

# Apologetics II

## 1. Evidence for Christianity

Key Question: Did Jesus rise from the dead?

a. Historical Argument – for the Resurrection of Jesus (a matter of history)

1) Jesus lived

- Josephus, Tacitus, Jewish Talmud, Pliny the Younger, Lucian.
- Biblical documents are historical documents – eye witness accounts

2) Jesus died by crucifixion

- The Romans knew how to kill you
- Multiple ancient accounts
- *Pericardial effusion* – fluid around the heart and lungs

3) Jesus was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea

- Mentioned in all 4 Gospels.
- Some crucifixion victims were buried
- Wouldn't have invented it being a member of the Sanhedrin
- No other burial stories are presented

4) The Tomb was found empty by women

- Women discovered the empty tomb – the least likely witnesses to invent (people don't intentionally embarrass themselves or their argument).  
Adjusted by the early Christian account.

a. NOTE: embarrassing stories of the disciples too.

- Jesus was buried in Jerusalem, in a known tomb, owned by a known man.
- The religious leaders said the body was stolen (It had to be empty)
- Show the body and it all falls apart

5) The disciples had experiences which they believed were appearances of the risen Jesus – even to the point that they were willing to die.

- Without this belief, the Christian movement would not have started.
- What did the NT writers have to gain by making it up?
- What could have influenced this belief?

a. Not pagan influences or Jewish influences. (Jewish concept was only about end times resurrection of all people)

- People don't die for a known lie.
- They were eye witnesses.

6) The resurrection was proclaimed very early

- Immediately after the cross – the Creeds were in existence before Paul
- Creed of the early Christians – 1 Corinthians 15:3-7 (written between 55-57 AD. Paul was in Corinth around 51. Maybe when Paul visited Jerusalem after his conversion)
- The 500 – “go and ask them”
- Mark's source is very early! (Gospel written 50s AD?)

7) Because of this belief, the world was turned upside down religiously

- Radical changes to Judaism: Worship on Sunday, no sacrifice, not bound to law of Moses, trinity, sacrificial messiah, Baptism and Communion.
- “Impact event” is something that we remember and changes us dramatically.

< What is the best explanation of these facts? >

b. The case of Paul and James

- 1) They each believed they had encounters with the risen Jesus
- 2) Paul's life, belief, and message radically changes – Why was Paul so convinced?
- 3) James, the brother of Jesus becomes the primary leader of the Jerusalem church.

c. Fulfilled Prophecy

- 1) 300+ (Isaiah 53, Psalm 22)
- 2) The Dead Sea Scrolls (1946)

d. Liar, Lunatic, Legend, Lord.

- 1) Can't maintain that Jesus was just a “good teacher.”

#### e. Reliability of the Bible

##### 1. How early are our texts? (antiquity)

- 1) 1,200 year gap for Plato, 1,000 years for Gallic Wars, 733 for Tacitus
- 2) 40-50 years for first NT manuscript. Complete manuscripts by 250 years.
- 3) Single manuscripts were often used for 250 years.

##### 2. How many copies? (multiplicity)

- 1) 7 Copies of Plato, 10 copies of the Gallic Wars, 2 copies of Tacitus.
- 2) 5,700+ of the New Testament

##### 3. Are there major differences between copies? (variants)

- 1) 99.9% accuracy of the original
- 2) The vast majority of variants are irrelevant

##### 4. Why these books?

- 1) Who wrote it? Is it historically accurate? Does it align with traditional doctrine? Is it useful and transformative?
- 2) Apocrypha
- 3) "Lost books of the Bible"

##### 5. Is the Bible True?

###### 1) Archeology and the Bible

- a. The House of David (1993)
- b. The Moabite Stone (1868) – Mesha, king of Moab from 2 Kings 3
- c. The pool of Bethesda
- d. Pilate (1961)
- e. Sodom and Gomorrah

###### 2) Scientific content

- a. Circumcision – 8<sup>th</sup> day spike of vitamin K
- b. Isaiah 40:22 – round earth. Job 26:7 – Suspended over nothing.
- c. Laws of hygiene and quarantine

###### 3) Universal nature of the Bible

- a. Brings transformation and life to every culture, in all ages.

###### 4) Witness of the Holy Spirit