

Can You Believe What the Bible Says About Jesus?

Rod Reynolds

After Jesus died and was resurrected, according to the testimony of John, on the first afternoon following his resurrection he appeared to his close disciples, including the eleven who were to be sent out as apostles.

“Then, the same day at evening [or afternoon, as it could be translated], being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, ‘Peace be with you.’ When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord” (John 20:19-20).

However, when Jesus appeared in the room where they were gathered, one of the eleven was absent.

“Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him, ‘We have seen the Lord.’ So he said to them, ‘Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.’ And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, ‘Peace to you!’ Then He said to Thomas, ‘Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.’ And Thomas answered and said to Him, ‘My Lord and my God!’ Jesus said to him, ‘Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed’” (John 20:24-29).

Some have assumed from this example that believing in Christ without evidence is praiseworthy. Does God want us to have blind faith, faith without evidence?

In the New Testament are some very strong claims concerning Jesus Christ. That he was born of a virgin. That he worked many miracles. That he died by crucifixion, and was resurrected three days later. That he has the authority to forgive sins, and thus remove their penalty. That he was God in the flesh.

Thomas saw Jesus. He had been with Jesus much of the time during the three and a half years of Jesus’ ministry. He had been among those personally taught by Jesus, as he was being trained to become an apostle, an eye-witness to testify of Jesus and his teachings. He knew Jesus had died, and how he had died. And he saw him alive several days after he had been dead and buried in a tomb.

But none of us has seen Jesus. If we are to believe, to have faith in Jesus, if we are, in this lifetime, to believe in Jesus’ resurrection, and in his promises, we will have to believe without having seen Jesus. But does that mean we must have “blind faith”?

I want to show you that God does not want you to believe in him simply by “blind faith,” that is, faith with no supporting evidence.

And if our faith is to be based on evidence, what is the evidence?

If the main evidence supporting faith in Jesus Christ is the Bible, how does the Bible measure up as a reliable history concerning Jesus Christ? This is a question I also want to address in this article.

The fact is, I repeat, God does not require, nor does he want, us to believe in Jesus Christ without evidence. Just after John records the statement we read that Jesus made to Thomas, is the following:

“And truly Jesus **did many other signs** in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book” (John 20:30).

We see that Jesus offered many signs, many proofs, to his disciples concerning the claims he made about himself and who he was. He did not ask them to have blind faith, faith without evidence. Luke wrote in the book of Acts: “The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering **by many infallible proofs**, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God” (Acts 1:1-3).

Nor does God expect us to believe without evidence. “But **these are written that you may believe** that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name” (John 20:31).

The things God has made, his creation, is powerful testimony to his existence and power. “... what may be known of God is manifest in them [or revealed to them], for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse” (Romans 1:19-20).

The information necessary to construct the tiniest living organisms, with their array of intricate biological machines of irreducible complexity, is enormous. There is no way such creatures could exist except through the design of a superior intellect.

Sometimes the term “simple organisms” is used of certain forms of life. There are in fact no simple biological life forms on earth. In discussing the complexity of even the least complex organisms, in their book *Evolution From Space*, highly accomplished scientists Fred Hoyle and Chandra Wickramasinghe conclude, “...the probability of life originating at random is so utterly minuscule as to make the random concept absurd...” (p. 141). “For life to have originated on the Earth it would be necessary that quite explicit instructions should have been provided for its assembly” (p. 30). “The theory that life was assembled by an intelligence” is vastly more probable than the alternative “of being the correct explanation.... Indeed, such a

theory is so obvious that one wonders why it is not widely accepted as being self-evident. The reasons are psychological rather than scientific” (p. 130).

Many other scientists, as well as many informed individuals who have no formal scientific credentials, have come to a similar conclusion. A few examples include Dr. Edward Luther Kessel, zoologist and entomologist, Professor and chairman of the Department of Biology at the University of San Francisco.

He wrote, “The more I study Nature, the more I am impressed with ...evidences [of design in Nature]. The processes and phenomena which we observe in science are indeed manifestations of a Supreme Intelligence” (“Let’s Look at Facts, Without Bent or Bias,” *The Evidence of God in an Expanding Universe*, John Clover Monsma, ed., G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1958, p. 53).

Dr. Marlin Books Kreider, Physiologist employed by the U.S. government and a Professor of Biology at Eastern Nazarene College, wrote, “Our scientific knowledge reveals so many improbabilities in the completely materialistic explanation that it is more rational to accept as the prime cause a form of special creation and the influence of an outside force” (“Identifying Einstein’s ‘Creative Force,’” *ibid.*, p. 68).

Dr. Russel Charles Artist, biologist and botanist, a professor in Germany at Frankfurt on the Main, and then professor and head of the Department of Biology at David Lipscomb University in Tennessee, adds, “...it cannot be demonstrated successfully that such a precision instrument as a watch came to exist by accident, that is, without the mind and hand of the craftsman, nor that, even in the self-winding type, it began without someone setting it in motion. When we ask concerning the living cell: ‘How did this microscopic but amazing functional unit come to have its present form?’ or ‘How was it set in motion?’ we are confronted with formidable, even insuperable, difficulties in trying to account for its beginning and, for that matter, its continued functioning, unless we maintain with reason and logic that an intelligence, a mind, brought it into existence. This Mind, this Supreme Intelligence, as contrasted with unthinking Matter, is God” (“Trillions of Living Cells Speak Their Message,” *ibid.*, pp. 122-123).

There are many ways in which God has left evidence of his power, wisdom and Godhead in the things he has created. But he has also left a written record of his creative acts, and of his communications with human beings and interventions in the affairs of this world. That record is preserved in the Scriptures of the Bible.

Peter wrote: “For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but **were eyewitnesses** of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’ And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (II Peter 1:16-21).

The written testimony of eye witnesses is an important part of the evidence available to support our faith. In fact, it is the primary evidence we have available that identifies the Creator, and gives us detailed information about his purpose and plan for human beings. It tells us not only who created us, but why, and how his purpose is being worked out from a historical and prophetic standpoint.

This record is written for our learning, our instruction and edification. Luke wrote as an introduction to his gospel account: "Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, just as those who from the beginning **were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us**, the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, **that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed**" (Luke 1:1-4).

The Scriptures left by the prophets and later by the apostles and their close associates are intended to be the authoritative source of our beliefs, the foundation on which our faith is based.

Jesus said, "Therefore whoever **hears these sayings of Mine, and does them**, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was **founded on the rock**. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall" (Matthew 7:24-27).

"Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, 'If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And **you shall know the truth**, and the truth shall make you free'" (John 8:31-32).

We know what Jesus' teachings are because they are recorded in the New Testament Scriptures. The entire New Testament, and the Old Testament, are the inspired word of God, as Peter assured us.

We should not just accept without question whatever men tell us. All too often men claiming to be ministers misrepresent, and lie about what God's word teaches. Paul praised the Bereans, because they sought to prove what they were being taught by searching the Scriptures. "These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so" (Acts 17:11). They were receptive to being taught, but they searched the Scriptures to confirm the truth of the teachings they were given.

Paul admonished us, "Test [prove] all things; hold fast what is good" (I Thessalonians 5:21). John warned, "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but **test the spirits**, whether they are of God; because **many false prophets have gone out into the world**" (I John 4:1). The test of truth from a doctrinal standpoint is conformity with the word of God, the testimony of the prophets and apostles whose teachings are recording in the Old and New Testaments. "To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no

light in them” (Isaiah 8:20). Paul admonished Timothy, “But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the **Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus**. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (II Timothy 3:13-17).

Paul also instructed Timothy, and this is a warning for us as well, “I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: **Preach the word!** Be ready in season and out of season. **Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching**. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry” (II Timothy 4:1-5).

Note that the job of a faithful minister is to preach the word of God according to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and to endeavor to convince his hearers. He is to be a teacher, teaching sound doctrine, even though it may be rejected in favor of fables, or false doctrines.

If you are to be convinced of the truth, you must have your mind engaged, and you must be seeking to confirm the truth of what you are told, if it is truth. You must be studying the Bible carefully, and weighing what you are taught, if you are not to be deceived.

But how trustworthy are the Scriptures of the New Testament. How do we know they are a reliable record of Jesus Christ, who he was, what he did, and what he taught?

First of all, let’s look at the authors. Who wrote the books of the New Testament, and when were they written? Every one of the books of the New Testament was written by an apostle, or a minister closely associated with one of the apostles in the first century Church. Matthew was one of the twelve chosen to be an apostle by Jesus. Mark was a companion of Peter, and also of Paul (2 Timothy 4:11; Philemon 1:24; 1 Peter 5:13). Luke was a close companion of Paul (Colossians 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:11; Philemon 1:24). John was one of Jesus’ chosen apostles.

These were the authors of the four gospel accounts, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

This is the testimony of Irenaeus, who had been taught by Polycarp, who in turn had been taught by John and knew other apostles:

“Matthew also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect, while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome, and laying the foundations of the Church. After their departure, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, did also hand down to us in writing what had been preached by Peter. Luke also, the companion of Paul, recorded in a book the

Gospel preached by him. Afterwards, John, the disciple of the Lord, who also had leaned upon His breast, did himself publish a Gospel during his residence at Ephesus in Asia” (*Against Heresies*, iii, i, 1).

Papias, of whose writings only fragments have survived, was a friend of Polycarp, who had been taught by the Apostle John, as had evidently Papias himself. And Papias also knew a number of people who had been acquainted with other of the apostles. Papias, it’s believed about 125 A.D., wrote the following about the gospel of Mark. “Mark having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately whatsoever he remembered. It was not, however, in exact order that he related the sayings or deeds of Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor accompanied Him. But afterwards, as I said, he accompanied Peter, who accommodated his instructions to the necessities [of his hearers], but with no intention of giving a regular narrative of the Lord’s sayings. Wherefore Mark made no mistake in thus writing some things as he remembered them. For of one thing he took especial care, not to omit anything he had heard, and not to put anything fictitious into the statements” (*Early Church Fathers*, I, Papias, Fragments of Papias, VI).

The other books of the New Testament were written by Luke, Paul, John, Peter, James and Jude, the latter two half-brothers of Jesus.

The accounts in the New Testament reflect the activities and teachings of Jesus Christ during his ministry and teachings and events affecting the Church in the decades between Jesus’ death and the death of the last of the apostles to die, John, in the late 90’s A.D. The testimony of these authors is consistent throughout the New Testament.

Some have claimed that the gospel accounts and other books were not written until several decades after Jesus died, and the accounts of his life had taken on mythical accretions. For example, former nun Karen Armstrong wrote in her book *A History of God*, the following:

“We know very little about Jesus. The first full-length of his life was St. Mark’s gospel, which was not written until about the year 70, some forty years after his death. By that time historical facts had been overlaid with mythical elements which expressed the meaning Jesus had acquired for his followers. It is this meaning that St. Mark primarily conveys, rather than a reliable straightforward portrayal” (Cited in *The Case For Christ*, Lee Strobel, Zondervan, 1998, p. 32).

The myth is what Karen Armstrong herself conjured up out of her imagination with no evidence. What she wrote in the statement quoted is pure speculation. The fact is some scholars suggest that Mark was written as early as sometime in the 50s A.D. (cf. *The Case For Christ*, p. 34). And we’ve already seen Papias’ testimony regarding Mark’s gospel account: “For of one thing he took especial care, not to omit anything he had heard, and not to put anything fictitious into the statements.”

The narratives of the New Testament were written much closer to the events they describe than the records of some other famous historical persons, such as Alexander the Great, whose earliest extant biographies were written by Plutarch and Arrian more than four hundred years after his death. Yet those biographies are considered generally reliable by historians.

And even if Mark's gospel had been written sometime between 60 A.D. and 70 A.D. as some conservative scholars believe probable (cf. *NKJV Study Bible*, second edition, Thomas Nelson; *Unger's Bible Handbook*, *Halley's Bible Handbook*), there were still plenty of people around who could have disputed his work if it had been full of errors. Conservative scholarship places the writing of Matthew's gospel around 50 A.D., and Luke's late fifties to early or mid-sixties. Moreover, there is a consistency in the overall teachings of the New Testament, including the gospels and the other books of the New Testament, as mentioned earlier.

Bible critics have a long history of creating myths of their own out of thin air based on little or nothing but fanciful conjecture. One of the myths is that Mark wrote his gospel account first, and Matthew and Luke copied most of what they wrote from Mark's account.

It seems likely that in the very early years of the Church some doctrines were passed on primarily by means of oral teachings from the apostles, who made use of existing Scriptures to validate their teachings (cf. Acts 8:35; 17:11-12; Ephesians 2:20; II Timothy 3:16, etc.). Papias wrote, "If, then, any one who had attended on the elders came, I asked minutely after their sayings—what Andrew or Peter said, or what was said by Philip, or by Thomas, or by James, or by John, or by Matthew, or by any other of the Lord's disciples" (*Anti-Nicene Fathers*, vol. I, Fragments of Papias, I).

We've already seen that very early testimony from Papias was that Mark wrote down the information that he had received from Peter. So it was from eyewitness testimony that he used to compile his account of the life and teachings of Jesus. Whether Mark's account was written in the fifties or sixties A.D. or before, there's no real proof, nor even likelihood, that Matthew and Luke copied their accounts of Jesus' life and teachings from Mark's account.

We've already seen that Matthew first wrote his account in the Hebrew or Aramaic language specifically for the Jews (see above and *Anti-Nicene Fathers*, vol. I, Irenaeus, Fragments from the Lost Writings of Irenaeus, XXIX), and later he translated it into Greek, and possibly added some additional information in the Greek version. Henry Halley sums up the case against Matthew copying from Mark as follows: "The widely-held, but unsubstantiated present-day hypothesis that Matthew copied from Mark's Gospel is, on the face of it, absurd. It is not at all certain that Mark even knew Jesus. Why would Matthew have to copy from one who had Not been an Eye-witness of things that he himself had seen with his own eyes and heard with his own ears over and over and over?" (*Halley's Bible Handbook*, Zondervan, twenty-third edition, 1962, p. 378).

As far as Luke is concerned, he tells us specifically what constituted the sources for his gospel account: "Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, **just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us**, it seemed good to me also, **having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first**, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed" (Luke 1:1-4). He received his information directly from those who were eyewitnesses, not from Mark.

Luke is widely regarded as an impeccable historian in what he wrote in his gospel account and the book of Acts, despite persistent attacks by ignorant and biased critics. Time and again, his testimony has proved accurate, and his critics discredited, as archaeological discoveries have come to light. A good summary of such instances is given in Josh McDowell's *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, pp. 72-75.

Sir William Ramsay, an imminent archaeologist, who began his career as a skeptic, eventually through his discoveries came to the conclusion that the author of the book of Acts, Luke, should be regarded "as a trustworthy historical authority" (*The Bearing of Recent Discovery On the Trustworthiness of the New Testament*, fourth edition, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1920, p. 222). In regard to the gospel account by Luke he concluded that "Luke is a historian of the first rank" (*ibid.*). With regard to Luke's statements regarding the census in Luke chapter two, he points out that, "Certainly he flatly contradicts the assertions of the modern critics; but... he is right and they are wrong" (*ibid.*, p. 225). And he goes on to explain in detail how they are wrong.

In commenting on the critics' motives, Ramsay states: "Their hostility to Luke arose out of their refusal to admit the superhuman element in the government of the world" (*ibid.*, p. 225). As Ramsay points out, proving that Luke was right about the circumstances of the census mentioned in Luke 2, does not of itself prove that Jesus was the Messiah. However, he goes on to comment, "... it is not without its value to have the truth of the concomitant circumstances demonstrated. One must remember that Christianity did not originate in a lie, and that we can and ought to demonstrate this as well as to believe it. The account which it gives of its own origin is susceptible of being tested on the principles of historical study, and through the progress of discovery the truth of that account can be and has been in great part proved. There is, however, more to do. The evidence is there, if we look for it" (*ibid.*, p. 237). Faith is necessary, but it should be a faith informed by truth.

"An important consideration concerning the Gospel accounts is the time they were written. Due to the early dating of the Gospel writings, no adequate time was left for the growth of a myth surrounding the birth of Christ [nor other remarkable aspects of his life and manner of death]" (*Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, Josh McDowell, 1972, Campus Crusade for Christ, p. 119). One unprepared to accept the accounts of supernatural events associated with Jesus Christ may reject the historical record as myth, as many have. But, if Jesus Christ was who he said he was, God in the flesh, why would we not expect extraordinary claims and displays of supernatural power to back them up to be part of the record?

Paul's conversion from a persecutor of Christians to a disciple of Christ and eventually becoming a leading apostle occurred not long after the Christ's crucifixion and the establishment of the Church (possibly within four or five years). There's no indication that he was converted as a result of myth making on the part of the disciples of Jesus who preceded him in the faith.

Paul wrote some of the earliest books of the New Testament, and his writing reflects teachings and controversies taking place at the times the books were written. The first epistle to the Corinthians was written perhaps around 56 A.D. To the Corinthians Paul wrote a

summary of major doctrines concerning Jesus' divinity, and his death and resurrection, that had been taught and believed among the faithful from the beginning of the Church's existence:

"Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that **Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures**, and that He was buried, and that **He rose again the third day** according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that **He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present**, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore, whether it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed" (I Corinthians 15:1-11).

So Paul confirms that he was teaching the same doctrines regarding Jesus, his death and resurrection, that the other apostles taught, and which were commonly believed in the Church from its inception. Moreover, there were more than five hundred first hand witnesses to the truth of what they taught about Jesus' resurrection. The letter addresses a heretical teaching denying the future resurrection of the faithful.

That the resurrection of Jesus occurred is a key to the development of the Church in the first place. Had Jesus not been resurrected it's likely the men who had followed him would have simply returned to their former occupations. But having been resurrected, he bolstered their faith and gave them instructions to preach the gospel to the world. "And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' Amen" (Matthew 28:18-20).

At first, the men Jesus had trained to become apostles did not believe reports that he had been resurrected. "And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, **they did not believe**. After that, He appeared in another form to two of them as they walked and went into the country. And they went and told it to the rest, but **they did not believe them either**. Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He **rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart**, because **they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen**. And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned'" (Mark 16:11-16).

From the beginning of their mission after Jesus' ascension the apostles understood that a key part of their message was to be the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In proposing a replacement among the twelve for Judas Iscariot, Peter said, "Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from

the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these **must become a witness with us of His resurrection.** “ (Acts 1:21-22).

On the day of Pentecost following, when the ministry of the New Testament Church began, the apostles preached the resurrection. **“This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses”** (Acts 2:32).

The conviction that Jesus was who he said he was, and whom they believed him to be, the Messiah, the Son of God, resurrected and glorified, and their savior who has the power to grant eternal life to the faithful, motivated the apostles to give their lives, suffering persecution, privation and martyrdom, to proclaim the message of the gospel.

Historical sources outside of the Bible, including the Jewish historian Josephus, and the Roman historian Tacitus, attest to the rapid spread of Christianity in the first century.

There are many prophecies of the Old Testament fulfilled in the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. No other person is a credible candidate for having fulfilled these prophecies. “Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, ‘Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.’ This is desert. So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship, was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet. Then the Spirit said to Philip, ‘Go near and overtake this chariot.’ So Philip ran to him, and heard him **reading the prophet Isaiah**, and said, ‘Do you understand what you are reading?’ And he said, ‘How can I, unless someone guides me?’ And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him. The place in the Scripture which he read was this: **‘He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; And as a lamb before its shearer is silent, So He opened not His mouth. In His humiliation His justice was taken away, And who will declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth.’** So the eunuch answered Philip and said, ‘I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?’ Then Philip opened his mouth, and **beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him”** (Acts 8:26-35).

Genuine Christian faith is not a “blind” faith, but must be based on a solid foundation of evidence that can be weighed and judged worthy of belief. Jesus said, “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and **truth**” (John 4:24).

Many attacks have been made on the integrity of the New Testament, as well as the rest of Scripture. Most if not all of the attacks, however, involve unfounded assumptions, and many have been proven false. The evidence examined in this article supporting the integrity of Scripture has just begun to scratch the surface. Studying the evidence in favor of the testimony of Scripture has strengthened the faith of many in the trustworthiness of its message. It can do the same for you.

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