

## Lord, I Believe

John 11:27

### I. INTRODUCTION: I

1. Remember what Martha told Jesus when He raised her brother Lazarus?  
**Jn. 11:27:** *"Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."*
2. **2** Atheism is on the increase around the world and here in the U.S.
  - A. Pew Research Center the percentage of atheists is highest among younger people:
    - (1) 18-29 year old's: 40% (Steadily increasing! +3 % points 2007 to 2014)
    - (2) 30-49 year old's: 37%
    - (3) 50-64 year old's: 14%
    - (4) 65+ year old's: 9%
  - B. It is even worse in England where ~60% of teenagers profess atheism.
3. **\*\*** Why? There are many reasons why younger people are more likely to be atheists.
  - A. We live in an increasingly secularized society.
  - B. "God" has been pushed out of the public square (e.g., hyperventilation over "separation of church and state").
  - C. Decline in church attendance.
  - D. Educational system (naturalism/materialism/evolution; +peer pressure involved).
  - E. Natural rebellion/questioning of youth (I too rebelled when I was young.).
4. **\*\*** Even faithful Christians have their doubts from time-to-time.
  - A. I would be a liar to claim that I'm always on a "spiritual high" every day.
  - B. If we're honest, we all have doubts from time-to-time; or at a minimum our faith grows weak from time-to-time (at least to some degree).
  - C. **\*\*** Do you remember the father of the boy with the unclean spirit in Mark 9? **Mk. 9:22:** *"But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us."*
    - (1) Do you remember what Jesus said to the father? **Mk. 9:23:** *"Jesus said to him, 'If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.'"*
    - (2) The father gives a contradictory answer: **Mk. 9:24:** *"And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, 'Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.'"* (KJV)
5. Ever feel that way? You "believe," but the circumstances of life are buffeting you so hard you begin to wonder: "Do I really believe as I should?"
  - A. I think we've all "been there and done that."
  - B. I also think when most of us have such feelings we tend to beat up on ourselves.
  - C. When we have such feelings it is not the time to beat up on ourselves; it's time to remind ourselves of some important things.
6. **3** I remind myself of four important things when my faith wavers: **Lord, I believe because...**

## II. DISCUSSION:

### Lord, I believe because...

I. **4** God is Creator: **Gen. 1:1**: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

A. Only two possibilities: The Universe is either...

(1) Eternal: It has always been and will always be.

(2) Finite: It had a beginning and will have an end.

B. Secular/materialistic scientists believe the Universe is finite; it had a beginning (i.e., “Big Bang”).

(1) The “Big Bang” has problems, let’s concede the Universe is finite and had a beginning.

(2) There are many reasons to believe the Universe is finite: I’ll just mention what I believe are the most important and incontrovertible evidences.

C. **\*\*** Basic physics: An eternal Universe violates the two most basic laws of physics:

(1) First Law of Thermodynamics: Energy and matter (i.e., conservation of mass) can neither be created nor destroyed, only converted into other forms.

(a) This makes the idea the Universe created itself from nothing absurd; matter and energy doesn’t work like that; neither pop into existence by themselves.

(b) But atheists (and most people fall for their nonsense!) believe exactly that.

(i) For example, the late Stephen Hawking said, “Because there is a law such as gravity, the universe can and will create itself from nothing.”

(ii) Never a more ridiculous statement was ever made! Physical laws don’t create anything; they only describe reality!

(c) Such nonsensical thinking has led to many wild and crazy theories; all designed to leave God out of the picture (e.g., panspermia, multiverse).

(2) Second Law of Thermodynamics:

(a) This law is also called the *Principle of Entropy* and is universally accepted.

(b) Common sense: This law states that all matter is moving from a more organized and orderly state toward a state of less usable energy; a state of confusion, a state of increased randomness, chaos and disorder.

(i) All us older folks prove this law every day when we look in the mirror!

(ii) Clocks don’t run “up,” they run “down.”

(iii) Metal rusts, cars wear out, light bulbs go ‘poof,’ roofs develop leaks, etc.

(iv) If the Universe were eternal it would be a chaotic mess; not the orderly system of planets, moons, comets, solar systems, stars and galaxies we see.

D. **5** Law of Causality: Every effect has a cause (use computer as an example).

(1) Secular/materialistic/atheistic society would have us believe the Universe came into being without a cause (**singularity**; “Nothing is what rocks dream about.” Aristotle).

(2) In the secular, non-theistic view the vast material Universe is a grand **Effect** without a **Cause**. Nonsense! Who’s being unscientific?!

(a) The *Law of Causality* dates back as far as Aristotle and Plato (350-360 B.C.).

- (b) Students of logic know this law is the ultimate canon of all the sciences.
  - (i) Without the *Law of Causality*, proven by millennia of empirical data, all the sciences would at once crumble to dust.
  - (ii) Finding what causes things is what science is all about!
- (c) The Bible articulates the *Law of Causality* two millennia ago: “every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God.” (Heb. 3:4)
- (d) \*\* The Universe is the grand **Effect** and God is the grand **Cause**, for “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” (Gen. 1:1)
  - (i) Everyone knows a house cannot build itself.
  - (ii) However, atheists are left in a huge dilemma trying to explain how the inestimably complex and unimaginably vast Universe could have come into existence without a cause.
  - (iii) \*\* Robert Jastrow, founder and former director of the *Goddard Institute for Space Studies* at NASA wrote (an atheist, cvt):
 

“The Universe, and everything that has happened in it since the beginning of time, are a grand effect without a known cause. An effect without a known cause? That is not the world of science; it is a world of witchcraft, of wild events and the whims of demons, a medieval world that science has tried to banish. As scientists, what are we to make of this picture? I do not know.”
- (e) 6 Scientifically speaking, according to the well-accepted *Law of Causality*, there had to be a cause for the Universe.
- (f) The power that caused the Universe to come into existence had to exist before the Universe came into existence; thus, it was a power that:
  - (i) Exists *independent of time, space and matter*.
  - (ii) It is an *eternal power*.
- (g) This *eternal power* obviously possesses *intelligence* far exceeding that of men.
  - (i) Thus, whatever brought the Universe into existence must be in a different class, a different order of intelligence than the things it brought into existence.
  - (ii) It must be an *eternal power* that possesses the quality of *deity*.
  - (iii) \*\* The apostle Paul spoke of this in Romans 1:19-20, when he wrote: “...what may be known of God is manifest in them [i.e., to human beings, cvt], 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...”
  - (iv) In other words, by simply looking at the great **Effect**, the Universe, any logical and reasonable person should conclude a being exists that created that Universe and possesses the qualities of *eternal power* and *deity* (i.e., godhead, divinity, or divine nature).
  - (v) \*\* God requires no cause since He is a spiritual, not a material, being (John 4:24) who has always been and always will be—“Before the mountains were brought forth, Or ever You had formed the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.” (Psa. 90:2)

E. **7** Design demands a Designer: God is the Creator because design demands a designer.

(I) What do I mean by “design”?

(a) How are the following pairs of items similar and how are they dissimilar?



**11** fdbge aeooov vsyoe oedr rry sve.



**Every Good Boy Deserves Favor**

(b) All items on the left are *natural* and *random*; no evidence of *design*.

(i) The items on the right demonstrate *order* and *organization*; order and organization are evidence of *design*.

- (ii) Things that are designed are the product of *mind*, require *intelligence*; they don't just happen (e.g., Hoyle's 747, i.e., a tornado blowing through a junkyard cannot produce a 747-jet aircraft).
- (2) What do we see when we look at the Universe? Or, the Earth? Or, life on the Earth? We see design! We see design everywhere!
  - (a) Solar system (e.g., precision of Newtonian physics)
  - (b) Stars and galaxies (celestial navigation within 300 feet)
  - (c) Earth
    - (i) Water cycle
    - (ii) Weather
    - (iii) Plant & animal life
- (3) **\*\* Design demands a designer is also a biblical principle:**  
**Heb. 3:4:** *"For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God."*
- (4) This argument was famously advanced by William Paley (*Natural Theology, or Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity* 1802):
- (5) To be an atheist, you must look at:
  - (a) **\*\* The Universe and its amazing precision and believe it came into existence from nothing and all the multitude of stars and heavenly bodies exist in their magnificent precision because of nothing!**
  - (b) **\*\* The great forests and conclude all the amazingly complex plants and animals came into existence from the random collision of atoms.**
  - (c) **\*\* A newborn baby and conclude he/she came into existence from the random collision of atoms; they have no soul, no purpose.**
  - (d) An individual cell with all its intricate and amazing design (literal miniaturized factory! More later) came into existence as a grand cosmic accident.
- (6) Who can believe such things?! ***I don't have enough faith to be an atheist!***

**F. 12 Anthropic principle:** sometimes called the "Goldilocks Principle"

- (1) The Universe, incl. the Earth & solar system made just perfectly so life is possible.
- (2) I don't want to get too deep into this; but, for example, there are a whole host of physical parameters very finely tuned and if they were just a minutely amount different than they are the Universe and life could not exist.
- (3) **\*\* Parameters of physics:** (many more than this!)
  - (a) Protons are exactly 1,836 times larger than electrons. If that relationship was off only a minute amount in either direction matter could not exist.
  - (b) If the ratio of the strong nuclear force to the electromagnetic force was different by only 1 part in  $10^{16}$ , no stars could have been formed.
- (4) **\*\* Earth/Sun relationship:**
  - (a) The distance from the Earth to the Sun must be just right; a change of less than 2% either way would be catastrophic.

- (b) 2% closer and it would be so hot all the oceans would evaporate.
  - (c) 2% farther away it would be so cold the earth would turn into an ice ball.
  - (d) Gravity and temperature are critical to within a few percent for the Earth to have a life-sustaining atmosphere—retaining the right mix of gases necessary to life.
  - (e) The Earth must rotate at just the right speed: too slow and temperature differences between day and night would be too extreme, too fast and wind speeds would be disastrous.
  - (f) \*\* Earth has a strong magnetic field which acts as a gigantic “sunscreen” protecting us from dangerous radiation from the sun and cosmic radiation from outer space; without this protection our atmosphere would be blown away in a matter of days or weeks and all life would cease to exist.
  - (g) Astrophysicist Hugh Ross lists many such parameters that must be fine-tuned for life to be possible and makes a rough but conservative calculation that the chance of one such planet in the Universe to be about 1 in  $10^{30}$ .
  - (h) Such examples of fine-tuning could be multiplied many times; we will let these suffice for our purposes.
  - (i) \*\* Sir Fredrick Hoyle was one of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries greatest astronomers (professor at Cambridge; coined the term “Big Bang”); was an atheist, but he was so impressed by the “Goldilocks Principle” he said:  
 “A commonsense interpretation of the facts suggests that a superintellect has monkeyed with physics, as well as with chemistry and biology, and that there are no blind forces worth speaking about in nature. The numbers one calculates from the facts seem to me so overwhelming as to put this conclusion almost beyond question.”
- (5) \*\* Is it any wonder the Psalmist wrote:

**Psa. 19:1-4a:**

*“The heavens declare the glory of God;  
 And the firmament shows His handiwork.  
 2 Day unto day utters speech,  
 And night unto night reveals knowledge.  
 3 There is no speech nor language  
 Where their voice is not heard.  
 4 Their line has gone out through all the earth,  
 And their words to the end of the world.”*

**G. 13 DNA code:**

- (1) DNA is a biomolecule that is in the nucleus of every cell in every living thing (bacteria, plant and animal; ~100 trillion cells in human body!).
- (a) It basically controls life in every living being.
- (b) It determines whether a tree is a white oak, red oak, cedar, white pine, etc.
- (c) It determines whether a tulip is red, white, yellow, etc.
- (d) It determines whether a dog is a poodle, German shepherd, golden retriever, etc.
- (e) It determines whether you are a boy or a girl, how tall you are, the color of your hair and eyes.



- (2) \*\* The late Carl Sagan was a famous astronomer, cosmologist, astrobiologist, popular science writer and TV personality wrote a very popular book entitled *Contact* (later made into a movie starring Jodie Foster).
- (a) It was a fictional story about SETI scientists (*Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence*).
  - (b) SETI scientists really exist and are radio astronomers that scan the heavens for radio signals from outer space in hope of detecting extraterrestrial life.
  - (c) In the fictional book they received this radio signal repeatedly: 2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 29, 31, 37, 41, 43, 47, 53 ... (up to a total of 26 of these numbers).
  - (d) If you recall basic mathematics these are *prime numbers* (i.e., numbers divisible, without a remainder, by only one and themselves).
  - (e) Why did the fictional SETI scientists get so excited hearing this repeated message?
  - (f) Because it was a designed message and design is evidence of intelligence.
  - (g) That such an ordered list of numbers could be generated randomly is so unlikely as to be deemed impossible; it requires intelligence.
  - (h) DNA contains the coded information needed for each of the ~100 trillion cells in the human body; every protein, every tissue, every organ, every organ system, absolutely everything needed for life.
    - (i) The same is true for every living organism (plants and animals).
    - (ii) DNA is the most fantastic information storage and retrieval system in the Universe.
- (3) 14 How much information can DNA store?
- (a) “One gram of DNA can store 700 terabytes of data. That’s 14,000 50-gigabyte Blu-ray discs... in a droplet of DNA that would fit on the tip of your pinky. To store the same kind of data on hard drives — the densest storage medium in use today — you’d need 233 3TB drives, weighing a total of 151 kilos.” (Harvard University)
  - (b) “Not only is the amount of information in cellular DNA staggering, it’s also incredibly compact. We marvel at computer storage disks with ever greater capacity. Yet the quantity of information that could be stored in a pinhead’s volume of DNA is equivalent to the content of paperback books spanning the distance from the earth to the moon 500 times—each book being unique from the others.” Werner Gitt, information scientist
- (4) \*\* DNA works just like a computer code.
- (a) DNA does not depend on its chemical properties to do its work. For example, Simple table salt (NaCl) forms crystals because of the chemical properties of sodium and chlorine as they join together.
  - (b) DNA doesn’t work like that at all. The arrangement of the molecules in DNA, not their chemical properties, determine the special code of DNA.
  - (c) E.g., chemical properties of ink and paper do not determine the message in a book; its message is determined by the arrangement of letters, sentences, paragraphs, etc.
  - (d) Thus, there is a “code” in DNA which demands a “code maker”!
- (5) \$64,000 question: How could DNA result from the unintelligent, undirected random collision of lifeless molecules? Intelligence had to supervise the process!

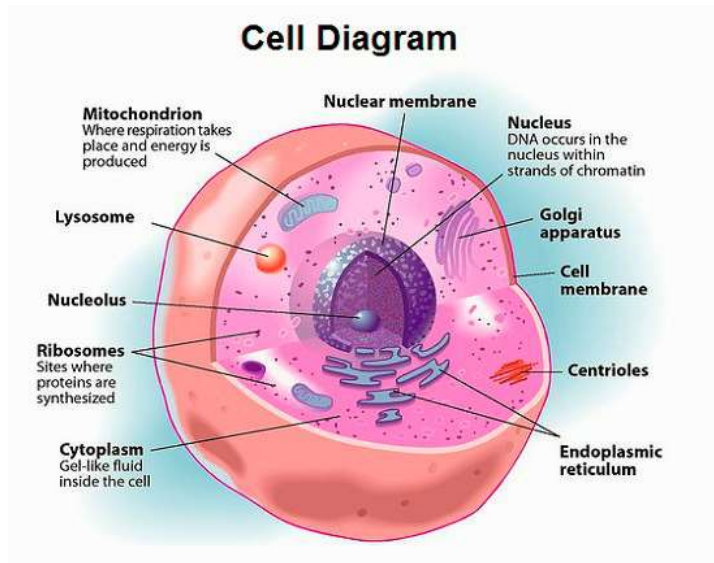
(a) Dr. Sagan and fellow evolutionists/atheists get excited over a string of 26 prime numbers and attribute its source to intelligence, but deny DNA, a vastly more complex information source, is the result of intelligence. Absurd!

(b) No wonder the Psalmist exclaimed:

**Psa. 139:14:** “I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.”

#### H. **15** Complexity of life:

- (1) Until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, scientists thought that cells were very simple structures made up of a fluid they called *protoplasm*. This ignorance led them to conclude a very simplistic view of the origin of life.
- (2) Not true! Even the simplest one-celled organism is vastly complex; a veritable miniaturized factory the human mind is completely unable to duplicate.



**General diagram of a typical mammalian cell.**

- (3) A multitude of more examples of the complexity of life could be cited (irreducible complexity, mammalian physiology, etc., etc.).

#### I. **16** The origin of life:

- (1) Atheism is forced into a silly and nonsensical explanation for the origin of life.
- (2) Since they leave God out of the picture, they are forced to believe a theory (*abiogenesis*) that has been disproven repeatedly for about the last three centuries (e.g., experiments of Louis Pasteur; 1860's).
- (3) They are forced to believe lifeless chemicals came together in a purely random and chaotic fashion, undirected by intelligence, and “poof” spontaneously made the unimaginable leap from non-living to living (billions and billions of times!).
- (4) I think most people that are atheists and/or believe in evolution fail to appreciate the unbridgeable chasm there is between lifeless chemicals and living organisms.
- (5) \*\* I think Sir Fred Hoyle, despite being a committed atheist, has summed up well the impossibility of the spontaneous generation of life:



“No matter how large the environment one considers, life cannot have had a random beginning. Troops of monkeys thundering away at random on typewriters could not produce the works of Shakespeare, for the practical reason that the whole observable universe is not large enough to contain the necessary monkey hordes, the necessary typewriters and certainly not the waste paper baskets required for the deposition of wrong attempts. The same is true for living material. The likelihood of the spontaneous formation of life from inanimate matter is one to a number with 40,000 noughts after it...It is big enough to bury Darwin and the whole theory of evolution. There was no primeval soup, neither on this planet nor on any other, and if the beginnings of life were not random, they must therefore have been the product of purposeful intelligence.” (John Lennox, *God’s Undertaker: Has Science Buried God?* pp. 164-165)

(6) Why do atheist/evolutionists believe in the spontaneous generation of life despite the overwhelming evidence it is impossible and has never happened?

(a) The late Dr. George Wald, ardent evolutionist/atheist provides the answer.

(b) Dr. Wald was no scientific “light weight”; he was a professor of neurobiology at Harvard and received the Nobel Prize in Physiology for work in the neurophysiology of vision. Here’s what he said:

**\*\***“There are only two possible explanations as to how life arose: Spontaneous generation arising to evolution or a supernatural creative act of God...There is no other possibility. Spontaneous generation was scientifically disproved 120 years ago by Louis Pasteur and others, but that just leaves us with only one other possibility...that life came as a supernatural act of creation by God, but I can’t accept that philosophy because I do not want to believe in God. Therefore, I choose to believe in that which I know is scientifically impossible, spontaneous generation leading to evolution.” (“Origin, Life and Evolution” in *Scientific American*, 1978)

(c) Did you know Dr. Wald is mentioned in the Bible?

**Psa. 14:1:** “The fool hath said in his heart, ‘There is no God.’ They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.”

**Prov. 1:7:** “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

**Psa. 10:4:** “The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.”

**Rom. 1:18-20:** “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; 19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. 20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.”

**Rom. 1:28:** “And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;”

J. Lord, I believe; because You are the only logical and scientifically sound explanation for the existence of the Universe! Rom. 1:19-20

**Lord, I believe because...**

2. **17** God is the source of morality:

A. There is a moral nature inherent in man and a moral order within the universe.

- (1) "Men everywhere have a concept of what 'ought' to be done in certain circumstances. A sense of 'fair play' (You took my seat, that's my notebook)." (Jenkins, p. 34)
- (2) "A. E. Taylor said that man may draw 'the line between right and wrong in a different place, but at least they all agree that there is such a line to be drawn' (*Does God Exist?*, p. 84)."
- (3) This, perhaps, to some degree, is what Paul discusses in Romans 2:12-16:

**\*\***"For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law 13 (for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified; 14 for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, 15 who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them) 16 in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel."

- (4) "A moral nature in man and the universe demands a *moral person* back of all things." (Jenkins, p. 34)

"Mankind is the only creature that has ever held an innate sense of right and wrong, otherwise known as morality. It is universally accepted as wrong to kill, steal, rape, swindle, or abuse one's fellow man. Even atheists commonly use such descriptors as right versus wrong, good versus bad, we should or shouldn't, we ought or ought not. From where did these innate instincts come? If there truly is no God...then neither is there right or wrong, good or bad, moral or immoral. In such a case, the atrocities of Adolf Hitler were justifiable and in line with Nietzsche's doctrine. Paradoxically, atheism itself has a rigid set of what we might call 'religious' convictions. These include faiths they firmly believe, teach, practice, and attempt to bind on others through means such as their implementation in public schools. However, if there is no God, why does any of this matter? On the other hand, if there is a God it is only natural that there would be instilled in us all a system of instinctive ethics motivating our opposition to what we believe to be wrong, even in the atheist." (Gurtler, p. 10)

- B. **\*\*** In other words, if the materialistic/naturalistic view of the world is correct, the rule should be *survival of the fittest, might makes right, law of the jungle*, all morals are situational.

- (1) No creator means no divine authority, which means no higher standard to appeal for ethical decisions of right and wrong than man's mind. Each man becomes a law to himself (Judges 21:25).

"*The Humanist Manifesto I and II*, serving as the atheist's Bible states, '*Ethics is autonomous and situational*' (1977, p. 17). That is, morality is dependent upon any one person's perception of right or wrong. There are no universal standards for mankind and neither can anyone individual's decision be considered good or bad. The atheist cannot say it is wrong to commit murder, genocide, rape, misuse animals or the environment, molest children, torture or maim other human beings or enslave people against their will. Atheists can say they don't 'like' or 'approve' of such actions, but if there is no God then condemning these acts is a philosophical impossibility." (Gurtler, p. 7)

- (2) German philosopher and avowed atheist Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche (1844-1900) summed up the materialistic/naturalistic worldview and morality: "*morality is a hindrance to the development of new and better customs: it makes stupid*" (1881, s. 19).

- C. **18** If there is no objective moral standard (God is the only source of such a standard) then Hitler was not a war criminal! 17-20 million dead

- (1) Saddam Hussein (Iraq; 1969-2003): 2 million dead

- (2) Josef Stalin (USSR; 1941-1953): 40-62 million dead
- (3) Mao Zedong (Red China; 1943-1976): 45-75 million dead
- D. \*\* If the atheistic/materialistic worldview is correct; human beings are just the result of eons of the random collision of lifeless atoms/molecules.
  - (1) Human behavior is deterministic; we are just doing what our molecules tell us to do!
  - (2) “DNA neither cares nor knows. DNA just is. And we dance to its music.” (Richard Dawkins, *River of Eden: A Darwinian View of Life*)
  - (3) Think about that the next time a psycho kidnaps, rapes and murders a young child.
  - (4) Why arrest them? Why try them? They are just dancing to the music of their DNA!

### Lord, I believe because...

#### 3. 19 God has revealed Himself:

- A. Book of nature & book of Scripture; God’s Works & God’s Word
- B. The Bible is the most reliable book of antiquity; no other book even comes close!
- C. How reliable is the Bible as an ancient book? Two primary methods used to measure the reliability of ancient books.
  - (1) \*\* First: time span between original (autograph) and copies (manuscripts).
    - (a) The nearer the early manuscripts to the autograph the greater the reliability.
    - (b) How does the Bible stack up against other ancient texts?
      - (i) Portions of New Testament manuscripts <50 years from the autographs.
      - (ii) Many complete NT manuscripts less than 250 years from the autographs.
      - (iii) By comparison the writings of well-accepted ancient writers such as Plato, Aristotle and Sophocles are 1,200 years, or more, from the autograph until the earliest manuscript.
  - (2) \*\* Second measure of reliability is the number of manuscripts.
    - (a) The greater number of early manuscripts the more reliable a text is considered.
    - (b) Also, the greater the number of manuscripts the more “cross checking” can be done to determine accuracy.
    - (c) How does the Bible stack up against other ancient texts?
      - (i) There are over 25,000 early manuscripts containing all, or substantial portions, of the New Testament.
      - (ii) Compare that to only seven manuscripts for the works of Plato, five for the works of Aristotle, and seven for the plays of Sophocles, Homer’s *Iliad* (643).
- D. \*\* In light of this, John Warwick Montgomery, recipient of 11 earned degrees including PhD, ThD and LLD, rightly said, “*to be skeptical of the resultant text of the New Testament books is to allow all the classical works of antiquity to slip into obscurity, for no documents of the ancient period are as well attested bibliographically as the New Testament.*”

### Lord, I believe because...

#### 4. 20 God is Savior: Heb. 11:6

- A. I did not grow up in the church or with any substantive religious training.
  - (1) My parents did not attend a church of any kind.
  - (2) I never saw them even pick up a Bible, much less read one.
  - (3) I grew up in a home where I was taught that “religion” was designed to keep you from having fun and enjoying life (1 Jn. 5:3).
- B. By the time I reached my late teens my life was an absolute, total mess.
  - (1) I graduated in the bottom half of my high school class.
  - (2) My senior year I ran around every night with the “guys” and got “loaded.”
  - (3) I had a couple of minor brushes with the law.
  - (4) My life became such a fouled-up mess; I even briefly thought about suicide.
- C. After high school, I spent about two years in college (one year on campus at IU).
  - (1) I had no spiritual training, no real concept of resisting temptations.
  - (2) The way I was brought up I just thought drinking alcohol and smoking cigarettes was the normal thing to do.
  - (3) At IU I got swept up with the “dope smoking” crowd.
  - (4) But, my conscience wasn’t totally “seared,” because I began to feel very guilty about what I was doing.
  - (5) I knew my life was a mess, but I was powerless to do anything about it.
  - (6) I finished my second year of college and quit (w/out consulting my parents!).
- D. I got myself a job working in a factory in Indianapolis.
  - (1) I worked nights (and often 7 days/week) which turned out to be a blessing because it meant I could no longer run with the “crowd.”
  - (2) I did make some positive changes on my own; I quit smoking and drinking.
  - (3) However, I was still very dissatisfied with life.
- E. Then the most important thing to ever happen to me happened: I met someone who was a Christian.
  - (1) He encouraged me to purchase a Bible; told me to read the Gospels.
  - (2) I was always a voracious reader, so I gladly dove right into the book.
- F. I knew little, if anything, about the evidences we’ve already studied:
  - (1) God is Creator
  - (2) God is the source of morality
  - (3) God has revealed Himself
- G. But, very quickly, as I read the gospels, I began to believe: Romans 10:17
  - (1) I just knew the Bible was true; and I soon discovered what my problem was: SIN!
  - (2) \*\* I discovered what I’d been searching for: the “*pearl of great price*” (Matt. 13:45-46).
  - (3) It took several months for me to summon the courage to obey the gospel but looking back I knew within a matter days that I had a disease that only Jesus could cure.

- (4) I didn't need the other "evidences" to convince me (not that they're not important!).
- H. I believe the story of Jesus is the most powerful "tool" to convict us of sin and the need to obey the gospel.
  - (1) Most people believe the Bible is full of fairy tales/myths; when I began reading I found exactly the opposite: it was undeniably TRUE! God is real! Jesus is real!
  - (2) All the sermons in the book of Acts; they all center around the story of the Christ.
  - (3) As we seek to share the gospel message with others; we don't need a fancy "program" or worry about having a "just so" carefully prepared lesson.
  - (4) Just give someone a Bible and encourage them to: 1) begin reading in the gospels, and 2) encourage them to ask questions.
  - (5) If there's an "honest and good heart" they will respond to the gospel message (Lk. 8:15).

### III. CONCLUSION: 21

- 1. I hope this lesson gives you some things to think about when your faith is wavering and weak.
- 2. **Lord, I believe because...**
  - ✓ God is Creator
  - ✓ God is the source of morality
  - ✓ God has revealed Himself
  - ✓ God is Savior
- 3. I want to address one final issue and the lesson will be yours.
  - A. Sometimes our faith wavers as we consider how small and insignificant we are.
  - B. But in God's eyes YOU are so very, very significant.
- 4. Let me illustrate with a true story.
  - A. My uncle (maternal) owned a small "mom & pop" grocery store in Indianapolis.
    - (1) It was located on south Belmont Avenue (the near westside of Indy) in a working poor neighborhood.
    - (2) "Marsh Grocery": often confused with "Marsh Foodliner" chain.
    - (3) Just an old-fashioned neighborhood grocery store (young folks know nothing about!).
    - (5) Uncle was also a butcher; an artist in carving up a side of beef or half a hog.
  - B. My mother worked at the store from time-to-time as the cashier.
    - (1) I would sometimes work with her, helping my cousin deliver groceries (explain).
    - (2) Uncle was generous; let people "run up a tab" (kept records in a three-ring binder!).
  - C. Never forget a young boy about my age at the time (9-10 years old) who came in one day.
    - (1) Boy was from a very poor family with 8 or 9 children.
    - (2) He had a few crumpled dollar bills and some change in his hand.
    - (3) His mother had sent him to the store to buy some pork chops.
    - (4) I'll never forget what he told my uncle:
      - (a) He showed him how much money he had and then he asked for some pork chops.



- (b) Then he said something I will NEVER forget; with a pleading tone in his voice he said, ***“Please slice them thin so then maybe I’ll get one.”***
5. When it comes to God’s love, blessings, attention, etc. for me; I don’t ever have to worry about getting less than anyone else.
- A. I don’t have to worry I’ll get short-changed by the Lord because:
- ✓ I’m not as good looking as George Clooney,
  - ✓ I’m not the “sharpest crayon in the box,”
  - ✓ I’m not rich,
  - ✓ I don’t have a “bubbly personality,”
  - ✓ I’ve not always been as faithful as I should be,
  - ✓ Etc., etc.
- B. **\*\*** These things don’t matter. I don’t have to worry like that little boy over getting a pork chop.
- (1) God will give me a full and complete measure of all He has!
- (2) He will make me completely/totally satisfied! With God, everyone comes in 1<sup>st</sup> place!
- Lk. 6:38:** “...it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom.”
- Acts 10:34b-35:** “...God is no respecter of persons: 35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”).
- 2 Cor. 9:8:** “And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:
- 2 Pet 1:11:** “For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”
- Phil. 3:21:** “who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.”
- (Rom. 8:17:** “...joint-heirs with Christ”; **1 Jn. 3:2:** “...we shall be like Him...”).
- 2 Tim. 4:8:** “Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.” (Rev. 2:10)

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