

Forensic Faith | Part 6
August 25, 2019

- I. Brand new series ..."Forensic Faith"...
 - A. CSI: Crime Scene Investigation
 1. To draw a conclusion...that they feel is true..!
 - a) That they 'believe' this is how this went down
 - b) They have "FAITH"...they are right!
 - c) associated with HOPE
 - d) Instead of reason...rationale
 - B. Deciding whether or not Christ was real...died...resurrected...
 1. 4 Reasons
 1. It can't be true (intellectual hang-up)
 2. I don't want it to be true (mess my lifestyle)
 3. I'm not sure what is true (out of context)
 4. I believe it's true...now what? (believe/receive/live/share)
- II. Textual Criticism: (biblical criticism) the process of attempting to ascertain the original wording of a text.
 - A. There are 1,565 copies dated on or around 3rd century
 - B. That's 1100 years from its inception...!
 - C. 5,843 copies...of the Greek New Testament...!!!
 - D. 2nd century AD...
 1. Less than 30 years from the 'original' to the copy..!
 2. Iliad: 1100 years...1565 copies
 3. NT: less than 30 years...5,483 copies...!!
 - a) Death on the cross!
 - b) Breathing slows: respiratory acidosis
 4. Carbon dioxide in the blood is dissolved into carbonic acid...
 - a) Causing the acidity of the blood to increase
 5. Leads to irregular heartbeat
 - a) Dies of cardiac arrest...
 6. Another cause adding to cardiac arrest...would be the hypovolemic shock He encountered during the flogging...
 - a) respiratory acidosis
 - b) That shock causes the heart to beat rapidly...!
 - (1) Which would lead to heart failure
 - (2) Results in a collection of fluid in the membrane of the heart
 - (a) Pericardial Effusion
 - (3) Fluid around lungs: Pleural Effusion
 - E. Why do some people choose not to believe that Jesus was actually killed?
 1. Because they can't explain the resurrection & if you can explain away the death...

2. you don't have to deal with the resurrection?

"Clearly, the weight of the historical and medical evidence indicates that Jesus was dead before the wound to his side was inflicted...Accordingly, interpretations based on the assumption that Jesus did not die on the cross appear to be at odds with modern medical knowledge."

-Dr. William D. Edwards (Journal of the American Medical Association)

- I. From a medical standpoint
 - A. FACT: Jesus did die 'completely' on the cross...not much of an argument!
 1. Why do people choose to believe that He didn't...
 - a) Hard for them to believe that someone LOVES them that
- II. Christianity:
 - A. Based on OBJECTIVE..HISTORICAL...FACT
 1. The resurrection of Jesus
 2. It can't be 'true for you...but not for me'
 - a) Tomb was either EMPTY or OCCUPIED
 - B. it's not a personal preference...it's is FACT..!
 1. The tomb was empty that 1st Easter morning...
 2. Quite simply: all the authorities had to do was produce a body..!
- III. Think about this:
 - A. thousands of early converts to Christianity—made so through the preaching of the resurrection—were all Jewish, either who lived in Jerusalem or
 1. visited there.
 2. In becoming a follower of Christ,
 - a) they were accepting a revolutionary teaching that could have been easily disproved by a simple five-minute walk to a garden just beyond the city walls.
 - b) Rather than disbelieving the resurrection, they eagerly spread the message far and wide.
 - c) Each convert was a proof of the empty tomb,
 - (1) as opponents could have stopped Christianity dead in its tracks by simply displaying the body of Jesus.
 - B. INSTEAD: they started talking about and telling everyone what they had been witness to...!
- IV. how did the Resurrection story last this long and how did it end up here in our community ...our church...
 - A. HOW did something that started in 1st century make it to 2018...?
 1. All the way from Jerusalem...
 2. 2,000 years ago and 6,242 miles away...
 3. After the Resurrection...! Jesus is meeting with some of the apostles...
 - a) and they begin to ask questions...!
 - B. Slide:

Acts 1:6-8

6 So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, “Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?”

7 He replied, “The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. (small group of people at this time...POWER: means something) And you will be my witnesses, (Greek word for ‘testimony’) telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, (where they were at this moment) throughout Judea, (extending the territory a little) in Samaria, (a place they didn’t want to go) and to the ends of the earth.”

1. It’s like saying...tell this story here in Lake Wylie...then to York county
 - a) Charlotte...i’m afraid of the big city...
 - b) N.C...S.C...southeast...United States..
 - c) North America...rest of the world...!!!
- C. Don’t know what they were thinking at this moment...but let’s imagine...!
 - (1) 100-120 FOLKS...Listening to a man
 - (2) ROME CRUCIFIED
 - (a) Religious leaders HATED...
 2. Jesus states:
 - (1) message of me, my teachings, eyewitnesses to my resurrection...take this to all of Jerusalem...
 - (a) WE CAN DO JERUSALEM
 - (b) ...Judea....sure alright...
 - (c) SAMARIA...we don’t even like to go there
 - (d) AND THE REST OF THE WORLD...
 - (e) Do you know how big that is Jesus?...
 - (i) TAKE THIS MESSAGE, MOVEMENT, MOMENTUM...
 - (a) Do you really think it’s gonna touch every part of the world...
 - b) This is so SIGNIFICANT...
 - (1) Jesus departed...this group went back to Jerusalem...
 - (a) Met together & prayed together...for 2 weeks...!!!
 - c) Then...it happened...
 - D. The Celebration of Pentecost...(Jewish Celebration)
 - (a) Jewish people from all over the world
 - (b) Luke states that there were 14 different regions of the WORLD...gathered for this festival
 - b) Meanwhile...our group of 100-120 folks...Mary...Jesus’ family...Apostles ...and PRAYING...!!!
 - (1) On this same day of Pentecost...
 - (a) The Holy Spirit showed up just as Jesus predicted
 - (i) HS manifested itself in such a way that these followers of Jesus were suddenly able

to speak the language of all these people who had gathered in Jerusalem...on that day for that particular festival...!!!

(ii) They went out into the city...teaching in everyone's language

(iii) Soon...all THESE PEOPLE FROM ACROSS THE WORLD...looked at these Galileans and asked...

(a) HOW IS IT YOU CAN SPEAK MY LANGUAGE...YOU'RE A GALILEAN...(from Galilee)

(b) Jerusalem is all a BUZZ...!!

(2) The SIGNIFICANCE WAS

2. that it wasn't a language or a message for just ONE group of people...it was

3. MULTI-NATIONAL...ETHNIC...

(a) CULTURAL...

(b) JUST AS JESUS PREDICTED...

(2) Then...as people begin to gather...some asked if these Galileans were drunk...and the response was...THEY AREN'T DRUNK...that's my language

(3) BABBLING...they aren't babbling...that's my language...

4. Peter was next up...1st sermon in the Church...!!

(1) This first church...first gathering...first congregation...first ECCLESIA...

(a) He began with some OT text that the locals would understand...

(i) This "MOMENT" was predicted in the OT...

b) Acts 2:14-17

(1) 14 Then Peter stepped forward with the eleven other apostles and shouted to the crowd, "Listen carefully, all of you, fellow Jews and residents of Jerusalem! Make no mistake about this. 15 These people are not drunk, as some of you are assuming. Nine o'clock in the morning is much too early for that. (they've not had mimosas and bloody mary's) 16 No, what you see was predicted long ago by the prophet Joel: 17 'In the last days,' God says, 'I will pour out my Spirit upon all people.

(2) Peter basically saying:

(a) Don't be surprised...God predicted that one day the message that had been given to the Jews...would be expanded and be a message for the entire world...!!!!

c) Then Peter went on to say:

(1) Acts 2:22-24

(2) 22 “People of Israel, listen! God publicly endorsed Jesus the Nazarene by doing powerful miracles, wonders, and signs through him, as you well know. 23 But God knew what would happen, and his prearranged plan was carried out when Jesus was betrayed. With the help of lawless Gentiles, you nailed him to a cross and killed him. This was VERY RECENT HISTORY...

(a) 2 Months since the crucifixion...!!!

(i) So when Peter says...Jesus of Nazareth...they knew exactly who he was referring...

(a) Heard a teaching...saw Jesus drag a cross

(b) Met a disciple...healings...THEY KNEW ...!!!

(3) 24 But God released him from the horrors of death and raised him back to life, for death could not keep him in its grip.

(4) Peter is keeping it so simple...teaching the Gospel of Jesus’ death and resurrection...!!!

(5) GOSPEL: Good News!...He is alive

(a) Verse 32...

(6) 32 “God raised Jesus from the dead, and we are all witnesses of this.

(a) God raised Jesus back to life and we’re witnesses...!!!

(b) This isn’t a testimony of what Jesus taught...!!

(i) If you aren’t a Christian or real new...this is HUGE to understanding Christianity...

(a) 1st century believers weren’t just teaching what Jesus taught...

(i) Christianity wasn’t about embracing a teaching...

(ii) From the beginning...it was about embracing an EVENT IN HISTORY...!

(c) We are witnesses that Jesus was crucified...

(i) a lot of people saw it...

(d) We are witnesses that He came back to life...not years ago...about 2 months ago...!!!!

(e) We are WITNESSES...!!!!

- V. From Jesus...to the apostle...a few friends and family
 - A. 120 folks...obedient
 - 1. Shared the truth of the EVENT...witnessed
 - 2. 3000 joined immediately..b/c some had seen themselves...
 - a) some had heard and believed...like you and me!!!
 - B. That's how this EVENT in history lasted 2000 years...
 - 1. Also it was recorded in manuscripts and ultimately put into what we know as the Bible
 - C. Also known as the 'Biblical Canon'
 - 1. Slide:
 - canon: the books that are divinely inspired and therefore belong in the Bible
 - 2. Word 'canon' comes from root word: REED (english word cane)
 - a) REED was used as a measuring rod
 - b) Came known to mean "STANDARD"
 - D. Honestly...the Bible does not give us a list of the books that it should contain
 - 1. Thus, 'canon'...
 - a) Process conducted first by the Jewish rabbis/scholars
 - (1) Later by early Christians...
 - b) A book of Scripture belonged in the Bible the moment God inspired its writing
 - (1) Written by man, God-inspired
 - E. As it relates to the Old Testament
 - 1. Very little debate/controversy over what books should be included
 - a) Hebrew believers recognized God's messengers and accepted their writings as inspired by God
 - 2. By 250 AD...universal agreement on the canon of the Hebrew Scripture/OT
 - a) There is the 'Apocrypha'..
 - (1) Most Hebrew scholars considered the Apocrypha to be good historical and religious documents
 - (a) Not on the same level as the OT
 - (i) Still used by Catholic Church
 - F. For the New Testament
 - 1. The process of recognizing and putting the collection of books together began early in the first century of the Christian church
 - a) NT books were being recognized early
 - b) Paul considered Luke (Physician) as authoritative as the OT...
 - (1) Luke would quote OT in his writings at times
 - c) Peter recognized Paul's writings as Scripture
 - 2. Even some books of the NT were being circulated amongst the early churches...
 - 3. Slide:

Colossians 4:16

16 After you have read this letter, pass it on to the church at Laodicea so they can read it, too. And you should read the letter I wrote to them.

4. Slide:
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:27
 - 27 I command you in the name of the Lord to read this letter to all the brothers and sisters.
 5. We know there are 27 books in NT
 6. Went like this:
 7. Jesus Christ is the Beginning of the NT
 - a) The disciples and early Christians recorded what occurred
 - (1) Wrote God inspired books
 8. From as early as 95 AD
 - a) Church leaders/teachers/scholars have been writing about what would become the NT
 9. Clement of Rome 95 AD: 8 books
 10. Ignatius of Antioch 115 AD: 7 books
 11. Polycarp (disciple of John's) 108 AD: 15 books
 12. Irenaeus 185 AD: 21 books
 13. Hippolytus 200 AD: 22 books
 - a) Slide:
 - Muratorian Canon-170 AD
 - b) The first "canon" was the Muratorian Canon,
 - c) which was compiled in AD 170.
 - d) The Muratorian Canon included all of the New Testament books
 - (1) except Hebrews, James, and 3 John.
 14. In AD 363, the Council of Laodicea stated that only the
 15. Old Testament (along with one book of the Apocrypha)
 - a) and 26 books of the New Testament (everything but Revelation) were canonical and to be read in the churches.
 - b) The Council of Hippo (AD 393) and
 - c) the Council of Carthage (AD 397)
 - (1) also affirmed the same 27 books as authoritative.
 16. 2 Timothy 3:16
 - a) 16 All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.
- G. All of the books of the Bible are inspired by God...!
1. Process called "inspiration": God breathed it...humans recorded it
 2. Dissemination: the Word of God is delivered to its audience through preaching/teaching or other means

3. Recognition: God's people distinguished Holy Scripture from other religious writings
 4. Preservation: God's Word survived to the present day...despite many attempts to destroy it
 5. Illumination: Holy Spirit open the believer's understanding to receive the Word of God
- H. That is the process...God is involved in every step of the process
1. This process is called 'canonization'
 - a) God determined it...the church discovered it
 - b) Not created by the church...church simply recognizes it
 2. God's Word is inspired and authoritative!
 - a) The church recognizes that fact and accepts it!
- VI. Slide:
- VII. Canonical Standards
- VIII. 1) Was the book written by a prophet of God?
- A. If written by a spokesmen of God...considered the Word of God
 - B. Such as an apostle
 1. They were gifted by God to be founds/leaders of the church
 2. Reasonable to accept them
- IX. 2) Was the writer authenticated by miracles to confirm his message?
- A. Miracles separated true prophets from the false ones
 - B. Moses was given miraculous powers
 - C. Elijah as well in the OT
 1. Jesus is mentioned all throughout the NT
 - a) Attested to by God with wonders and signs which God performed through Him
- X. 3) Does the book tell the truth about God, with no falsehood or contradiction?
- A. God cannot contradict Himself nor can He utter anything FALSE
 1. No book with false claims can be the Word of God
 - B. For this such reason...early church fathers maintained a very strict policy in putting the Bible together...
 1. When in doubt...throw it out!
 2. Enhanced the validity of their discernment...OBJECTIVE
- XI. 4) Does the book evince a divine capacity to transform lives?
- A. meaning..."Does the book come with the power of God?
 1. The book should have 'transforming power'
 2. If the book did not live up to its stated goal...
 - a) If it did not have the power to change a life
 - b) Then God was apparently not behind it
 3. The presence of God's TRANSFORMING POWER
 - a) Was a strong indication that a given book had his stamp of approval
- XII. 5) Was the book accepted as God's Word by the people to whom it was first delivered?

- A. 1 Thessalonians 2:13
 - 1. 13Therefore, we never stop thanking God that when you received his message from us, you didn't think of our words as mere human ideas. You accepted what we said as the very word of God—which, of course, it is. And this word continues to work in you who believe.
- B. The people in the best position to know if a book's prophetic credentials were those who knew the prophet who wrote it
 - 1. When a book is received, collected, read and used by the people of God as the Word of God
 - a) It was considered canonical!
- C. Early church leaders and councils met to determine which books to include...
 - 1. By AD 303...the list was settled
- D. God has used His Word to communicate to us for thousands of years
 - 1. Primary purpose: to reveal Himself and communicate to us
 - 2. Church councils did not decide if a book was Scripture
 - a) That was decided when a human author was chosen by God to write
 - 3. In order for the councils to come to a universal understanding...
 - a) God guided them in their recognition of the canon
 - (1) Including the preservation!!!
 - 4. God knew what was on the horizon once the early church became established...
 - a) So it is good that He intervened and guided and kept corruption out of the text...
 - (1) b/c corruption was headed for the church
- E. When the church was first formed...
 - 1. It was centered around one idea...
 - 2. simple mission...
 - 3. It was to be a 'gathering'
 - 4. Slide:
Ecclesia: (Greek) assembly or gathering
 - 5. By early AD 300's...
 - a) Church translated poorly into GERMAN
 - b) Slide:
Kirche: lord's house
(Keer-ya)
300AD
 - c) Definition: German term for any gathering, holy or ritual place...
 - (1) not necessarily Christian...just a gathering for folks of any religion
 - d) Greek word: ecclesia...which means gathering, movement, congregation is translated church
 - (a) It actually was a throwback to OT temples

- (i) Meaning...in Israel there was a temple
 - (a) People of God gathered in the temple b/c God lived there
 - (b) POOR TRANSLATION: resulted in bad theology...
 - (i) The church was now simply located in a building...
- F. Whoever controlled the building...controlled the Scriptures...whoever controlled Scriptures...controlled the people
- G. In some parts of Europe...whoever controlled the building and the Scriptures...controlled the people...who ultimately controlled the gov't...
 - a) So this 'new' translation of church evolved for 100's of years
 - (1) Remember:
 - (2) The Bible was not on your phone...or in your house...
 - (3) Had to go to church to hear it read from the church leader...pope/pastor/teacher
 - (a) Read what they wanted to read
 - (b) Read it however they wanted to...
 - (c) no one in the congregation had a Bible
 - (d) nor any type of seminary training
 - b) Church became very insider FOCUSED:
 - c) hierarchical, ritualistic,
 - d) pagan, immoral,
 - e) destructive...unethical
- H. Then in 16th century...
 - 1. A chap showed up in England in the early 1500's...named William Tyndale...
 - a) SLIDE: smile Willie T...
 - b) English author & scholar...specifically Linguistics...
 - (1) Father of the English Bible
 - (2) He wanted the average person to have access to the Bible
 - c) In 16th century...this is how it went
 - (1) Go to church...
 - (2) listen to the priest who read from a translation of the Scripture that avg. person couldn't understand...NO ONE HAD ACCESS...
 - (a) If you CONTROLLED the Bible...you controlled the TRUTH...controlled church...controlled people...
 - (b) He wanted his countrymen to have access to God's Word...the TRUTH...
 - (c) Began translated it..hebrew OT...greek..NT into english
 - (d) 1st man to do this...
 - (e) Church leaders were furious...

- I. in 1524 fled from England to Germany
 - J. Thanks to Johannes Gutenberg 100 years prior :
 - K. print copies
 - 1. Mostly NT SMUGGLED into England
 - 2. Suddenly AVERAGE person had a copy in a language they could understand
 - 3. During Tyndale's trial...
 - 4. he made a famous statement
 - a) SLIDE: "If God spares my life, ere many years, I will cause a boy that driveth a plow to know more Scriptures than thou dost"
 - b) He accused the religious leaders:
 - (1) Manipulating the Scriptures
 - (2) Manipulating the people
 - (3) Manipulating the church in order to CONTROL THE POLITICAL POLICIES...
 - L. One of the main things that drove the religious leaders crazy...
 - 1. Was this little GREEK word that Tyndale translated...
 - a) Ecclesia...he didn't translate it CHURCH
 - (1) Church-German for 'lord's house'
 - (2) Translated it "CONGREGATION"...b/c that what the word meant in GREEK...
 - (3) That's what Tyndale wanted...
 - (4) To return the 'GATHERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE' back to what it was meant to be...and started as in 1st century...
 - (5) A growing...multicultural
 - (a) Multiethnic...mission centered MOVEMENT of people with a simple message...for the world...around 1 single event
 - 2. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ
- M. We've looked at all kinds of evidence...
 - 1. Studied the accuracy...the historicity...manuscripts
 - a) OT scrolls...NT documents
 - (1) Medical evidence of Christ's death
 - (2) Conspiracy theories surrounding the disciples
 - (a) The accuracy of the Gospels...
 - (i) Matthew, Mark, Luke & John
 - 2. Always come back to ONE EVENT...one truth...
 - a) Jesus is ALIVE!...
- N. Gamaliel was spot on...
 - 1. Slide:
 - 2. Acts 5:33-40
 - 3. 33 When they heard this, the high council was furious and decided to kill them. 34 But one member, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, who was an

expert in religious law and respected by all the people, stood up and ordered that the men be sent outside the council chamber for a while. 35 Then he said to his colleagues, "Men of Israel, take care what you are planning to do to these men! 36 Some time ago there was that fellow Theudas, who pretended to be someone great. About 400 others joined him, but he was killed, and all his followers went their various ways. The whole movement came to nothing. 37 After him, at the time of the census, there was Judas of Galilee. He got people to follow him, but he was killed, too, and all his followers were scattered.

38 "So my advice is, leave these men alone. Let them go. If they are planning and doing these things merely on their own, it will soon be overthrown. 39 But if it is from God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You may even find yourselves fighting against God!"

40 The others accepted his advice. They called in the apostles and had them flogged. Then they ordered them never again to speak in the name of Jesus, and they let them go.

4. 39 But if it is from God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You may even find yourselves fighting against God!"
5. I don't want to fight against God...
6. i know you don't either...!
 - a) Let's keep up the movement...let's keep up the fight...
 - (1) To CREATE FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST...
 - (2) as we grow in our relationship with Jesus!!!

O. No matter how much we research or study...we always come back to the same EVENT...Jesus is Alive..!

- (1) Let's not get caught up in the small UNEXPLAINABLE nuances ...when in our presence and at our fingertips we have mountains of evidence and data of a Savior named Jesus that can't be DENIED!...