

Reason to Believe

CHRISTIANITY

Evidence for God All of Creation points to a Creator who has revealed Himself in both general and specific ways, so we are with out excuse. (*Rom 1:18-20*).

1. **Design in Creation** There is too much design and pattern in the world to have happened by chance, odds are too great! (*Psalms 19:1-4*) Design implies a Designer
2. **2nd Law of Thermodynamics** states things are “winding down” and head toward disorder, which implies the universe had an orderly beginning...(*Genesis 1*).
3. **Principle of Causality** In science, an effect must always have a cause, but the very first effect must begin with an uncaused Cause... God. (*Genesis 1:1, 2 Peter 3:5*)
4. **Universal Moral Law** All across the world, even in remote people groups, there are objective moral laws (*Romans 2:12-15*). Moral law implies a Moral Lawgiver.
5. **Revealed in the Bible** Though this may seem circular, the Bible’s integrity and claims have been shown to be trustworthy and has incredible support (see below).
6. **Revealed by/in Jesus Christ** The fact that Jesus was certain of a personal/creator God, gives strong evidence and proof of God’s existence (see below).

Evidence for the Bible The notion that the Bible has been altered in time or embellished in its content, especially in its historicity, has been completely silenced.

1. **Source Evidence** The bible has more source evidence than any 10 books of antiquity combined! Aristotle, Plato, Homer...all books that are unquestioned fall short.
 - A. **Vast Amount of Copies** Over 5600 copies and fragments of the New Testament just in its original language (Greek). They are in 98% complete agreement.
 - B. **Close Proximity to Originals** (OT was written on clay, metal, parchments...not many copies. NT was written primarily on papyrus...not very durable)
Old Testament (OT) was finished around 400 BC, the earliest complete copy from 900 AD was later authenticated by Dead Sea Scrolls from 100 BC.
New Testament (NT) was finished about 100 AD, the earliest complete copy from 350 AD but with fragments back to about 100 AD (perhaps 50 AD).
2. **Archeological Support** There are over 25,000 archeological finds that support biblical history, not one find opposes it. Not bad for a book often called fictional.
3. **Consistent Theme** Written over 1500 years by 40 different authors from 40 different cultures, yet scripture speaks with one mind and one central theme.
4. **Predictive Prophecy** Fulfilled prophecy points to a Supernatural origin. Over 25% of the bible is filled with prophecy. An estimated 1817 biblical prophecies have been fulfilled with great detail. No other “holy book” appeals to prophecy. Prophecies were written long before they were fulfilled (*2 Pet. 1:20-21*).
5. **Internal Integrity** Stories of failure, pride, embarrassment, fear, murder... in biblical characters/authors support the accuracy of the recorded events. Any biblical author fabricating or embellishing such stories would at least clean up or cover the shameful part they played. *ie.* Moses, David, Disciples... Much of the Bible was written at the time and place where the events occurred, so the amount of eyewitnesses at the events would ensure honesty.
6. **Inner Testimony** Hundreds of times the Bible claims to be the Word of God (*2 Tim 3:16*) Jesus believed it was (*Matt 5:17-19*) so did the Apostles (*2 Pet. 3:16*).
7. **Transforming Power** There are countless individuals whose lives have been changed by the bible and who have seen its promises come to pass. (*Hebrews 4:12*).

Evidence for Christ Jesus was convinced about God, the Bible, its history, its miracles, its promises... and He also made many self-claims which He backed up.

1. **Messianic Prophecy** The OT contains a detailed profile of what the Messiah would do, the approximate time He would come, even the way He would die. It wasn’t luck; the chances of one person fulfilling just 8 of the Messianic prophecies is one in one hundred million billion... Jesus fulfilled over 48! (*Is. 55*)
 2. **Miracles** These were not added after the eyewitnesses of Christ died off. In fact Peter reminds the crowd in *Acts 2:22* that they witnessed Jesus’ miracles and signs.
 3. **Sinless/Perfect** In the presence of family, friends and enemies; Jesus challenged anyone to find Him guilty of any sin (*John 8:46, Hebrews 4:15, 1 Pet. 2:22*).
 4. **Above Reproach** He has been called a great teacher, good rabbi, had great morals, excellent example, speaker of truth, greatest man who ever lived, yet how can this be if He lied about His identity, led masses astray and even told them to endure suffering and death?! Could He maintain this act with out *anyone* seeing through it. Yet no credible slander has *ever* surfaced about Him. And since no one esteems the delusional or deceptive, He must be who He claimed.
 5. **Resurrection** The resurrection alone validates all the claims of Christ. It was the greatest miracle and proof of His authority. It truly cemented the early church.
 - A. **The Missing Body** If the body of Christ was anywhere to be found Roman or Jewish leaders would have produced it, ending Christianity before it began.
And of course the disciples wouldn’t take it to cover up, only to die later for a lie. There has never been a body found.
 - B. **Jerusalem Church** No one would start a church in the very place where counter evidence of its foundational claims would be found, yet amazingly that is exactly where the christian church exploded onto the scene. In fact there were over 500 eye witnesses of Christ to “cross-examine”. (*1Corinth. 15:6*)
 - C. **Disciples Martyred** While it is true that people die for false beliefs, the Apostles and early believers died for what they *saw*, not a belief. Even at the time of Jesus’ arrest the disciples fled, which showed they still weren’t *fully* convinced of Him (*Mark 14:50+72*) . But 3 days later everything changed.
 - D. **General Persecution** The martyrs of the early church were not strangers, but the closest friends and family of the Apostles. This death and suffering could have stopped if just *one* of the Apostles stepped forward and said it was a scam. They had no uncertainty about *any* of it, even though it cost everything! Jesus must have appeared to them clearly as having victory over death, not as something the cat dragged in (aka the Swoon Theory).
 - E. **Brothers Believed** What would it take to believe *your* brother was God! The miracles never convinced James and Jude, but the resurrection did (*John 7:5*).
Perhaps the greatest “skeptics” of the 1st Century were the Disciples, because they had the most to lose... relationships, traditions, family, friends, health, and life.
- The Historical account of the early Christian Church is filled with obstacles and odds that could only have been overcome by the Church’s certainty of the Resurrection.

Claims of Christ The life of Christ must give credibility to the claims of Christ. These claims set Christianity apart, making it *much* different than any other beliefs.

1. **Messiah** Not only did Jesus fulfill the Messianic prophecies, but He Himself claimed to be the Messiah/Christ (*Mark 14:61+62, Matt. 16:16, Luke 4:25-26*).
2. **God** Jesus said “Before Abraham was, **I AM**” that is a name strictly reserved for **God** (*John 8:58, John 1:1*). Also the disciples worshiped Him as God (*John 20:28*)
3. **Only Way** Jesus said He is *the only way* to the Father who is in Heaven (*John 14:6, Acts 4:12*). This has huge implications for other belief systems. (*John 18:37*)

God is Good For many believing in God is not a problem, sometimes a more challenging question is... What is God like? Especially in the midst of hard times.

1. **Fallen World** Both humanity and this world is bound by the effects of the Fall (*Genesis 3:6*) and a corrupt nature (*Romans 8*). There is pain, death, suffering... This is a sobering reality of our world and humanity. (*Matt. 15:19*) God promises a renewal at the end of the age. (*2 Pet. 5:10-15, Revelation 21:1-4*)
2. **Free Will** We were created to love God, that *can not* happen with out the choice of not loving Him... *ie.* option to eat the forbidden fruit. Mankind chose a new owner that day: sin (*John 8:54*) which would influence our will forever. Unfortunately Free Will gives mankind the option of loving or hurting others too.
3. **Fair God** God is Just, and He would deny His own character if He denied His justice and fairness. So sin must be paid for or punished. (*Gen. 18:25*)
4. **Finite Minds** Though it's hard to see, God can turn tragedy into triumph. (*Is 55:8+9*) During trials we shouldn't abandon the only One with answers. (*Rom 8:28*)

CREATION

6 Day Creation Although not necessary for salvation, it is worth looking at the evidence for a Young Earth because it is supported through out the Scripture.

1. **Natural Reading** What is needed for a normal day is not sun but light, for the separation of day and night; light is created on the 1st day. All through Genesis 1 you have typical language of a day... morning and evening. Also the work week and Sabbath rest is based on the Creation week model. (*Exodus 31:17*).
2. **Order of Events** The order of events in Gen. 1 is very clear, but in an old earth view, the events have to be twisted around... *ie.* stars and sun before earth...
3. **Death Before Sin** The bible states clearly it was through Adam's sin that death entered the world, but the Old Earth/Theistic Evolution view teaches millions of years of death, disease, bloodshed all before Adam and Eve. (*Romans 5:12, 8:19-22*) Genesis 1:29+30 shows not even animals killed each other for food.
4. **Jesus Believed** He said “From the beginning of Creation, God made them male and female...”, He placed man at the very beginning of Creation. (*Matt. 19:4*).

Worldwide Flood Few realize the impact and damage Noah's flood would have had on the earth. Genesis 6:7+6:13 show the magnitude of it's purpose.

1. **Sedimentation** Hydrology has shown that water is a natural sorter, so the Geological Column could happen rapidly... as was observed at Mt St. Helens in 1980.
2. **Fossil Record** Fossil records plainly speak of watery graves and rapid burial. Due to decay and scavenging, you *never* find sediment slowly accumulating on deceased animals. With the waters flooding the land and being deposited on the ocean floor, you would expect to find the sea floor animals at the base, then larger swimming animals, then animals near the banks, next larger mammals that withstood earlier washing away, and man would seek higher ground and survive the longest, leaving the fewest fossils because of the “bloat and float” factor. Not the simplicity to complexity model held by evolution.
3. **WorldWide** Some have suggested the flood was local. Primarily because a global flood would *A.* verify the biblical account and *B.* mess up the uniformity view (below). But that makes no biblical sense... For Noah would only need to save the animals in his area or take the boat building time to walk to safety.
4. **Noah's Ark** Ark literally means *box*. The Ark was built to float not drive. It's dimension work perfectly and the 6:1 ratio is still used today by ships. It had the ability to hold 125,000 animals, but it only needed to hold 16,000 basic “kinds” and food. The bible talks of “kinds” not any other manmade categories.
5. **Vast Accounts** There are literally hundreds of cultures that have legends of a worldwide flood, though they vary in detail most all of them contain the same basic elements: *God or the gods sent a flood to judge sin and one family survived*. Such stories would imply these groups descended from Noah's family post-flood.

Evolution Some believe this is how God created life, but it is found *nowhere* in Scripture. Evolution still remains a faith system which lacks substantial evidence.

1. **Irreducible Complexity** Life at the *most basic level* (a cell) is too complex of a system to have been able to evolve. It needed *every* working part instantaneously.
2. **Loss of Information** Biological information always decreases, but evolution needs increased information. While the loss of info may be beneficial for the survival of a species, it is not because of new information gained. In Gen.1 the created “kinds” are stacked with the bio info used for variation and to fill the earth.
3. **No Missing Links** The lack of transitional fossils, as Darwin himself admitted, would pose one of the greatest threats to evolutionary theory. They are still missing.

Age of the Earth Using a Biblical timeline and accounting for a few varying factors, the age of the earth could be anywhere between 6,000 to 10,000 years old.

1. **Catastrophism** Uniformity says *the present is the key to the past*; it takes *current* natural rates and applies them backwards to get ages of formations. But catastrophes account for rapid deposition and erosion. Events like the Flood would account for what may falsely appear as slow changes... like the Grand Canyon.
2. **Radioactive Dating** These methods can not account for initial conditions of objects dated. They must also conform to the previously accepted timeline of the Geological Column, if they don't the dates are thrown out as “bad dates”. No rock or bone speaks for itself, it must be interpreted by previous assumptions.
3. **Young Earth** Things like helium in rocks, Carbon 14 in coal, salt and sediment rates in the sea, distance of moon, radio halos... all indicate a young earth.

Check Out: *The Case for Christ by Lee Stroebel, A Ready Defense by Josh McDowell, The Answers Book by Ken Ham, Scientific Creationism or Biblical Creationism by Henry Morris.*
www.carm.org, www.apologetics.org, www.apologeticspress.org, www.icr.org, www.answersingenesis.org, www.sermonindex.net

The Most Important thing you could know is that we have this one life to prepare for eternity, we will be with Christ or without Him!

How Can I be Saved? Confess your sins to God. Ask Jesus Christ to be Lord and Savior of your life. Put your trust in His payment for sin. Live out your salvation.