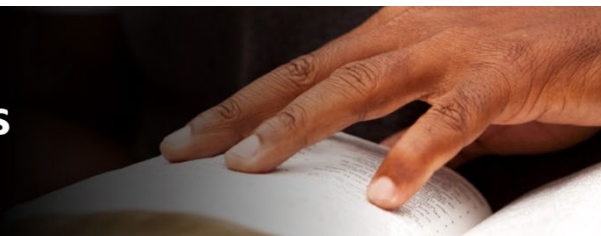


# Biblical Apologetics

How do we know it's true?



## Class 6, Wednesday, February 15, 2023

*"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander." (1 Peter 3:15-16, NIV)*

### Today's Issue: Why the New Testament is Reliable

(See "The New Testament Documents: Are they Reliable?" by F.F. Bruce for much more detailed information.)

A big complaint by those who do not understand the process by which ancient documents are found, preserved, copied, studied, and saved—is that, *"We don't even have the original copies of the New Testament."* Their point is that since we don't have the originals, we don't know what the original said. *That is completely false!*

### The New Testament

As a review, the New Testament is made up of 27 short writings.

- Five are historical and are gospels of Jesus (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John) or the church (Acts), compiled by four authors.
- 21 are letters. 13 bear Paul's name. One (Hebrews) is usually included with his letters. One was written by James, Jesus' brother. One was written by Jude, a brother of James. Two were written by Peter. Three are unsigned, but due to their similarity to John's gospel, they are attributed to him.
- One (Revelation) is apocalyptic literature, a well-known type in Jewish and Christian circles. The inclusion of seven letters to known churches increases its historical reliability.
- That's four types of literature by nine different authors.

### Evidence For Their Reliability

1. Though some dispute it, **the New Testament was written in N T T**. (Two issues for historians: "How soon after the events took place were they recorded?" and "Were eyewitness still alive when the document was written?") The crucifixion was about AD 30, and most of the New Testament was written in the next \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ years.
  - The d\_\_\_\_\_ of J\_\_\_\_\_ in AD 70 helps us determine when a book was written.
2. **The Bible is remarkably c**. Differing details and minor inconsistencies add to reliability. (Eyewitnesses to events rarely give the same details but tell the same story.)
3. **We have h\_\_\_\_\_ n\_\_\_\_\_ of ancient manuscripts and a h\_\_\_\_\_ n\_\_\_\_\_ are quite ancient.** Though it's true that we don't have the originals, this is true of **ALL** ancient books.
  - There are over \_\_\_\_\_ full or partial ancient New Testament manuscripts. Some go back to AD \_\_\_\_\_ and more complete documents go back to AD \_\_\_\_\_.
  - We have only \_\_\_\_ ancient manuscripts of the Roman *History of Tacitus*; the oldest from AD 900, yet no one questions its validity.
  - The same is true of *Caesar's Gallic Wars*, or histories of Thucydides or Herodotus—no one questions them!
4. **Archaeology (as mentioned last week) verifies the names and places mentioned in the New Testament in great detail.** (Example: "S\_\_\_\_\_ S\_\_\_\_\_" in Antioch still exists!)

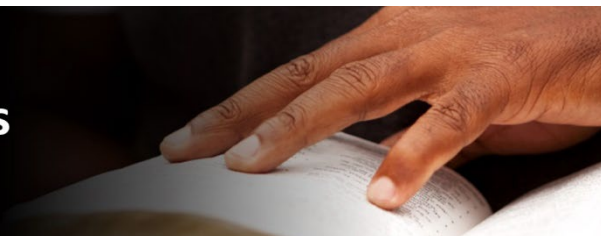
### More Study:

**Handbook of Christian Apologetics: Hundreds of Answers to Crucial Questions**, by Peter Kreeft and Ronald K. Tacelli. (*A study book which I have used extensively in preparing for this class.*)

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