

- **Slide 1:** Two passages from last week's message
  - **1 Peter 3:15** "but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,"
  - **Ephesians 4:11-12** "And He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry"
  - Conclusion: We all as the church need to be engaged in apologetics with the world, which means we all as your leaders need to help equip you to do so!
- **Slide 2:** General comments on apologetics
  - Remember our primary purpose in this life
    - Our goal is not to win arguments, but to love people; our desire is to see lost people reconciled with God (seek peace and pursue it)
    - Evangelism will almost always raise up situations for Apologetics, and, Apologetics defends and reinforces Evangelism (not the same but symbiotic) (apologetics is also encouraging for the believer)
  - Get specific: Try and get to the heart of the matter. Ask what passage specifically they have in mind, if any; or what has shaped that opinion.
    - Attempt to discover if they think what they do because they never really gave it any thought or because of some specific occurrence
  - Don't fake or force an answer. Be honest! "I don't know off the top of my head. Let's find out together."
- **Slide 4:** Let's start with the absolute foundation
  - Why can we even trust the Bible?
    - The Bible is our source of truth, so we need to be able to defend why someone should take it seriously as a legitimate document
  - Three tests the world (secular/academic/religious/etc.) uses to measure historical authenticity of a work
    - Bibliographical- how accurately was it recorded and passed on over time? (proximity of extant manuscripts to original autograph and quantity)
    - Internal evidence- does it contradict itself internally & from copy to copy?
    - External evidence- do other works support or refute it?
- **Slide 5:** Bibliographical
  - Memory
    - We do not need to memorize things today, but back then, memory was much more important
    - Parables; Pivotal events (you'd remember your friend walking on water)
    - There's nothing to say that the authors weren't using notes
    - Holy Spirit helped them (this obviously carries significance with believers, but non-believers will probably not accept this)
  - Manuscript evidence (manuscript = hand copied, the more the better)
    - NT has ~3x the manuscript evidence of the 2nd most recorded work in history (Homer's Iliad, see table at end of outline)
    - NT = shortest time gap! **(Illus)** If I wrote a book falsely claiming something happened in the 80s, there are people alive to refute me

- **Slide 6:** Internally
  - Where do critics point to as “errors” in the Bible?
    - And keep in mind we are addressing claimed factual errors, not what people deem to be moral/psychological/logical problems
      - An unbeliever may struggle with an understanding of the purpose of Levitical law, or accepting miracles, but that’s a different conversation than “the Bible factually contradicts itself”
  - Many commonly targeted ‘inconsistencies’ all circle back to the “accurate but incomplete” explanation
    - Jesus cleansing the temple is at the beginning of His ministry in John but at the end of His ministry in Matthew, Mark, and Luke
      - Could have cleansed the temple twice & John is not chronological
    - Fallacy of “# in one account means only that #”
      - “Angels at the tomb” (Matt 28:2, Mark 16:5, Luke 24:4)
      - “Blind men outside Jericho” (Matt 20:30, Mark 10:46)
      - “Demon possessed men” (Matt 8:28, Mark 5:2)
    - “The Gospels all disagree with what was written on the cross”
      - **Matt 27:37** “And over His head they put the charge against Him, which read, ‘This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.’”
      - **Mark 15:26** “And the inscription of the charge against Him read, ‘The King of the Jews.’”
      - **Luke 23:38** “There was also an inscription over Him, ‘This is the King of the Jews.’”
      - **John 19:19** “Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, ‘Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.’”
      - “This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews” all correct
      - “There is enough of a discrepancy to show that there could have been no previous concert among them and at the same time such substantial agreement as to show that they all were independent narrators of the same great transaction.” - [Simon Greenleaf of Harvard Law School](#), 19th century expert on legal evidence, [wrote a 613 page treatise](#) called “An Examination of the Testimony of the Four Evangelists by the rules of evidence administered in courts of justice”
  - Or, possible copyist errors that do not affect the integrity of the message of the Bible (what is known as preservation)
    - [Ahaziah’s age](#) in 2 Chronicles 22:2 and 2 Kings 8:6 (22 years or 42 years)
      - There are Biblical scholars who posit that based on the original Hebrew language, the 42 is referring to a kingly reign that began with him/his lineage, but was not limited to just him
    - **Psalm 12:6-7** “The words of the Lord are pure words, like silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven times. You, O Lord, will keep them; You will guard us from this generation forever. → “inerrant as *originally given*”

- **Slide 7:** Internally - how do we know the Bible wasn't changed?
  - Genuine believers should know better than to mess with Scripture
    - **Revelation 22:18-19** "I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book."
      - Although the warning is specific to the Book of Revelation, the principle applies to anyone who seeks to intentionally distort God's Word.
    - **Deuteronomy 4:1-2** "And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the rules that I am teaching you, and do them, that you may live, and go in and take possession of the land that the Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving you. You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you."
    - **Proverbs 30:5-6** "Every word of God proves true; He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him. Do not add to His words, lest He rebuke you and you be found a liar."
  - Why do we trust the version we have now? Because historically, the Bible as we currently have it is the same one accepted by the people
    - "These are the fountains of salvation, that whoever thirsts may be satisfied by the eloquence which is in them. In them alone is set forth the doctrine of piety. Let no one add to them, nor take anything from them." - [Athanasius 296-373 AD](#), referencing the NT as it is in our versions still (Festal Epistle of Athanasius XXXIX. Translated in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, vol. IV., p. 551–552.)
    - "For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another [as the Greeks have] but only twenty-two books, which contain the records of all the past times; which are justly believed to be divine." - Josephus writing about the OT around 90 AD
      - **Slide 8:** The Law: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
      - The Former Prophets: Joshua, Samuel, Kings,
      - The Latter Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah-Lamentations, Ezekiel, The book of the twelve (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi)
      - The Writings: Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth-Judges, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles
      - In Protestant Bibles, many of the books are divided; same amount of writing, just organized differently.

- **Slide 9:** Externally
  - Gary Habermas catalogued 39 non-Biblical works that confirm the life, teachings, death, crucifixion of Jesus (The Historical Jesus)
    - Pliny, Tacitus, Thallus, and Josephus confirm Jesus
  - “[Luke is a historian of the first rank](#). This author should be placed along with the very greatest of historians.” - Sir William Mitchell Ramsay
    - Began as skeptic educated in doubting the authenticity of the NT, and determined to historically disprove the Bible, chose to start with Luke since he provided so many details. After years of study, concluded NT totally accurate historically
    - “[Further study](#) ... showed that the book could bear the most minute scrutiny as an authority for the facts of the Aegean world, and that it was written with such judgment, skill, art and perception of truth as to be a model of historical statement...I set out to look for truth on the borderland where Greece and Asia meet, and found it there [in Acts]. [You may press the words of Luke](#) in a degree beyond any other historian's and they stand the keenest scrutiny and the hardest treatment...' - The Bearing of Recent Discovery
    - After Luke, chose to focus on Paul's letters, concluded all were authentic
  - “[Scores of archaeological findings](#) have been made which confirm in clear outline or exact details historical statements in the Bible.” [Nelson Glueck](#), 20th Century secularly trained archaeologist
- **Slide 10:** Preview
  - This demonstrates why the Bible deserves to be taken seriously as a historically legitimate authentic document. We have to start here.
  - When we get to 2 Peter 1:20-21, we will look at authorship and what that means, the difference between revelation and illumination, what do we mean by inspired, inerrant, infallible,; is the Bible equally authoritative throughout?

[Clay Jones](#), professor at Biola University, compared the Greek NT documents (as a group) to other documents of ancient history in [an article published in the \*Christian Research Journal\*](#). Below are the results of his research:

Author	Work	Date Written	Earliest MSS	Time Gap	Old # <sup>29</sup>	New
Homer	<i>Iliad</i>	800 BC	c. 400 BC	400	643	1,757
Herodotus	<i>History</i>	480–425 BC	10th C	1,350	8	109
Sophocles <sup>30</sup>	Plays	496–406 BC	3rd C BC	100-200	100	193
Plato	Tetralogies	400 BC	895	1,300	7	210
Caesar	<i>Gallic Wars</i>	100-44 BC	9th C	950	10	251
Livy	<i>History of Rome</i>	59 BC–AD 17	Early 5th C	400	1 Partial, 19 copies	150
Tacitus	<i>Annals</i>	AD 100	1st half: 850, 2nd: 1050 (AD 1100)	750–950	20	2 + 31 15 <sup>th</sup> C
Pliny, the Elder	<i>Natural History</i>	AD 49–79	5th C fragment: 1; Rem. 14–15th C	400 (750)	7	200
Thucydides	<i>History</i>	460–400 BC	3rd C BC (AD 900)	200 (1,350)	8	96
Demosthenes	Speeches	300 BC	Some fragments from 1 C. BC. (AD 1100)	1,100+ (1,400)	200	340
NT		AD 50–100	AD 130 (or less) <sup>31</sup>	40	5,366	5,795

But the situation is even better for the NT because we haven't yet mentioned all the MSS of the NT in other languages. Jones reveals that there are over 2,000 Armenian, almost 1,000 Coptic, 6 Gothic, more than 600 Ethiopian, more than 10,000 Latin, more than 350 Syriac, 43 Georgian, and more than 4,000 Slavic manuscript copies of the NT. That total is 23,794 MSS.