

## Historical Reliability & Dating of New Testament

### Archaeology Evidence<sup>53-67</sup>

1. Archaeology has never once contradicted the Bible.
2. Examples: Herod's burial, Pool of Siloam, Arch of Titus, Lysanias, Yehohanan, Tomb of Lazarus, Jacob's Well, Pool of Bethesda, Peter's House, Nazareth Decree, Tomb of Jesus, Alexamenos Graffito.

### Comparison With Manuscript Copies of Other Literature<sup>68</sup>

1. As of 2017, there are 23,986 NT manuscripts and 60,000+ biblical manuscripts (cf. Iliad: 1,800, Demosthenes: 200, Caesar: 10).
2. Gap of around 25 years or less between the NT manuscripts and the originals (cf. Iliad: 500, Pliny: 750, Caesar: 1,000).

### Original Reconstructed<sup>68</sup>

1. Suppose we have 3 different manuscripts that have 3 different errors in the same verse such as Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ"; "I can do all things through Christ"; "I can do all things through Christ"...Is there any mystery about what the original said?
2. God's Word is better protected through copies spread around the world; if there was an original, then someone could change it easily.

### Accuracy of Reconstruction<sup>68</sup>

1. There is estimated around 200,000 errors in the NT manuscripts, but these are mainly small grammatical ones, and spread throughout thousands of manuscripts. So just one variant spelling of one letter in 2,000 manuscripts is counted as 2,000 "errors."
2. Bruce Metzger estimated the NT is about 99.5 percent accurate. And the 0.5 percent in question doesn't affect a single Christian doctrine.

### Dating the Gospel of Matthew (Early 60s-80 AD)<sup>69-70</sup>

1. The writings of Irenaeus say that Matthew wrote in the mid-60s.
2. Written after the Gospel of Mark.

### Dating the Gospel of Mark (Late 50s-Late 60s AD)<sup>69-70</sup>

1. Mark's mother's house provided a gathering point for believers, and Mark joined his cousin Barnabas and Paul in their early travels.
2. Mark was an associate of Peter; most likely written before Peter was martyred (c. 64), or shortly after.
3. Dating can be placed earlier if we rely on the early church tradition that the gospel was written while Peter was still living.
4. Acts was written between 62-64; Gospel of Luke was written before Acts, and Luke likely used Mark as a source, placing Mark earlier.

### Dating the Gospel of Luke (Early 60s-80s AD)<sup>69-70</sup>

1. Luke and Acts are referred together because Luke wrote both.
2. Pre-70 AD argument: Luke does not describe Paul's death (mid-60s) or show an awareness of Paul's letters.
3. After-70 AD argument: Paul wasn't writing a biography of Paul but of the progress of the gospel, and his writings reflect Paul's influence.

### Dating the Gospel of John (Mid 60s-100 AD)<sup>69-70</sup>

1. Wide possible timeframe and little support for any specific period.
2. But, you can suggest AD 80-85 due to allowing time between the writing of John's Gospel and his three letters in the early 90s.

### Dating Acts of the Apostles (62-64 AD)<sup>69-70</sup>

1. Luke reports many events that took place in Jerusalem, but doesn't mention the destruction of temple in AD 70, so it was written before.
2. Acts doesn't mention the persecutions from Nero in the mid-60s.
3. Luke doesn't record martyrdoms of Peter, Paul, and James (61-67).
4. A major theme was the church leaders welcoming new Gentile believers into the community. This was very important before AD 70.
5. Several distinctively Jewish expressions indicate a pre-70 audience.
6. Luke doesn't mention wars against Romans, beginning in AD 66.

### Dating Paul's Letters (45-58 AD)<sup>69-70</sup>

1. Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthian Church from AD 54-55.
2. 1 Corinthians 15:3-8 is the earliest, most authenticated testimony of the Resurrection and goes back to the time and place of the event.
3. Other documents written in AD 50s or before: Gal., 1 Thess., Rom.

## Trustworthiness of the New Testament Writers

### Eyewitness Claims<sup>71</sup>

1. Contains eyewitness testimony (Acts 2:32, 3:15, 4:18-20; 1 Cor. 15:3-8).
2. All writers witnessed or were associates of witnesses to the risen Jesus.
3. Paul lists 14 people whose names are known as witnesses and 500+ others.
4. Apostles make bold proclamations to powerful people (Acts 26:24-28).
5. 140+ historically confirmed details in John, Luke, and half of Acts.
6. Multiple independent accounts by 9 authors over a 20- to 50-year period that were spread all over the ancient world.

### Embarrassing Details About Themselves<sup>72</sup>

1. Fail to understand Jesus numerous times (Mk. 9:32; Lk. 18:34).
2. Fall asleep on Jesus twice in his greatest time of need (Mk. 24:32-41).
3. Jesus calls Peter "Satan" (Mk. 8:33), and Paul rebukes Peter (Gal. 2:11).
4. All the disciples but one hide when Jesus dies on the cross and afterwards.
5. Despite Jesus telling them several times (ex. Jn. 2:18-22), they are doubtful when they hear of his resurrection and after they see him risen (Matt. 28:17).
6. If they were lying, they would've presented themselves as bold believers.

### Embarrassing Details and Difficult Sayings of Jesus<sup>72</sup>

1. Embarrassing details: (Jn. 6:66, 7:5, 7:12, 7:20, 8:30-31, 10:20).
2. Difficult sayings: (Jn. 6:53, 14:28; Matt. 24:34, 24:36; Lk. 18:19).

### Demanding Sayings of Jesus<sup>72</sup>

1. If they were making up a story, they didn't make up one that made life easier for them (Matt. 5:28, 5:32, 5:39-42, 5:44-45, 5:48, 7:1-2).

### Distinguished Jesus' Words Very Clearly<sup>72</sup>

1. If they were making up a story, they could have easily ended all debates on controversial issues by just making up quotes from Jesus.

### Resurrection Events That Would Not Have Been Invented<sup>72</sup>

1. Jesus was buried by Joseph of Arimathea, a member of the Jewish Sanhedrin that sentenced Jesus to die.
2. All four Gospels say that women were the first witnesses of the empty tomb. Women in these times were not considered reliable.
3. There was a conversion of Jewish priests (Acts 6:7, 15:5).
4. The Jewish explanation for the empty tomb is that the disciples stole the body, which implicitly admits that the tomb was actually empty.

### Historically Confirmed People<sup>72</sup>

1. Many historically confirmed people (Pilate, Caiaphas, Festus, Herodian).
2. The writers would have blown their credibility if they falsely used people in events that never occurred (esp. people of great notoriety and power).

### Divergent Details (Undesigned Coincidences)<sup>72</sup>

1. The apparently contradictory Gospel accounts strengthens their reliability.
2. There are notable connections between accounts too subtle and widespread to have been planned or contrived (similar to reporters).
3. The writers didn't get together beforehand to smooth out their testimonies.

### Challenge Their Readers to Check Out Verifiable Facts and Miracles<sup>72</sup>

1. There are many claims of accuracy (Lk. 1:1-4; 2 Pet. 1:16; 1 Cor. 15).
2. Paul reminds the Corinthians that he worked miracles among them (2 Cor. 12:12); he would have destroyed his credibility if this didn't happen.

### Describe Miracles Like Other Historical Evidence<sup>72</sup>

1. The Gospels give matter-of-fact, bland descriptions of the Resurrection and don't mention any dramatic theological implications like in the Epistles.
2. The 35+ other miracles attributed to Jesus are described in the same way.

### Monumental Shift in Beliefs and Practices<sup>72</sup>

1. Overnight, they abandon 1,500-year-old institutions: animal sacrifices, Law of Moses, strict monotheism, Sabbath, and belief in conquering Messiah.
2. 10,000+ Jerusalem Jews (including the Pharisees) convert to Christianity 5 weeks after the crucifixion and risked their souls being damned to hell.
3. Adopt new radical beliefs: Sunday—day of worship, baptism, communion.
4. Suffered persecution and death; no one recanted their stories.

### Accuracy of Names<sup>73</sup>

1. Richard Bauckham found that the names for men in the Gospels correspond to names in first-century Palestine, so they aren't later additions.



## Logical Faith:

## Why Christianity is True



### The Gospel of Jesus Christ (How Can I Be Saved?)<sup>1-7</sup>

#### Why Do I Need to Be Saved? (We Are All Sinners)

1. We are all infected and born with sin (Rom. 3:23; Ps. 51:5).
2. We have all sinned (Eccles. 7:20). Have you ever lied, stolen, or used God's name in vain? Jesus said, "Whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." If so, God sees you as lying, stealing, blasphemous, adulterer at heart.
3. Sin separates us from God and on the path to eternal destruction.

#### Saved From What? (Eternal Destruction in Hell)

1. Because of our sin, we all deserve death (Rom. 6:23).
2. Sin results in physical and spiritual death because all sin is ultimately committed against an eternal and infinite God (Ps. 51:4). Because of that, the just penalty for our sins is also eternal and infinite.
3. What we need to be saved from is eternal destruction (Matt. 25:46; Rev. 20:15). Hell is the place that is separated from God. God does not send anyone to hell; everyone sends themselves through their own sin.

#### How Did God Provide Salvation? (Through Jesus' Sacrifice)

1. Because the penalty for sin is infinite and eternal, only God could pay the penalty, because only He is infinite and eternal.
2. So, God took on human flesh in the person of Jesus Christ and lived and taught among us (Jn. 1:1, 1:14). He willingly sacrificed Himself for us, allowing Himself to be crucified (Jn. 10:15).
3. Because Jesus Christ was human, He could die; and because Jesus Christ was God, His death had an eternal and infinite value. It was outside of time and he died for ALL our sins (past, present, and future). That is why He said on the cross, "It is finished" (Jn. 19:30).
4. Jesus' death on the cross was the perfect and complete payment for our sins (1 Jn. 2:2). He took the consequences that we deserved.

#### What Do I Need to Do? (Faith in Jesus)

1. Salvation is a gift from God. "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of your works, so that no one may boast" (Eph. 2:8-9).
2. "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31). To believe is not just knowing that Jesus is the Son of God. It is an act of will where you trust him alone for the forgiveness of your sins. "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Rom. 10:9).
3. Repentance also goes hand-in-hand with believing where you go from rejecting Christ to having faith in Him (Acts 5:31). It is a change of attitude and action from sin toward obedience to God. Both repentance and faith are gifts from God, and not from ourselves. Salvation is only possible because of God's grace (Eph. 2:8-9).
4. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me" (Jn. 14:6). "There is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). "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" (Jn. 3:16).

#### Accepting Jesus Christ as Your Savior

Are you ready to place your faith in Jesus and trust Him to save you? Know that saying a prayer will not accomplish anything on its own. It is only faith in Jesus' death and resurrection that saves us. If you choose, you can respond with a similar prayer: "God, I am a sinner and could never reach heaven by my own good deeds. Right now, I place my faith in Jesus Christ as God's Son who died and rose again to give me eternal life. I trust in Jesus alone. Please forgive me of my sins and help me to live for you. Thank you for accepting me and giving me eternal life."

## Evidence for Jesus Christ's Existence & Resurrection

### Did Jesus Christ Exist?<sup>28-25</sup>

1. Josephus (AD 37-100), Thallus (52), Tacitus (55-117), Jew. Talmud (70-200), Mara Bar-Serapion (73), Phelegon (80), Lucian (2<sup>nd</sup> century), Pliny (112), Trajan (112), Suetonius (120), Eusebius (265-330).
2. These non-biblical sources show that Jesus: (1) had a brother, James, and was from Nazareth; (2) lived a wise and virtuous life; (3) wonder-worker who performed unusual feats; (4) introduced new teaching contrary to Judaism; (5) crucified by Pontius Pilate; (6) his disciples believed that he died on the cross and rose from the dead; (7) darkness and an earthquake occurred at Jesus' death; (8) his disciples denied polytheism, worshipped Christ as God, and denied Roman gods; (9) his teachings and disciples spread fast; (10) his followers believed that they were immortal; (11) his followers were willing to die for their beliefs; and (12) his followers renounced material goods and lived moral lives.

### What is the Minimal Facts Approach?<sup>26-27</sup>

1. Gary Habermas created the minimal facts approach to the resurrection. Each fact has strong historical evidence supporting it and the vast majority of today's scholars accept it as historical fact.

### Fact #1: Jesus Was Killed By Crucifixion<sup>26-27</sup>

1. Crucifixion was a common form of execution by the Romans.
2. The odds of surviving were extremely small (horrific conditions).
3. Romans were confident Jesus was dead and were good at their job.
4. Death by crucifixion was caused by great difficulty in breathing.
5. All four Gospels report this and non-biblical sources as well: Tacitus, Josephus, Lucian, Mara Bar-Serapion, Jewish Talmud.

### Fact #2: Jesus' Disciples Believed They Saw the Risen Jesus<sup>26-27</sup>

1. Paul knew the apostles and says that they claimed—just as he did—that Jesus had returned from the dead (1 Cor. 15:11).
2. 1 Cor. 15 creed dates back within two decades of Jesus' resurrection and says that Jesus died, rose, and appeared to over 500 people.
3. Early apostolic teachings are enshrined in public sermons (Acts 13).
4. The earliest Gospel (Mark) predicts the resurrection in five places, and reports the testimony of the angel to the resurrection, the empty tomb, and the imminent appearance of Jesus in Galilee.
5. The writings of the apostolic fathers, who succeeded the apostles, said the apostles were dramatically impacted by Jesus' resurrection.
6. The apostles truly believed that Jesus rose from the dead, and then suffered for their conviction. Non-biblical sources report this: Clement of Rome, Polycarp, Tertullian, Origen, Eusebius, Hegesippus.

### Fact #3: Conversion of the Church Persecutor Paul<sup>26-27</sup>

1. Paul was an enemy of Christians and persecuted them.
2. Both Paul himself and Luke report that Paul became a Christian because he experienced an encounter with the risen Jesus.
3. Paul became an evangelist and suffered for the sake of the Gospel.
4. Non-biblical sources: Clement, Polycarp, Tertullian, Dionysius.

### Fact #4: Conversion of the Skeptic James, Jesus' Half Brother<sup>26-27</sup>

1. The Gospels tell us that Jesus had at least 4 half-brothers and sisters.
2. James was not a follower of Jesus during Jesus' lifetime.
3. Non-biblical sources: Josephus, Hegesippus.
4. 1 Cor. 15 tells us that the risen Jesus appeared to James.
5. James didn't just become a Christian, but also becomes leader of the Jerusalem Church; he died a martyr (Josephus, Hegesippus, Clement).

### Fact #5: Jesus' Tomb Was Empty<sup>26-27</sup>

1. Jesus was publicly executed and buried in Jerusalem, and then his resurrection was proclaimed in that same city.
2. Christianity would not have been started if the tomb wasn't empty.
3. At that time, skeptics said the disciples stole the body, admitting the empty tomb. But why would they suffer and die for a known lie?
4. Gospels report women were the first to discover the empty tomb. In this culture, women's testimony weren't reliable (Jewish Talmud).

## Opposing Theories Against Jesus Christ's Resurrection<sup>28</sup>

### Legend (Story Embellished With Supernatural Details)

1. Resurrection is traced back to the experiences of the initial eyewitnesses.
2. Paul and James came to Christ through experiences with the risen Jesus.
3. 1 Cor. 15 creed predates the Gospels and says 500+ people saw risen Jesus.

### Nonhistorical Genre (Disciples Invented Fable For a Message)

1. This cannot account for the empty tomb, or conversions of Paul and James.
2. Sermons of Peter and Paul communicate a literal, physical resurrection.
3. At the time, Jewish leaders accused the disciples of stealing Jesus' body.

### Copied Myths From Other Religion

1. Accounts of rising gods in other religions are unclear and not parallels.
2. The first account of a dying and rising god appears 100 years after Jesus.
3. A resurrection in earlier accounts is questionable (Marduk, Adonis, Osiris).
4. Other religions lack evidence and are accounted for by opposing theories.

### Fraud 1 (Disciples Lied or Stole the Body)

1. Disciples' lives were radically transformed and boldly proclaimed the risen Christ in front of severe persecution and death; no one recanted their stories.
2. This cannot account for the conversions of Paul and James.

### Fraud 2 (Someone Else Stole the Body)

1. Peter and Thomas were unconvinced by empty tomb, but by risen Jesus.
2. This cannot account for the conversions of Paul and James.

### Witnesses Went to the Wrong Tomb

1. This does not account for the disciples believing they saw the risen Jesus.
2. The empty tomb convinced no one but John.
3. Paul and James would not have been convinced by merely an empty tomb.
4. Tomb's location was well-known, since Joseph of Sanhedrin buried Jesus.

### Jesus' Apparent Death (Swoon Theory)

1. Jesus sweated blood (hematidrosis), which made his skin more sensitive.
2. Scourging was intended to weaken victim just short of death.
3. Victims of crucifixion died due to trouble breathing, or asphyxiation.
4. Journal of American Medical Association said, "Interpretations...that Jesus didn't die on the cross appear to be at odds with modern medical knowledge."
5. Jesus was pierced by a spear, and blood and water came out (pericardium).
6. The Roman soldiers and Pontius Pilate verified that Jesus had died.
7. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus wouldn't embalm a living Jesus.
8. A wounded Jesus couldn't have pushed the heavy tomb and walked miles.
9. If Jesus appeared to his disciples in a pathetic state, this wouldn't have convinced them that he was the risen Prince of life.
10. This theory cannot account for Jesus' glorious appearance to Paul.

### Jesus' Appearances Were a Hallucination

1. Hallucinations are private occurrences, and are not collective ones.
2. 1 Cor. 15 creed says that Jesus appeared to 500+ people at once.
3. This doesn't account for empty tomb, conversions of Paul and James, and the bodily nature of appearances (disciples touching and eating with Jesus).

### Biased Testimonies of Christians

1. Paul's testimony is strong because he was an enemy of Christianity.
2. James' testimony is strong because he was a skeptic during Jesus' life.
3. Recognizing the bias of an author doesn't mean they distorted the facts. All authors have personal interests (Jewish historians with the Nazi Holocaust).

### Risen Jesus Would Have a Greater Impact

1. Back then, people didn't have our convenient ways of recording things.
2. Many writings are lost and are no longer available.
3. We still have at least 42 authors mention Jesus within 150 years of death.
4. Back then, most people were illiterate and didn't write (oral culture).
5. Some writers had high hopes of Jesus returning in their lifetimes.
6. Even today, how many people would write a book on a significant event?

Reference list and more in-depth information: [logicalfaith.co](http://logicalfaith.co)

Contact me: [logicalfaithbook@gmail.com](mailto:logicalfaithbook@gmail.com)

Recommendations: *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, The Case for Christ, The Case for a Creator, The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus, Destined to Reign*, [gotquestions.org](http://gotquestions.org)

All Socials:



## Evidence for Jesus Christ's Divinity

### Important Messianic Prophecies<sup>29</sup>

1. seed of Abraham (Gen. 12:3), lineage of Isaac (Gen. 17:19), house of David (Jer. 23:5-6), born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14), both God and man (Isa. 9:6-7), born in Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2), predated by a messenger (Mal. 3:1), worked miracles (Isa. 35:5), entered Jerusalem on a donkey (Zech. 9:9-10), visited Jerusalem temple before it was destroyed in AD 70 (Mal. 3:1), rejected by Jewish people (Ps. 118:22), silent before accusers (Isa. 53:7), pierced (Ps. 22:16), prayed for his persecutors (Ps. 109:4), died with thieves (Isa. 53:12), died in 33 AD (Dan. 9:25-26), forsaken by disciples (Zech. 13:6-7), buried in rich man's tomb (Isa. 53:9), rose from dead (Ps. 16:10), ascended into heaven (Ps. 68:18).

### Clearest Prophecy of Jesus<sup>30</sup>

1. Dead Sea Scrolls contain the full book of Isaiah and date to 100 BC. Read Isa. 52:13-53:12, and ask yourself, "To whom is this referring?"

### Other Important Events<sup>30-50</sup>

1. For more than 1,900 years, Jews have had no functioning temple. Either God has forsaken us, or everything finds fulfillment in Christ.
2. On the Day of Atonement, there were signs that God accepted their sacrifices. The last 40 years before the second temple was destroyed, all signs were negative (the same time as when Jesus died in 33 AD).

### Odds of Fulfilling Prophecy<sup>51</sup>

1. The probability of fulfilling 48 prophecies are 1 in 10<sup>157</sup>.
2. Since the Messiah had to come 2,000 years ago, then if Christ isn't the Messiah, there will never be one, and God lied with the prophecies.

### Did Jesus Manipulate Events?<sup>31-46</sup>

1. This does not fit the known unimpeachable character of Christ.
2. How was it that Jesus could hide from his most intimate friends this intricate plot? It is implausible that Jesus would pick these men for this.
3. How can we explain Jesus' sinless and miraculous signs (Jn. 19:16)?
4. Jesus had no control over his birth, lineage, accusers' reactions, his suffering, men gambling for his clothes, his side pierced with spear, etc.
5. In a theistic world, it is inconceivable that God would allow a total deception in his name or an accidental "fulfillment" by an imposter.

### Jesus' Direct Claims to Be God<sup>52</sup>

1. Caiph asked Jesus, "'Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?'" 'I AM,' said Jesus. 'And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.' The high priest tore his clothes. 'Why do we need any more witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy.' They all condemned him as worthy of death" (Mk. 14:61-64). Christ claimed that he would judge the world and receive worship from its people (Dan. 7:13).
2. Jesus said, "'Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day'...'I tell you the truth,' Jesus answered, 'before Abraham was born, I AM!' At this, they picked up stones to stone him" (Jn. 8:56-59). Christ quoted the name God gave to Moses at the burning bush (Ex. 3:13-14), and was claiming to be that eternal, self-existent One.

### Jesus' Indirect Claims to Be God<sup>52</sup>

1. Other statements: Jn. 5:21, 8:12, 10:11, 14:6, 17:5; Matt. 25:31, etc.
2. Through parables: Lk. 15:2; Matt. 19:28-30; Mk. 2:19, etc.

### Jesus' Divine Actions<sup>52</sup>

1. Jesus forgave sins (Mk. 2:5-11), gave new commandments (Matt. 28:18-19; Jn. 13:34), requested prayer in his name (Jn. 14:13-14), accepted worship on at least 9 occasions (Matt. 8:2, 9:18, 14:33, 15:25, etc.), and commended those who acknowledged his deity (Jn. 20:29).

### Jesus' Sinless Life<sup>52</sup>

1. His disciples who spent three years with him, claimed that Jesus was sinless (1 Pet. 1:19, 2:22; 1 Jn. 3:5; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15).
2. Jesus' enemies said that he was sinless (Mk. 12:14, 14:55).
3. Pontius Pilate found him innocent (Lk. 23:22).
4. No human writer could've invented such a perfect, sinless character.