that at even a much lower rate there would be more people on earth than there are atoms in the entire universe.)

The theory of evolution also predicts that civilization gradually arose from crude, ignorant, ape-like, brutish beings, and **language** evolved from simple animal sounds into complex modern languages. Therefore, we should find fossils of many creatures at different stages of evolving from ape to man. But archaeological findings indicate that man was civilized from the first remains of man, and language appears to have been contemporaneous with man; and ancient languages were often more complex than modern ones. So far nearly all reports of findings of assumed transitional ape-men have been found to be mistakes or hoaxes.

(The **Human Genome Project** also indicates that all people descended from one common male and one common female a few thousand years ago just as the Bible indicates. Genesis 3:20 states that “... Adam called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.”) Also the ages of people recorded in the Bible’s genealogical records indicate an age of only about 6000 years since the creation of mankind. **B & YW & YAE & DQ & [OT] & {CLE June 3rd & UMC p.182} <MIP (p.300, 305,306, 241, 242)>**

The theory of evolution predicts that rock layers were laid down on the earth about one layer per year for millions of years, and that organisms died and fossilized through time. Supposedly by looking at the rock layers that fossils are found in, we can figure out how long ago different organisms lived. The idea is that the deeper the fossils, the older they are. Rocks are also dated by the kind of fossils found in them.

Again modern scientific evidence sheds much light on this subject. It indicates that a worldwide flood, as Noah's flood, is the best explanation for **massive depositing** of rock layers and fossils all around the world. We find billions of dead things (fossilized with amazing detail), buried in multiple, striated, sedimentary, rock layers, which were quickly laid down by water, all over the earth. Many fossils of organisms, which normally decay quickly after death, have been found to be very well preserved, indicating that these organisms were buried quickly, completely and deep enough to prevent decay from oxygen and other microscopic organisms. Since organisms must be buried deeply and quickly to become fossilized, large items as vertical trees and whales were obviously covered by thousands of layers quickly instead of slowly over many years. Otherwise such organisms would have decayed long before they were completely buried. A massive world-wide flood would have created thousands of feet of sediment, with millions of layers, in a matter of days to months. Therefore fossils can only tell us **where** an organism died, not **when** it came into existence. Although there have been other smaller floods and catastrophes, like earthquakes, landslides and volcanoes, such as the Mt. Saint Helens eruption in 1980, which have caused sedimentation deposits, most fossils were probably formed by Noah's flood. [The evidence for the world-wide flood and special creation seems to become stronger every year.]

Now, there is also a theory called, the **Theory of Progressive Creationism** or **Theistic Evolution**. This theory is the belief that an intelligent designer created all the basic elements for a primitive earth and universe then used evolution to mature it. {This idea was based on the old Greek pantheistic philosophy which became popular during the Renaissance.} This theory is a compromised view for those who can not accept the pure ideas of evolution or creation alone.

Unfortunately many churches teach this theory because they believe science supports it, but they obviously haven't seen the evidence which I've just presented to you. The evidence clearly does not support such ideas. Darwinian evolution would have been a very cruel, wasteful, and inefficient way for God to create. It is not likely that an all-powerful, all-wise and merciful God would use suffering, death and destruction to create what He finally called "**very good.**" It would have been very unnecessary too since God can create anything in an instant. This theory basically says that we need to reinterpret what the Bible says about the creation story, because the writers of the creation story were not as knowledgeable as we are today. This idea assumes that the creation account in the Bible was not really God-inspired but just ideas of man. But I ask you, if you do not believe that all of Genesis is true history, where do you draw the line between what is true and what is made up? Where does Genesis start to be a true history if it is not all true? As for me, I see no reason to doubt God's word. I believe the entire original Bible was God-inspired and is an accurate and true account of our history. **OT & [MIP p. 7 {& 294}]**

One must have a strange kind of faith if he can believe in spiritual things which he can not verify such as salvation, eternal life, heaven and other spiritual truths, but at the same time believe the Bible is wrong about practical matters of science and history which can be researched and verified. Either the Bible is wholly reliable on every subject with which it deals, or it is not the Word of God. **MIP (p.237)**

To answer many more questions about science and the Bible go to the website www.AnswersInGenesis.org. This organization also has a large, excellent Creation Museum in northern Kentucky near Cincinnati, Ohio. The museum displays much of the overwhelming,

scientific evidence which supports each of the six days of creation. Again the website to go to is www.AnswersInGenesis.org.

Although there is much more evidence to support each of the areas discussed thus far, we will end our **SHAPES** of Biblical Reliability discussion here. Just for a quick review to help you remember the above evidences, the **SHAPES** acronym, again that is S.H.A.P.E.S. stands for **S**cientific evidence, **H**istorical evidence, **A**rchaeological evidence, **P**rophetic evidence, **E**pistles or Manuscript preservation evidence and **S**tructure & Statistical evidence.

CLAIMS for ITSELF & the Claims by JESUS

The next few sections are other evidences not included in our SHAPES evidences. Such as the Claims the Bible has for Itself & the Claims Jesus has for the Bible.

Christianity believes and teaches that the Bible alone is the revealed Word of God. Even though it was written by men, the ultimate author was God Almighty. This claim was not invented by the Church, but is the claim the Bible makes for itself.

Over 2,000 times in the Old Testament alone there are clauses such as, “And God spoke to Moses,” and “the word of the Lord came unto Jonah,” and “God said.” Moreover, the Bible claims to be a record of the words and deeds of God, thus the Bible views itself as God’s Word.

[By using phrases such as “thus saith the Lord” and other similar phrases, the Lord wanted us to realize that it was He whom had spoken and revealed this information to us.]

The mere fact that the Bible claims to be the Word of God does not prove that it is such, for there are other books that make similar claims. The difference is that the Scriptures contain convincing evidence as being the Word of God. **G & ATQ**

It’s important to know what the Bible says about itself. If the authors of Scripture had not claimed to speak for God, it would be presumptuous for us to make that claim for them. We would also have a different kind of problem. We would have a collection of unsolved mysteries, embodied in historical and ethical literature. But we would not have a book that has inspired the building of countless churches and synagogues all over the world. A Bible that did not claim to speak in behalf of God would not have become foundational to the faith of hundreds of millions of Christians and Jews (2 Peter 1:16-21). But with much supporting evidence and argument, the Bible’s authors did claim to be inspired by God. Because millions have staked their present and eternal well-being on those claims, the Bible cannot be a good book if its authors consistently lied about their source of information. **I & CE**

Many have spoken well of the Bible, but no indorsement is as compelling as that of Jesus of Nazareth. He recommended the Bible not only by His words but by His life. In times of personal temptation, public teaching, and personal suffering, He made it clear that He believed the Old Testament Scriptures were more than a national tradition (Matthew 4:1-11; 5:17-19). He believed the Bible was a book about Himself. To His countrymen He said, “You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.” (John 5:39). **I & CE**

POWER TO CHANGE LIVES

Another evidence for the reliability of the Bible is its power to change lives.

When Jesus died, His disciples, confused and afraid for their lives, went into hiding. But Christ's resurrection from the dead convinced them that Christ was who He claimed to be and their lives were instantly and wholly transformed.

They were transformed from a group of sniveling cowards into men who traveled the world, preaching that Jesus was God and had risen from the dead. They became bold in their doubtless faith and they dedicated the rest of their lives to proclaiming the truth of Jesus, His resurrection, and His Kingdom. Because of their message, nearly all of His disciples suffered severe persecution and died horrible deaths of torture. Merely changing their story would have spared them this persecution. They had absolutely nothing to gain and everything to lose if their story wasn't true.

Also multitudes of people, past and present, have found from personal experience that the Bible's promises are true, its counsel is sound, its commands and restrictions are wise, and its wonderful message of salvation meets every need for both time and eternity. Most true Christians can testify to the changes God has made in their life and His answers to their prayers and their wonderful personal relationship with their Lord - Jesus. A & Y

One of the most convincing evidences that there is a God is the change that takes place in a person's life as he becomes intimately acquainted with Him. Those who had the nature of a lion become like a lamb. Where there was hate, there is now love. Where there was fighting, there is now peace. Where there was turmoil within, there is now a quiet rest. Where there were endless questions, there is now confidence. He changes the selfish person into one who cares about others. Q

Dr. J. Vernon McGee has stated that young and old have found purpose and fulfillment in life, marriages have been saved, families reunited, individuals have been freed from alcoholism and drug addiction. Folk have had their lives transformed by coming to Christ. Now let me give you a reason, he said. Only the Bible can turn a sinner into a saint. MG (Transformed Lives)

Unbelievers often point to those who claim to believe in the Bible, but are not changed by it. But history is also marked by those who have been bettered by this book. [Show me an atheist whose life has been bettered because of his atheistic beliefs.] The Ten Commandments have been a source of moral direction to countless numbers of people. The Psalms of David have offered comfort in times of trouble and loss. Jesus' Sermon on the Mount has given millions an antidote for stubborn pride and proud legalism. Paul's description of love in 1 Corinthians 13 has softened angry hearts. The changed lives of people like the apostle Paul, Augustine, Martin Luther, John Newton, Leo Tolstoy, and C.S. Lewis, illustrate the difference the Bible can make. Even entire nations or tribes, like the Celts of Ireland, the wild Vikings of Norway, or the Auca Indians of Ecuador have been transformed by the Word of God and the unprecedented life and significance of Jesus Christ. I & CE

On a personal note, God has changed me and my life too. I was someone who doubted His existence and questioned the truth of the Bible. He turned me into a researcher, who now has no doubt that God does exist and no doubt that His word is totally trustworthy. Also, I have

always been a slow reader and I hated to read as a child, especially reading out loud for other people. But now, as you can see, God has given me a passion to read and study His word and to tell others about it. He has helped me overcome my fears, and has used me despite my shortcomings.

Throughout history, God has used people because of their heart and their faith, not because of their abilities. God has always used people whom we would not have chosen. He helps us overcome our disabilities in order to serve His purposes. Where there is a will, there is a way, and when it comes to God's will, He will make the way.

Another view of changed lives would be those changed lives which come from the result of **miracles**. Often people will report of things which happen in their life which can not be explained by normal, natural circumstances, such as documented tumors disappearing, or cancer going away without treatment, or people being physically moved by an unseen force to avoid injury, or being saved from horrific accidents, and so on. A miracle can be defined as when something happens, but it is scientifically impossible to happen. Miracles are a further sign that God exists and that He cares for His creation. If God created all time, space, matter and energy, then He obviously has the knowledge and power to change it whenever and however He sees fit. Often we pray for miracles, but miracles happen **only** because they are the will of God, not because some person wants them to happen.

Many miracles were recorded in the Bible such as the long day of Joshua, the ten plagues of Egypt, the deliverance of Jonah from the whale, the preservation of the three Israelites in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, the passage through the Red Sea, Jesus's turning the water into wine, and calming the storm, and healing the sick, and resurrecting the dead including His own self from the dead. But as mentioned above, miracles are still occurring today all around the world including the miracle of salvation and changed lives. Although skeptics often try to give natural scientific reasons for them, they often have no real logical explanation for them. So, we just have to have faith that it was either God who produced the miracles or that they just happened somehow by chance without God.

SUFFERING?

Now, let's take a look at suffering. Have you ever thought "If God exists and is all-good, all-powerful, and all knowing, **why does God allow bad things to happen to good people?**" and, "Why does God allow good people to suffer? Can't He stop or prevent situations which cause pain, suffering and death?" Many people use this idea to convince themselves that there is no god. They often say things like "If God is supposed to be all-knowing, all-powerful, and loves and cares for His people, why does He allow them to suffer? Why doesn't He heal them?"

The Bible tells us that God **is** all-knowing, all-powerful, and has the ability to do anything He desires. But the Bible also tells us that God's ways are not our ways, His thoughts are not our thoughts and His ways are far beyond our understanding. He knows what is best for each of us. If He allows people to continue to suffer, He must have a reason for not healing them at this point.

I believe that God has a purpose for all His children - in this present life or in His heavenly kingdom to come. So He may be allowing this suffering to give us experiences which will help us develop into the people He wants us to be. When bad things happen to us, we learn

and grow and we become better able to help others who are going through similar situations.

When we suffer, we learn to appreciate what we had before our loss. We often do not appreciate what we have until we lose it. We learn not to take things for granted, as our health or other people in our life. Also suffering, pain, and sorrow make us more humble, less prideful, less selfish and more appreciative or thankful for what God and others do for us.

Often suffering changes our relationship with God. People grow closer in their relationship with God when they realize they are not invincible, that they need help, comfort, and reassurance that only God can provide. **T & CC**

The Bible teaches much on the subject of suffering, especially in the book of Job. Many people in the Bible endure pain, grief, loss, hardship, death of loved ones, etc. The Bible teaches that sin is the ultimate cause of suffering and death. God's original creation was as God intended life to be for us, without any suffering, but mankind chose to disobey God and the result was a curse on all of God's creation. We have all had to suffer from this curse, some much more than others. **A**

The truth is that God loves us so much that He gives us the freedom to make our own decisions. Unfortunately accidents are results of bad decisions by us or others. Illnesses, birth defects, and natural disasters are all eventual results of the beginning of sin (Adam's bad decision) and God's curse of death and destruction of the earth and all of its inhabitants because of sin. Adam's rebellion against God caused separation from God and the beginning of the deterioration of all living things and their descendants.

Ever since the fall of man, man's decisions and actions have caused suffering on themselves and others. Some decisions are intentional, while others are strictly accidental. We live in a sinful world and society. Life itself is a risk. Every time we leave the house, we put our life at risk due to the consequences of decisions we and others make.

So, bad things can happen to good people because of chance encounters with germs, cancers and defective genes causing illnesses and birth defects, and because of natural disasters and our destructive lifestyles as drinking, drugs, and crime, or because of accidents caused by bad decisions by man. All of these things are ultimately results of the fall of man and man's sinful, selfish, rebellious nature.

But we do know that God loves us so much that He gives us freedom to make our own decisions. He gave us the freedom to decide whether or not we want God involved in our lives. He gave Adam that same freedom. Since man has a sinful nature, he often chooses to use his freedom to sin and to make his own decisions separate from God. God, as a parent, does not want any of His children to suffer, but He knows that we must accept our consequences and the consequences of other's decisions (even all the consequences of Adam's decision - his sin). **T**

God, by His nature, is very good, perfect, sinless and loving, so He does not cause bad things to happen but He allows consequences to happen since man, by his nature, is sinful and rebellious against God. Also being a Christian does not keep us from having difficulties in our lives; these are what test our faith. **CC**

We are all sinners and fall far short of God's standards of perfection. No one deserves God's grace, but the Bible teaches that there is hope for those who follow Christ. Although we

will suffer in this present life, there will be no more suffering or death in God's final kingdom for those who truly believe in Him. Therefore if you have doubts as to the existence of God or of the gospel of Jesus Christ, do what you can to learn the truth, be saved, and share in the hope of heaven. I

CONTRADICTIONS

Now let's look at the contradictions controversy. What about all those contradictions in the Bible?

This section on contradictions is from the book
Answers To Tough Questions skeptics ask about the Christian faith,
by Josh McDowell and Don Stewart.

How can you believe a Bible that is full of contradictions?

It is truly amazing how often this question is asked. This question contains the assumption that the Bible is filled with many obvious discrepancies which, if true, would make it impossible to believe that the Bible has a divine origin. It is a popular idea to maintain that the Bible disagrees with itself, which casts considerable doubt on its trustworthiness.

If, indeed, the Bible does contain demonstrable errors, it would show that at least those parts could not have come from a perfect, all-knowing God. We do not argue with this conclusion, but we do disagree with the initial premise that the Scriptures are full of mistakes. It is very easy to accuse the Bible of inaccuracies, but it is quite another matter to prove it.

Certain passages at first glance appear to be contradictory, but further investigation will show that this is not the case.

One of the things for which we appeal with regard to possible contradictions is fairness. We should not minimize or exaggerate the problem, and we must always begin by giving the author the benefit of the doubt. This is the rule in other literature, and we ask that it also be the rule here. We find so often that people want to employ a different set of rules when it comes to examining the Bible, and to this we immediately object.

When facing possible contradictions, it is important to remember that two statements may differ from each other without being contradictory. Some people fail to make a distinction between contradiction and difference.

Also many people think they find errors in passages that they have not correctly read. A closer reading will reveal that the discrepancy disappears.

Sometimes two passages appear to be contradictory because the translation is not as accurate as it could be. A knowledge of the original languages of the Bible can immediately solve these difficulties, for both Greek and Hebrew - as all languages - have their peculiarities that make them difficult to render into English or any other language.

Often passages in Scripture are taken out of context when they are read or quoted. People often fail to read and properly interpret the passages before and/or after the problem passage in order to get the proper meaning.

Some difficulties in Scripture result from our inadequate knowledge about the circumstances, and do not necessarily involve an error. These only prove that we are ignorant of the background.

As historical and archaeological study proceed, new light is being shed on difficult portions of Scripture and many “errors” have disappeared with the new understanding. We need a wait-and-see attitude on some problems.

While the Bible difficulties and discrepancies have not yet been cleared up, it is our firm conviction that as more knowledge is gained of the Bible’s past, these problems will fade away. The biblical conception of God is an all-knowing, all-powerful Being, who does not contradict Himself, and so we feel that His Word, when properly understood, will not contradict itself. **K & ATQ** (p. 29)

This next section on contradictions comes from The Evidence Bible compiled by Ray Comfort. The Bible has many *seeming* contradictions within its pages. For example, the four Gospels give four differing accounts as to what was written on the sign that hung on the cross. Matthew said, “This is Jesus the King of the Jews” (27:37). However, Mark contradicts that with “The King of the Jews” (15:26). Luke says something different: “This is the King of the Jews” (23:38), and John maintains that the sign said “Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews” (19:19). Those who are looking for contradictions may therefore say, “See - the Bible is full of mistakes!” and choose to reject it entirely as being untrustworthy.

However, those who trust God have no problem harmonizing the Gospels. There is no contradiction if the sign simply said, “This is Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews.” The godly base their confidence on two truths: #1 is that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God” (2 Timothy 3:16); and #2 is that an elementary rule of Scripture is that God has deliberately included *seeming* contradictions in His Word to “snare” the proud. He has “hidden” things from the “wise and prudent” and “revealed them to babes” (Luke 10:21), purposely choosing foolish things to confound the wise (1 Corinthians 1:27).

If an ungodly man refuses to humble himself and obey the gospel, and instead desires to build a case against the Bible, God gives him enough material to build his own gallows.

This incredible principle is clearly illustrated in the account of the capture of Zedekiah, king of Judah. Jeremiah the prophet told Zedekiah that God would judge him. He was informed that he would be “delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon” (Jeremiah 32:4). This is confirmed in Jeremiah 39:5-7 where we are told that he was captured and brought to King Nebuchadnezzar, then they “bound him with chains, to carry him to Babylon.” However, in Ezekiel 12:13, God Himself warned, “I will bring him to Babylon ... *yet ye shall not see it*, though he shall die there” (emphasis added). Here is material to build a case against the Bible! It is an *obvious* mistake. Three Bible verses say that the king would go to Babylon, and yet the Bible in another place says that he would not see Babylon. How can someone be taken somewhere and not see it? It makes no sense at all - unless Zedekiah was *blinded*. And that is precisely what happened. Zedekiah saw Nebuchadnezzar face to face, saw his sons killed before his eyes, then “the king of Babylon ... put out Zedekiah’s eyes” before taking him to Babylon (see Jeremiah 39:6,7). This is the underlying principle behind the many “contradictions” of the Holy Scripture (such as how many horses David had, and who was the first to arrive at the tomb after the resurrection of Jesus.).

God has turned the tables on proud, arrogant, self-righteous man. When man proudly stands outside of the kingdom of God, and seeks to justify his sinfulness through evidence he thinks discredits the Bible, he doesn’t realize that God has simply lowered the door of life, so that only those who are prepared to exercise faith, and bow in humility may enter.

It is interesting to note that the *seeming* contradictions in the four Gospels attest to the fact that there was no corroboration between the writers. **J & TEB**

The scriptures, when properly understood, will not contradict themselves.

Although most of the apparent discrepancies found in the Bible have been explained and reconciled long ago by conservative scholars, the answers are commonly ignored and the same old supposed contradictions continue to be paraded by critics. (Even though the explanations of critics are often illogical, they would rather believe in them than to accept what to them is illogical, which is, the idea of the existence of God.) Such apparent contradictions of the Bible also serve the contrary purpose of exposing the rebellious hearts of unbelievers. A person may either use such passages as justification for his unbelief or as stimulation to faith, and his response merely reveals what manner of person he is. **MIP** (p.221, 223)

Time after time attacks on the Bible's straightforward proclamations of history and science have been proven totally inaccurate. God's Word can stand up to any and all criticism. God encourages and speaks highly of those who take time to study His Word and test its truths. **CLE** (April 13) & **LGC** (Vol.3, p. 49)

Other questions people have about contradictions are: "Why do we have so many different **interpretations** of the Bible? and why so many different church **denominations**?" "Why can't churches agree on what to believe?" It is true that many different church denominations have come about due to differences in opinions in such things as how much water to use to baptize with, or how to sing and what to sing, as well as many other non-crucial issues. But the main thing to remember is that most churches agree on certain foundational beliefs such as the deity, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. **K2** & **TEB**

The great majority of Bible readers have no problem with agreement on the central teachings of the Bible. Even those who do not believe the Bible to be true have no difficulty whatsoever discerning the main message.

Within all branches of Christianity, we find the same basic understanding as to what the Bible teaches. They usually accept the same creeds that assert such basic truths, as that God made man in his image, with freedom of choice, and that man chose to rebel against God, thus bringing sin into the world.

(And that) God, because of His everlasting love, became a man in the person of Jesus Christ and died a substitutionary death on our behalf, paying the penalty for sin. (And that) Mankind can have their relationship restored with God through placing their faith in Jesus Christ.

The message of the Bible is clear for those who will read it and seek to find out its meaning. The problem comes when people bring their preconceived notions to the Bible and attempt to make the Word fit their preconceived ideas. This is not the fault of the Bible, but of the persons who force the Bible to say whatever they want it to say. **K3** & **ATQ** (p. 27)

The following could be considered another contradiction. Have you ever heard anyone say something like, "Why would I want to be a Christian? Look at all those hypocritical people who go to church and act so holy there, but they live such sinful lifestyles away from church, or they even act bad in church." When people make such statements, they are making a good point, but there are two things we must remember. The first is, that Christians, including pastors, are not perfect, they are human and still make mistakes. It has been said that a church is not a country

club for saints, it is a hospital for sinners. Also, if you took all the sinners out of church, there would be no one left. Christians are supposed to try to live sinless lifestyles, but we live in a sinful world, and they often give in to temptation and fall short of people's expectations of a godly life. Just as babies, Christians have to grow in their faith and their faithfulness.

The second thing to remember is that not all church members are truly saved. Many people go to church for the wrong reasons or do not totally accept Christian teachings. Rev. Adrian Rodgers and Billy Graham have both estimated that only about 18-20% of church members are truly Christian. People are supposed to go to church to worship God, study His word, and encourage each other in their Christian beliefs. Hopefully though, as long as the unfaithful are in church, they have a better chance to eventually figure it out and accept Christianity. So don't let the unfaithful people in church stop you from attending church or believing in God. Let God deal with those who have problems with their faith.

EVIDENCE FOR GOD

Now, how about evidence for God.

How do you prove that something exists if you can not see it, feel it, smell it, taste it, or hear it? This is an argument many atheists have for the existence or non-existence of God. They may ask "Why do you believe in God if you can not prove that God exists?" or they may say something like "Prove to me that there is a god!"

Instead of a believer in God getting flustered about not being able to absolutely, physically or scientifically prove God's existence, the believer in God should ask those who say they do not believe in God "Can you prove that there is no God?" Non-believers should be able to support their beliefs as well as those who say that they believe in God. **BB**

Is there a God? Is there a Supreme being or Ruler of the universe? How can I be certain? The answer to this question is of utmost importance because, if there is a God and I ignore Him, what will the consequences be?

Throughout the ages of time people have felt compelled to worship something or someone greater than themselves. Ancient cultures had sun gods, moon gods, thunder gods, and many others. Some native Americans, when discovered by the Europeans, were worshiping what they called the Great Spirit. The ancient Jewish nation worshiped Yahweh, Creator of the earth. It is apparent that inside every person is something that longs to relate to a higher power.

Faith is believing something we cannot see. We cannot see God but we see indications all around us that point to His existence. God has intended that we could not see Him but rather that we could accept His existence by the obvious evidences which testify of Him. God reveals Himself to us as we accept His existence.

God reveals Himself through His Word, the Bible.

Q & ITG

It's only fair to allow the Bible to stand as a witness to God's existence if the Bible itself is proven to be a reliable source. So the issue is trust. Can we trust the Bible? A person who doesn't believe the Bible, doesn't know enough about it to realize the foolishness of such a claim. If you don't believe the Bible, please don't tell anyone, for you'll only be expressing your ignorance. **R & HWK**

Let's look at more evidence. There must also be a designer behind every design. The world-

renown crusader for Darwinism and atheism, Prof. Richard Dawkins, states:

‘We have seen that living things are too improbable and too beautifully “designed” to have come into existence by chance.’

Thus, even the most ardent atheist concedes that design is all around us. To a Christian, the design we see all around us is totally consistent with the Bible’s explanation that God Created all. **P & RAG**

Also, many scientists are concluding that the laws of chemistry and physics cannot explain our experience of consciousness. Professor J.P. Moreland defined consciousness as our introspection, sensations, thoughts, emotions, desires, beliefs and free choices that make us alive and aware. The “soul” contains our consciousness and animates our body.

He also said, “You can’t get something from nothing.” If the universe began with dead matter having no conscious, “how, then, do you get something totally different - consciousness, living, thinking, feeling, believing creatures - from materials that don’t have that?” But if everything started with the mind of God, he said, “we don’t have a problem with explaining the origin of our mind.” **S & CFC**

To believe in any unprovable idea you will have to believe by faith. You must have faith to believe in God’s existence, but to believe that God does not exist also requires a great deal of faith since such a belief disagrees with the existing evidence. Therefore, to me, it makes much better sense to put my faith in what the scientific evidence overwhelmingly supports. In the case of whether or not to believe in God, you must also understand the consequences of your choice in what to believe. If God does not exist and there is no existence after our death on earth, then you can live however you please without any eternal consequences. But if God does exist you will be judged for your unbelief and sentenced to eternal separation from God with all other unbelievers in hell. So research the many evidences for God and the Bible and carefully choose where you put your faith. **AA**

WHY CHRISTIANITY

There are many religions in the world, why should you chose Christianity?

How can Christians honestly claim that the only way to reach God’s heavenly kingdom is through Jesus? There are several religions which say that there are other ways to get there. How can Christians be so narrow minded? What gives them the right to say there is no other way?

John 14:6 in the Bible states that Jesus himself said “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” To accept this statement as true we would have to accept the Bible as a reliable source. But for it to be absolutely true and the only way, the Bible would have to be the most reliable religious work over all other writings from all other religions.

O2

In many ways the Bible shows how unique and reliable is the Christian faith versus all other Religions. Other religions are subjective religions based on feelings, emotions, superstitions, or groundless belief, and are primarily centered on the ethical and religious *opinions* of their founders rather than historical facts. But Christianity is unique over all other religions because it is based on historical *facts* and *acts*. Although other religions are based on what their founders taught, Christianity is founded on who Jesus is and what He actually did.

Christianity is a historical faith based on objective facts and historical records which are subject to examination by the ordinary criteria of objective investigation. The Bible is a reliable history book unlike writings from other world religions which make no historical references or make up their history and even have contradictory historical accounts. Christianity is also the only religion which offers the possibility of physically investigating its factual nature because it makes specific claims about the world around us. U & X & MIP (p.7, 18) & CLE (Jan. 1st)

There are vast differences between Christianity and the religions of the East. The God of Eastern thought is impersonal, while the God of the Bible is personal. In some eastern religions, God is everything and everything is God, while the Bible teaches that God is independent from His creation. The Christian world view is totally different from that in the Eastern religions. History has no purpose or meaning to the Eastern mind; it is a never-ending struggle. The Bible portrays a supernatural God, who is working toward the ultimate goal of setting up His eternal kingdom. V & ATQ (p.108)

Christianity is founded on truth that can be tested and is for the thinking person. Followers of other religions can quote their texts and give glowing testimonies of how their religions make them feel, but their beliefs are based on feelings rather than historical facts. It is quite possible to be devoted and sincere about your religious belief; but wholeheartedly believing a lie does not make it true. Although some beliefs can bring comfort, will they ultimately help or harm us if they are false? U & MIP (p.7) & CLE (Jan. 1st)

The Bible is unique among all the religious writings of the ancient world in the following ways:

- #1. It is the only book that gives an account of the creation of all things from nothing.**
- #2. It is the only book of ancient history that reveals a meaning and purpose behind events or the past.**
- #3. It is the only book that gives a continuous historical record from the first man to the present era.**
- #4. It is the only religious book which sets the moral standard required by man at an impossible level and explains why man, by his efforts, can never achieve this standard.**
- #5. It is the only book containing detailed prophecies of future events that have come true with 100% accuracy.** X & MIP (p.156-157) & CLE (Feb. 16th)

Only the Bible starts with the special creation of all things by an eternal, all powerful, personal God. The Bible has a unique and reasonable solution to the origin problem - [as stated in Genesis:] "In the beginning, God created ...". Other religious books reveal ignorance on this point. They all propose ideas for the evolution of the universe from existing matter but do not explain how the matter originated.

Only the Bible explains the origin of matter by the existence of God. He is outside of matter, time, and space. He brought matter into existence and can take matter out of existence. X & MIP (p.11) & CLE (June 1st)

Christianity is based on the character of Jesus Christ and what He did. Its truth and validity rely on real events of the past such as: the creation, the fall, the crucifixion of Christ, and

His resurrection from death to life. Christians worship a “living” Lord. All other religious founders and leaders are dead. In most cases their tombs are known and honored. Only the tomb of Christ was occupied for only three days and thereafter it was empty forever!

X & MIP (p.14) & CLE (April 12th)

If any of the details reported in the Bible were false, they would have been successfully refuted by the Jewish leaders. Although they tried, they were unsuccessful in their attempt to discredit the facts of the resurrection. Evidence for the truth of the resurrection was apparent to the thousands who were converted to Christianity soon after the event. The rapid spread of this persecuted faith is perhaps the greatest evidence of its reality. The facts of the resurrection were checked by converts of that day and led to changed lives, and they still do today.

Christianity has nothing to fear from those honestly searching for the truth. It is based on logical evidence surrounding real events in time and space. Y & SFT (p.VI-9)

Christianity is unique in its teaching about **salvation**. Other religions and cults teach that we are saved through the “good works” we do - if our good works outweigh our bad deeds then we will be saved. But Christianity teaches that “We are saved **by** the grace of God **through** faith in Jesus **from** sin and sin’s penalty **for** God’s kingdom **to** do good works.” Although we are not saved by good works, our good works show evidence of our faith. Christians are expected to do good works, not to be saved, but because we are saved.

Finally, Christianity is unique in that it is a coherent belief structure. Some Christian doctrines may transcend comprehension, however, unlike the claims of other religions, they are never irrational or contradictory. Christianity is also unique in that it cogently accounts for the vast array of phenomena we encounter in everyday life, such as: the human mind, laws of science, laws of logic, ethical norms, justice, love, the meaning of life, the problem of evil and suffering, and truth. In other words, Christianity corresponds with the reality of our present condition.

BAM (p.154)

EVIDENCE FOR JESUS CHRIST

Now that we have seen evidence for Christianity, what about evidence for the existence of Jesus Christ Himself?

It has been said that the Old Testament is Jesus Christ “concealed” and the New Testament is Jesus Christ “revealed.” This means that the Old Testament tells about the coming of a “redeemer” who is unknown to mankind at that time, and the New Testament tells about Jesus Christ, the revealed redeemer of the Old Testament.

Christ’s bodily resurrection from the dead was the final and greatest proof of His absolute uniqueness and is documented in both Biblical and secular history with strong evidence to support its truth.

Critics charge that there are no ancient writings about Jesus outside the New Testament. This is another ridiculous claim. Writings confirming His birth, ministry, death, and resurrection include Flavius Josephus (A.D. 93), the Babylonian Talmud (A.D. 70-200), Pliny the Younger’s letter to the Emperor Trajan (approx. A.D. 100), the Annals of Tacitus (A.D. 115-117), Mara Bar Serapion (sometime after A.D. 73), and Suetonius’ Life of Claudius and Life of Nero (A.D. 120). But is Jesus the Messiah which was prophesied in the Old Testament?

In the Book Daniel, the Bible prophesied the coming of the one and only Jewish Messiah prior to the temple's demise. The Old Testament prophets declared He would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2) to a virgin (Isaiah 7:14), be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12-13), die by crucifixion (Psalm 22), and be buried in a rich man's tomb (Isaiah 53:9). There was only one person who fits all of the messianic prophecies of the Old Testament who lived before A.D. 70: Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Mary. [From "Archaeology and History Attest to the Reliability of the Bible" by Richard M. Fales, Ph.D. in The Evidence Bible - Irrefutable evidence for the thinking mind, Compiled by Ray Comfort] **E & TEB**

Unlike other religions, Christianity is rooted in history and evidence. Jesus of Nazareth was born in Bethlehem in Judea during the reign Caesar Augustus and was put to death by Pontius Pilate, a first century Roman governor. The testimony of his life, death, and resurrection is validated both by credible eyewitness testimony and by credible extra-biblical evidence as well. No other religion can legitimately claim this kind of support from history and evidence.

W & BAM (p.154)

The Bible isn't the only book from Jesus' century that talks about Him. A Roman historian - Josephus - born in AD 37 had this to say about Him: "There was a wise man who was called Jesus, and his conduct was good ... Pilate condemned him to be crucified and to die. And those who had become his disciples did not abandon their loyalty to him. They reported that he had appeared to them three days after his crucifixion, and that he was alive." **SG** (p. 72)

The miracles of Jesus were His calling card; that is, the validation of His claim to be God. The resurrection was His proof of identification. **Y & SFT** (p.VI-9)

[A complete set of articles examining science and reality from a Christian perspective can be found at SearchfortheTruth.org.]

Not only did Christ die precisely at the time of His choosing, but He rose on the third day by His own power. Christ predicted this when He said that He had the power to lay His life down and He had the power to take it up again (John 10:17,18). After three days Christ rose from the dead. Christ alone conquered death, which clearly shows that Christ is exactly who He said He was, "the resurrection and the life". It is Christ's resurrection that gives Christians hope in life, the realization that they have nothing to fear from death, and the assurance that they will see Christ again after their death. **X & MIP** (p.14) & **CLE** (April 12th)

TEACHING EVIDENCE FOR BIBLICAL RELIABILITY

So, Why should we teach evidence for Biblical reliability?

"What does it matter what we believe about science, history, our origins, and the reliability of the Bible?" "What is the big deal?" Well, for me, it's all about the authority of God and His word. Is the Bible trustworthy? Can we trust what it says? Is it truly God-inspired, or is it just a collection of men's ideas?

Over the past several decades our society has been trying to distance itself from the truth of the Bible. When our country was founded most people, although not all religious themselves, accepted the Biblical account of ancient history and the moral laws of the Bible. But over time

misinformed scientists and liberal thinkers have slowly convinced people that the ideas in the Bible are out dated and that we can no longer trust everything the Bible says.

The founding fathers of our country believed in the moral laws and teachings of the Bible. Our society was founded and built on a strong Christian foundation - its laws, morals, and doctrines. The Bible was looked upon as “**The**” **authority** for moral law. But over the past few decades liberal minds have been successfully removing the Bible (from our schools and government) as the ultimate authority and have been replacing it with man’s opinion. Christians and morally conservative thinkers have sat back and allowed these changes to occur. Today children are being taught that morals, ethics and values are **relative** to each culture - there is no longer an ultimate standard as taught by the Bible. Also many believe that there are several ways to get into God’s kingdom since they believe that all religions are basically the same at their core.

Q

Trust in the Bible is being questioned as the authority of God is being replaced by the authority of man. Even many Christians are compromising the teachings in the Bible with popular secular beliefs. Therefore many **non**-Christians are doubting the reliability and truth of the Bible since many Christians no longer believe that the Bible is entirely true. It is difficult for non-Christians to understand the meaning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, when they do not even believe that God exists or that the teachings in the Bible are really reliable.

I have heard it said that 70-75% of children brought up in Christian homes will lose their faith by the first year of college. Also it has been said that only 9% of adults and less than 1% of teens have a **Biblical World-View** believing that Jesus lived a sinless life and was truly resurrected from the dead, that hell exists, that God really created the world, that absolute morals exists, and so on. Many people are taught in church about the gospel of Jesus, God’s love for us, Church doctrine and Bible lessons, but they are **never** shown how truly reliable the Bible is. They never develop a strong foundation for the truth of the Bible. Therefore when they are confronted later by liberal professors and/or students with different beliefs, they do not know what to really believe. Often these professors and/or students are well prepared with their convincing arguments and literature. But since the Christian has never been shown information which overwhelmingly supports their Christian faith, they often begin to doubt their own faith and begin to accept the other person’s views, whether it be atheism, agnosticism or a different religion. Many begin to believe whatever feels good to them and their chosen lifestyle.

Q

Ever since Adam and Eve, Satan has been trying to convince us that what God has said is not completely true, or that God did not really say what is written in the Bible. The Bible has been attacked unlike any other book throughout history (even by many Christians). There have always been and will always be people who look for apparent errors, mistakes, contradictions, or untruths in the Bible, so they can discredit the reliability of the Bible to try to “prove” that the Bible is not trustworthy. Intellectual people, in particular, tend to be more prone to reasoning away biblical reliability.

But why? Because, if they can convince themselves and others that the Bible is not reliable, then they can conclude that it is not authoritative on controversial subjects.

If they can “prove” that the meanings of our origins in Genesis are wrong and must be

reinterpreted, then they can show that other areas in the Bible may also be wrong and are in need of reinterpretation. They can therefore reinterpret any area in the Bible which they feel is in error and reword it to better fit their beliefs. This way the “old-fashioned” Bible can be updated to support today’s lifestyles, rather than people changing their lifestyles to fit the “time-honored” Scriptures.

The idea is that man is now enlightened and therefore knows much more, intellectually, than the writers did way back then. It is assumed, by many liberal thinkers, that the Bible is not God-inspired, as it claims to be, and its teachings are limited by the intelligence and knowledge of the men who wrote the many books of the Bible.

As for me, I would rather live my life, having shared the evidence for the reliability of the Bible and promoting the authority of God and His word, then die, only to find out that I was wrong, than to believe man’s interpretations which contradict the biblical teachings, then die, and find out that I was wrong. If I am wrong, I’d rather hear Jesus say, “Well done, faithful servant, at least you fought to defend My authority” than to hear Him say, “Shame on you for teaching what is contrary to My word”.

What must we do as Christians? We must learn how to develop a strong foundation in the Christian faith. We must show our congregations that **abundant evidence** is available for God’s existence, for God as the creator, for Jesus’ life and the overwhelming reliability of the Holy Bible. Once they see that Christianity is the only reliable religion and that the teachings in the Bible can be trusted, then they can gain much better appreciation for the teachings in the Bible, such as God’s love for us, His desire for us to live abundant lives with Him, and His desire for us to develop a strong personal relationship with Him. We can ask our congregations “wouldn’t it be neat if the all-powerful, all-knowing, all-loving God of the universe could tell us what He wants us to know?” When they understand that the Bible can be trusted to be true, we can start to teach them again that the Bible is God’s Word - His way of revealing to us what He wants us to know about Himself, His laws and instructions for us to live by, His expectations of us, and His promises for us, and about His creation and mankind’s origin and past, our purpose in the present, and the hopes or fears for our future. As stated earlier, it has been said that the Bible, B.I.B.L.E. gives us **Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth**. It is an excellent manual for how we should live.

Teaching the evidence for **Biblical Reliability** will help non-believers to believe, help new and established believers grow stronger in their faith and help them be able to evangelize to those liberal professors and students with Biblical Reliability discussions and handouts. Do you want to see a **revival**? Get people fired up with the abundant evidence on how awesomely reliable, trustworthy and truthful the Bible really is, then let them spread the word. **Q**

We all have “free will” to decide what we want to believe. No one can force anyone to truly believe anything. We all have to decide whether we want to believe in God and the Bible or not. If you still do not believe or you have doubts about the truth of the Bible, or of God, or of Jesus, or of these many evidences which support the Bible, I challenge you to research for yourself.

Much more information on the reliability of the Bible may be obtained by reading several

articles on my “Evidence For Biblical Reliability CD” or on my blog site found at - <http://biblicalreliability.blogspot.com>. Again this blog site address may be found on the label and on the insert of this CD. Also I highly recommend that you read the book “*Many Infallible Proofs - Evidences for the Christian Faith,*” by Morris and Morris. It is packed full of evidences for the reliability of the Bible.

Now that you have seen all this overwhelming amount of evidence for the reliability of the Bible, for the existence of God and for the truth of Jesus Christ, you may ask “What must I do to be saved?” First, lets clear up one idea about God and forgiveness.

Often people feel that they have been so bad or done something so wrong that noone could ever forgive them or love them. But a good parent would love their child, no matter what they had done. They may be very displeased with what their child has done, but they would always love them. This is called *unconditional love*. A good parent would want their child to come to them and confess what they had done, apologize for it, be sincerely sorry, and ask for forgiveness. They would hope their child would no longer want to do bad things. A good parent should also be trusted to do what is best for their child.

Unfortunately, not all parents are good parents, but there is one father who is the perfect parent. He has *unconditional love* for His children. He wants them to come to Him with all their problems. He will completely forgive His children for whatever they have done. He wants to have a loving personal relationship with each child. His love will last forever. This good parent can be your’s too. This Good Father is the almighty God of the Holy Bible. **O2**

Since we normally do not know when we will die, it is very important to discover for yourself who God and Jesus are before it is too late. Just pray for God to show you the truth. You can talk to Him at any time since He is always with you and hears everything you say and think. So, are you ready to be saved?

Over the next few moments I’d like to share with you a very good explanation of the *why* and *how* to be saved.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

So let’s look at What It Means To Be Saved.

If you go all the way back to where time began, you would find in the book of Genesis (the first book of the Bible) these words: “In the beginning God created ...” The Bible says God created the entire universe, and then He made His highest creation - man and woman. God created Adam and Eve to be like Him and live forever.

They had it all! A beautiful place to live. Everything they could possibly want or need. Perfect bodies, a perfect marriage, perfect sex, perfect communication, and no pain or sickness or sorrow. Most importantly, they had a perfect relationship with God.

As long as they stayed within God’s boundaries, they had it all. There was only one thing God told them not to do - that was to eat the fruit of a certain tree. Satan came into the garden in the form of a serpent and tempted them to disobey God. Adam and Eve made a choice to rebel against what God told them. They chose to do things their way instead of God’s way, thinking

they knew what was best for them.

The instant they chose to rebel, sin and all its evil entered the world. (SIN is any action or thought that goes against God's will) Adam and Eve started to grow old, and death entered the world for the first time. Where the environment had been perfect, there was now suffering, pain, sickness, and disease. Worst of all, Adam and Eve became spiritually dead. Their friendship with God was cut off. At that point God could have said, "forget it" and wiped them out with a single word. But because God's love for us was so great, He immediately began to provide a way to reconcile people to Him.

The Bible says that God chose blood to be payment for sin. **HEBREWS 9:22** states that the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. **Leviticus 17:11** says that blood represents life. So the first thing God did after Adam and Eve sinned was to kill an animal. The skin from the animal covered their nakedness and its blood (temporarily) "paid" for their sin. God promised them that one day he would send the complete (permanent) payment for their sin. [Such animal sacrifices continued throughout the Old Testament times and were a temporary payment for sin, or disobedience to God. Jesus's sacrifice on the cross was the final, permanent, payment for sin making animal sacrifice no longer necessary.]

Justice requires that you pay for what you do wrong. Because God is just, he requires that sin be paid for, once and for all. The only one qualified to pay for the sin of the world was someone who had never sinned himself. So 2,000 years ago, Jesus, God's own Son, left the splendor of heaven and came to the earth as a little baby. He was the only baby who ever asked to be born. For 33 years he walked and lived among men. He faced every temptation and experience of life without sin. By his life he taught us how to live.

Jesus became that once-and-for-all sacrifice for sin - to die in your place and in mine-to pay for our sin. If we received what he did for us on the cross, we will be forgiven and made right with God.

Jesus is offering you a new life and a new beginning. He'll not only give you an exciting life here on this earth, but also one day take you to heaven to be with him forever. The only other option is not receiving Christ and his work for you on the cross. You pay for your own sin in a horrible place the Bible calls hell, created for the devil and his demons.

The choice is yours. Salvation is a gift from God. **ROMANS 6:23** in the Bible states, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord". But like any other gift, it does not become yours until you reach out and take it. How do you do that?

First, you must **Admit** you are a sinner in need of God's forgiveness. **ROMANS 3:23** says, "For **all** have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God."

Next, you must **Confess** your sin to God, show Him that you are truly sorry for your sinful acts and thoughts, and ask God for forgiveness for your sin. Then **Repent** of your sin.

Repent means that you must turn away from your sinful lifestyle and no longer desire to do bad things. **LUKE 13:3** says, “But unless you repent, you too will all perish.”

Lastly you must **Give** your heart and life to Jesus. Truly accept, and proclaim to others, that Jesus Christ is your personal Lord and Savior. **JOHN 3:16** says, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” And **ROMANS 10:9-10, 13** say that if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” And **ACTS 16:31** says, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.” But to just say “I believe” is not enough; you must believe in your heart. **BS** You can not fool God. He knows what you truly believe.

When a person truly becomes a Christian, they no longer want to live a sinful lifestyle. They turn away from the ways of the world and choose to be obedient to God’s word. They develop a love for God and a hunger for His word. They want to study God’s word in order to grow spiritually. They learn genuine humility and selfless love for others. They pray often everyday to praise God, to thank Him, and to ask for His help.

True Christians will want God’s will for their life instead of their own will, and they will want Jesus Christ to be their Lord as well as their Savior. They will want Jesus Christ to be in charge of every aspect of their life. They will want to be good and do good things for other people.

For me, I realize that God created me; He has a purpose for me; He knows what is best for me. So it makes sense for me to want and to ask for “God’s will” to be done in my life.

So if you want to be a true Christian, tell Jesus Christ about it through prayer to Him (talking to Him silently or aloud). Tell Him that you accept His sacrificial death for your sin. Ask Him to be your Lord and ask for His Holy Spirit to come upon you to dwell with you and guide your every thought and decision and action. **TC**

Pray a prayer something like this. Remember there is nothing magical about the words. What counts is what you mean in your heart. So let’s pray.

“Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner, and I know my sin must be paid for. I accept your death on the cross, as payment for my sin. Please forgive me of all my sin - past, present, and future. Please come into my heart and save me. I give you my life, and ask you to be my Lord and Savior. Take me to heaven to be with you when I die. Help me to live for you until that time. Thank you, Jesus, for saving me. Amen.”

If you prayed that prayer and meant it, then Jesus did exactly what you asked him to do! You may not have seen light flash or heard angels sing, but in a split second, something natural took place. You were saved!

You now have a new life in Christ and it's important that you start out right. Share what has just happened to you with someone else. Begin to study God's word. (To learn more about Jesus Christ, His teachings and His example, **the Gospel of John**, the forth book of the New Testament, is a good place to start). We learn best by repetition and dedication, so get in the habit of reading the Bible regularly. [Although you do not have to go to church to be saved, the Bible does tell us that we should assemble with other believers to help support and encourage each other.] So find a Bible teaching, preaching, and believing church, where you can grow in your new faith. Ask God to show you the church where he wants you to become a member. Talk to him every day - he loves you so much and wants to spend time with you. [If you want to develop a personal relationship with someone, you must talk with them and spend time with them. So if you are sincere, talking to God and reading His word, on a regular basis, will help you develop a close personal relationship with Him.]

[If you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior], you have made the most important decision you will ever make. God bless you in your new life as a radical Christian! Give it all you've got! **BS**

This concludes this presentation. I hope it has made you think about the truth of the Bible and its teachings. Since the information in this presentation is so important to our present and future lives, I pray that you will listen to it again and share it with others. Again, if you would like to see more information on the reliability of the Bible, or read a hard copy of this presentation, contact me for a copy of my "Evidence For Biblical Reliability CD" or visit my blog site at - <http://biblicalreliability.blogspot.com>. May God bless you.

LIST OF “EVIDENCE FOR BIBLICAL RELIABILITY CD”
AND BLOG ARTICLES
USED FOR THIS PRESENTATION

- A Evidence For Biblical Reliability
- B Evidence For Biblical Accuracy
- C MAPS Guide - Biblical Reliability
- D The Bible Stands Alone
- E Archaeology and History Attest to the Reliability of the Bible
- F The Dead Sea Scrolls - “The greatest manuscript discovery of all times”
- G What Makes The Bible So Special?
- H Exacting Bible Copying Methods
- I Ten Reasons To Believe The Bible
- J Contradictions in the Bible-Why Are They There?
- K How can you believe a Bible that is full of contradictions?
- K2 Why Are There So Many Denominations?
- K3 There are so many different interpretations of the Bible, why should I believe yours?
- L Scientific Facts in the Bible
- M Science Confirms the Bible
- N Does the Bible contain statements that are at variance with science?
- O Why Should We Teach Evidence for Biblical Reliability
- O2 A Good Father’s Love
- O3 Is Jesus Really The Only Way?
- P Is There Really A God? How would you answer?
- Q Is There A God?
- R How Do We Know God Exists?
- S The Case For A Creator
- T Suffering - Why?
- U Christianity is a Credible Faith
- V What are some of the differences between Christianity and the Eastern Religions?
- W What distinguishes Christianity from Other Religions?
- X Comparing Christianity to Other Religions
- Y History Validates the Resurrection
- Z That’s One Body That Will Never Be Found
- AA Do You Have Proof
- BB Proof
- CC What Keeps People From Believing?
- OT Summary Of Origins Theories
- YW Evidence For A Young World
- DD 25 Reasons To Doubt Evolution
- DQ Difficult Questions for Evolutionists To Answer
- MW My World View
- TC What Is A True Christian?
- BS What Does It Mean To Be Saved?
- ET Signs Of The End Times

[Also see the article (list)“Websites For Biblical Reliability”]

OTHER RESOURCES USED

- MG Guidelines For The Understanding Of The Scriptures, Dr. J. Vernon McGee. *Thru The Bible Radio Network*, Pasadena, CA
- WA *World Aflame*, by Billy Graham
- EDV *Evidence That Demands A Verdict*, Josh McDowell, Here's Life Pub. Inc., San Bernardino, CA (Nelson Pub., Nashville, TN) 1979. p. 19.
- NDV *The New Evidence That Demands A Verdict*, Josh McDowell, Here's Life Pub. Inc., San Bernardino, CA (Nelson Pub., Nashville, TN) p. 39 & pp.33-116
- CE Article from creationevidence.org, Under "Main Menu" select "Does God Exist"
- HHE Article from www.equip.org, by Hank Hanegraaff - the Bible Answer Man.
- TEB *The Evidence Bible - Irrefutable evidence for the thinking mind*, Compiled by Ray Comfort, Bridge-Logos, Orlando, FL 32822.
- BHA *Revised and Expanded The Bible Has the Answer*, by Henry M. Morris & Martin E. Clark from Answers In Genesis.
- ATQ *Answers to Tough Questions skeptics ask about the Christian faith*, by Josh McDowell and Don Stewart. Living Books, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, IL 1980.
- MIP *Many Infallible Proofs - Evidences for the Christian Faith*, by Henry M. Morris with Henry M. Morris III. Green Forest, AR: Master Books, Inc., October 2005
- BAB *The Bible Answer Book*, by Hank Hanegraaff - the Bible Answer Man.
- BAM *The Bible Answer Book*, by Hank Hanegraaff - The Bible Answer Man (Nashville, Tennessee: J. Countryman division of the Thomas Nelson Book Group).
- CLE *A Closer Look at the Evidence*, by Richard L. & Christina E. Kleiss. Search for the Truth Publications, Midland, MI 2004.
- RAG Article from answersingenesis.org, See Creation Archive > Volume 20 Issue 3:32-34 June 1998
- ITG Tract: *Is There a God*, by the Church of God in Christ, Mennonite. Gospel Tract and Bible Society, Moundridge, Kansas.
- HWK Pamphlet: *How Do We Know God Exist?*, by James L. Melton. Bible Baptist Church, Martin, TN, 2003.
- CFC *The Case For A Creator*, by Lee Strobel. Zondervan Pub. Inc., Grand Rapids, MI. 2004
- SFT *Search for the Truth* by Bruce Malone. Search for the Truth Publications, Midland, MI. 2003
- DJC Pamphlet: *The Deity of Jesus Christ*, by James L. Melton. Bible Baptist Church, Martin, TN, 1998.
- 25R Article from creationmoments.com. Go to Articles > Bible > Biblical Accuracy > 25 Reasons to Doubt the Theory of Evolution
- YAE Article from answersingenesis.org/get-answers/topic/young-age-evidence
- SG Student's Guide to the Bible, by Stephen M. Miller. Barbour Publishing, Uhrichsville, OH 2008.
- UMC *Unlocking the Mysteries of Creation*, Premier Edition, Dennis R. Peterson, Creation Research Pub., El Dorado, CA 2002.
- LGC *Letting God Create our Day, Vol.3*, Paul A. Bartz, Bible Science Assoc. Inc., Minneapolis, MN, 1992. (Now Creation Moments, Zimmerman, MN)
- TSG *The Signature of God: Astonishing Biblical Discoveries*, Grant R. Jefferey, Frontier Research publications, Toronto, Ontario, 1996.