

7 Strands of Evidence Supporting the Historical Reliability of the New Testament Gospels . . .

1. The Gospels claim to be EYEWITNESS TESTIMONY.

- Matthew: written by Matthew, one of the twelve apostles. (AD 80)
- Mark: written by John Mark, a companion of Peter & Paul. (AD 70)
- Luke: written by Doctor Luke, a companion of Paul. (AD 85)
- John: written by John, one of the twelve apostles. (AD 95)

2. EXTERNAL WITNESSES confirm NT historical accuracy.

- Josephus • Tacitus • Papias • Ireneaus

3. The presence of HOSTILE WITNESSES support NT historical accuracy.

- What explains success of Christianity immediately following Christ's death? How could the center of Christianity be Jerusalem, the very place of Christ's death?

4. The Apostles' LIVES and DEATHS confirm NT historical accuracy.

- 11/12 apostles died martyrs' deaths. Why would they die for a lie?

5. Jewish ORAL TRADITION supports NT historical accuracy.

- Jews were known for their ability to memorize large amounts of material and their respect for sacred tradition. The language of the NT makes it clear the Apostles saw themselves as the recipients and guardians of the truth about Jesus.

6. Jesus' DISTINCTIVE SAYINGS support NT historical accuracy.

- Form • Vocabulary • Threefold Sayings • Questions • Parables

7. The inclusion of IRRELEVANT material and the lack of RELEVANT material for the early church support NT historical accuracy.

- There's lots of Gospel material that has no relevance to the early church. There's lots of issues in the early church that aren't addressed in the Gospels.

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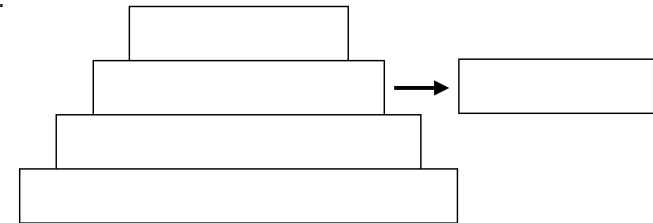
Is the Bible Historically Reliable?

Luke 1:1-4
January 21, 2018

Sola Scriptura is the conviction that only the Bible—because it is God's inspired, inerrant Word—is our SUFFICIENT and FINAL authority. But are we confident that the Bible is inspired by God and without error? Today we begin to examine the reliability of Scripture by asking the question, "Is the Bible historically reliable?"

Why is the historical reliability of the Bible of vital importance?

- Christianity is dependent on the DEITY of Jesus and His ability to forgive sins.
- The deity of Jesus is proved by the RESURRECTION of Jesus.
- The resurrection of Jesus is dependent on the HISTORICAL RELIABILITY of the New Testament Gospels.
- The historical reliability of the OLD TESTAMENT is validated by Jesus.



2 Arguments Against the Historical Reliability of the NT . . .

1. The New Testament is a LIE. The writers deliberately fabricated the stories about Jesus in an effort to deceive the public. There is no basis of truth in the writers' portrayal of Jesus, His identity and especially His supposed resurrection from the dead.
2. The New Testament is a MYTH/LEGEND. Over a long period of time the stories about Jesus became more and more exaggerated and outlandish to the point where people were eventually claiming that Jesus was God and rose from the dead.

Growth Groups are the glue that holds our church together. Growth Groups are groups of 6 - 12+ people that meet together during the week to process and apply the message, pray together, care for another, and live life together. If you are interested in joining a Growth Group, go to gracecentralcoast.org.

Living Life Together

Take time in this second week of Winter Growth Groups to connect with one another. This week, share one joy and one trial you're experiencing in life right now.

Digging Into God's Word & the Message Together

1. What is one thing you learned in this week's message? What is one way you were challenged by the message?

2. Read Luke 1:1-4, John 19:35, 2 Peter 1:16 and Acts 2:32. What do all these passages claim? According to 1 Corinthians 15:14-19, why is this vitally important for our faith?

3. Is the historical reliability of Bible something that you've struggled with or had to work through? Or perhaps you still have unanswered questions? Share!

4. Of the two arguments AGAINST the historical reliability of the New Testament, which one have you heard most often? Do you think this is a real issue keeping people from faith in Christ?

5. Which of the 7 strands of evidence FOR the historical reliability of New Testament is most "weighty" or valuable to you? Why?

6. Read 1 Peter 3:15 together. How ready and equipped are you to do this when it comes to issues surrounding the reliability of the Bible? How can you get equipped?

Praying Together

- Using 1 Peter 3:15 as a springboard, pray for a deepening of your commitment to Scripture and an equipping to be able to talk about Scripture.

- Pray that our young people at Grace will work through their own questions about the Bible and come to embrace it's authority.

- Share and pray for one another's needs and life challenges.