

Basic, Objective Reasons To Believe In God, the Bible, and Jesus



“Christianity, if false, is of no importance, and if true, of infinite importance. The only thing it cannot be is moderately important.”

- C.S. Lewis

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This paper is going to begin with a fact that this author has never seen disproven: people do not change their minds in an argument!

The human condition for all simply prevents it; when we reach a certain level of emotional concern for a particular position (regardless of its truthfulness), our biology simply prevents us from taking our opposition's position, no matter the evidence presented.

If you doubt this, find even one time in an actual moderated debate in religion, politics, sociology, or literature where the other side, by the end of the debate, not only admitted to “losing the debate”, but actually became convinced of the opposition's position. I have never found one. Or, look at any unregulated debate of those same topics, such as those on Internet forums. There are *millions*, maybe even more than that, to view. I have never found one where one opposing side actually relented to the other in affirming the opposition's views were correct, and their own view was wrong.

How Can We Determine Truth?

When was the last time any of us admitted in the middle of an argument that we were wrong? 😊

Truth is not found via argument or debate.

Truth is found by honestly seeking it, no matter where it may lead.

In all of my time as a preacher and youth minister before that, I can tell you I have never argued anyone – not even a kid – into the faith. Apologetics is commonly below “Bible-thumping” in terms of its evangelical effectiveness. This is *not* because the evidence is underwhelming (quite the opposite), but because the human condition makes argument a universally-stubborn position and most apologists have the tact of a bull in a China closet.

So, is there any point in apologetics? Is there any point in trying to prove the existence of God, the truthfulness of the Bible, and the reality of Jesus?

There are actually many good reasons – but they are not the ones people default to. Every freshman to the study of apologetics (or philosophy, politics, literature, sociology, etc.) thinks that if they study long enough, hard enough, and with enough certainty, they will find that *one* argument that will convince “the other side” that they were right all along. Just so you do not waste any time, such an argument has not and never will exist.

Why Study Apologetics? (Some Reasons)	
Answer skeptics (however, do not ever expect to “win over” anybody by debate)	Personal affirmation The world has always opposed Christianity; why do Christians accept it so wholeheartedly?
Apply same standards God, the Bible, and the person of Jesus Christ will stand up to any <u>similar</u> standard of discipline applied to any other study of humanities.	

So is God being unfair by not making His existence so obvious that every human being just believes by default? Is God wrong for making the Bible in all its translations and versions potentially anything but completely unquestionable in every regards? Is Jesus not who He said He was because not all people everywhere are instantly convinced of who He is?

These are fair questions, but they also have fair answers. However, to really get down to the science and art of “proving” the existence of God, the truthfulness of the Bible, and the reality of Jesus, we have to form our

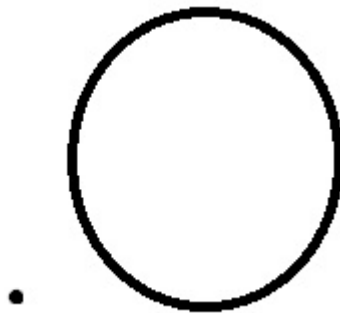
basis of understanding: we are not dealing with a discipline like math where $2+2=4$ every time. We are dealing with a discipline, like literature/politics/sociology, etc., in which each has useful fact and parameters of determining the totality and usefulness of that fact; however, it is not as precise a discipline as math.

Understanding Different Fields of Study	
Exact Fields of Science	Humanities
Mathematics Chemistry Physics Systemic Biology	Philosophy Sociology Psychology Art Religion Criminal Justice Politics Literature, etc.
<p>Conclusion: No one rejects criminal justice, psychology, politics, literature, etc. as a legitimate field of study simply because the nature of the subject precludes exactitude. All the same, we can approach an objective study of religion with the same standards applied to any field of humanities and arrive at similar, helpful, fact-filled conclusions.</p>	

Just as two people can read the same book, and come to similar conclusions, the book reports they write will be different (as they *should* be). Religion, especially Christianity, is not a cookie-cutter experience. Just as none of us have the exact same relationship with someone as another does, so none of us have the exact same relationship with God, or understanding of all things truth:

Now I am not advocating for anything less than absolute truth. I am merely recognizing mine (and the human condition's) inability to fully process all of what God has revealed perfectly. It would in fact be absurd to consider the possibility that a finite human mind of any intelligence could ever fully comprehend "God": "God", by definition, is "supernatural", which immediately means by default that He, and everything He is, is beyond any conventional definition or understanding. So, if He exists, He is not going to be fully and concretely understood by any lone thing we presently can use for measurement or observation.

If God exists, our intelligence, by definition, in comparison:



Not to scale, as we are smaller, and He is infinitely larger, but you get the idea.

This author believes that there is proof all over the Bible for a God exactly like this. Nobody in the Bible ever sees "God" in His eternal, Spirit form. We are warned that doing so is truly impossible and even if it did happen, immediately fatal. This would match our basic, human understanding of a supernatural being – beyond our comprehension, measurement, and observation. Instead, we have to come to our understanding of God through the only other remaining logical

possibilities – through the universe He supposedly made, the revelation He supposedly left, and the person He supposedly became incarnate.

Of course, we are talking about seeing God’s power and existence in creation, the Bible, and Jesus. Do these things prove the existence of God beyond a reasonable doubt?

How Can We Know God Exists?		
The Universe He Made	The Revelation He Left	The Person of Jesus, God in the Flesh

Let us start with creation, though this is likely to be least convincing: again, this is *not* because the evidence is underwhelming (quite the opposite), but because the stigma against evidence from creation is so high that virtually all evidence is now ignored by default. So, in order to face this subject, one must do it with the mindset that if you do believe in God partially based on the evidence for creation, you are a minority *in our present culture* because the present culture simply does not allow for mass defect in this present area. The professional, personal, familial, occupational, and other hazards for embracing any form of a creationist’s view continues to rise, hence, by nature’s default, the numbers of people who choose to believe in it and embrace it are dwindling. The truth of the matter gets lost in the “tax” people now have to pay to believe in a creation God made, so more people opt out of the “tax” of losing personal credibility or occupational advancement. It is that simple.

Does Present Culture “Penalize” Seeking the Truth about God?
In public grade and high schools, “God” is off-limits entirely. In literature, the Bible is often ignored. In biology, “God” is assumed absent.

In psychology, “God” is assumed neutral at best, harmful at worst. In the study of history in our present day, religion is largely ignored, although arguably *nothing* has had more impact on the history of the world than the subject of religion.

In the workplace, religious discussions are often taboo.

In business, culture expects no religious values expressed.

At home, many simply “refuse” to talk about religion.

Conclusion: So if culture penalizes seeking the truth about God, is truth being objectively sought by culture, or simply prejudiced against God?

However, onto the evidence: evidence for creation is traditionally broke down in arguments such as the ontological argument, the argument of design and complexity, etc. and since many volumes exhaust these particular arguments in detail this author will spare them here. Instead, the focus for evidence for God by creation to be discussed here lies in the *sheer believability* that God did it.

A basic rule of logic says, “The burden of proof is on the person who says “A” exists. It is not the burden of the opposite party to prove “A” does not exist.” This is true, though many sincere (but misguided) Christians try to assert the opposite. Bertrand Russell famously and correctly said that if a teacup is orbiting around Mars, it is in fact impossible to disprove – but that does not mean that there is a teacup on Mars.

What is the Burden of Proof?

Truth Claim	Action Required
Person 1 says, “A” exists	Up to Person A to Prove it
Person 2 says, “A” does not exist	Up to Person A to prove otherwise

If that argument just lost you, consider this: if I told you an invisible unicorn was in the room, you would say, “No, there isn’t. That’s ridiculous.” Then I would say, “You can’t disprove my invisible unicorn doesn’t exist, so therefore it does.” If you have the common sense God gave rocks, you would leave the room, completely accurate to call me a loon.

All the same, Christians sound completely loony when they try to say that atheists cannot disprove God. That doesn’t matter; the burden of proof is on us. However, we can flip this coin in a sense by equating creation with the *believability* of God; take the following example:

Everyone believes that a wristwatch does not occur in nature; there is no natural process by which something like a wristwatch can originate. Therefore, everyone agrees that an intelligent person of some kind first invented the wristwatch, and intelligent people have been improving the design ever since. Intelligence is involved from beginning to end with wristwatches; there is no alternative.

All the same, when we look at creation, is there a natural process by which creation could have come to be in its present form, or does it by default (like the wristwatch example) *require* intelligence behind it in order for it to exist in its present form?

Common Sense: Where Do Complex Objects Come From?	
Object	Origin
Wristwatch	Intelligent Inventor
Book	Intelligent Author
Theorem	Intelligent Mathematician
Genetically-Modified Seed	Intelligent Scientist and Farmer
Creation	Random chance and natural process?

Anyone can immediately see this is a classic argument for intelligent design. The skeptic has already checked out, and the layman may have already been bored. However, the argument I wish to propose does not lie in evaluating evolution's supposed credentials (though that is a worthy subject to investigate), but rather the default, common-sense position that the situation demands:

When we look at wristwatch, we know that obviously, without-a-doubt, an intelligent person invented and produced the wristwatch. It is certainly within the obvious, default position to think that something like creation had intelligence behind it. The burden of proof instead is on the idea that we came from random chance and natural processes; this is the unbelievable position by default, just like the teacup on mars, or the invisible unicorn in the room. We have no examples of anything in nature we can readily stick in an experiment and make it evolve into anything other than a variant of its own kind, over any amount of measured time.

Evolution relies on theoretical models (this is where the term theory and Evolution will forever be married) to simulate evolution, because even if it does happen, it does not happen within a time frame by which it can be observed by anyone.

Evolution's Eternal, Stuck State of Being a "Theory" Forever	
"Any evolution of species into another is unobservable in a normal lifetime"	No "live" example available of one organic being reproducing into another kind of organic being
No account for origins of universe	Cannot breed organic beings of one kind with another in any case

Conclusion: it is these unchanging facts about evolution that will forever keep it in the world of being a “theory”, and a theory that cannot be tested objectively. This questions the legitimacy of evolution perpetually.

So the default position is that evolution did not happen, and if it did, it has to be able to proven without reasonable doubt, and this is where evolution continues to be in trouble:

Even after evolution has been predominantly taught in every public school and college for decades as fact, still only about a 1/3 of the population is confident it is correct. Why? Is it because so many people have dug into both issues equally? Certainly not (most people have only ever been exposed to evolutionary theory with any degree of thoroughness). Is it because so many people are fundamentalist creationist church goers? Oh, up to a 1/3 perhaps. But what about that middle 1/3 that is neither strongly religious nor strongly educated in any other theory than evolution? What explains their lack of confidence in evolution, despite their exclusive education in it?

Undeniably, some of it is social pressure, simply not willing to be part of a heated debate. Some of it is because despite all efforts at near-universal education over a long period of time, evolution simply struggles to be *believable*. The 1/3 that is confident evolution is fact comprise of 60% atheists/agnostics/unaffiliated with any religion, which by default are forced by their worldview to accept evolution. In their philosophy, God *could not* have created the universe, so therefore evolution *has* to be correct. It is dogma by default. And they say we Christians are “stuck”.

The other 40% of the 1/3 total sample (so, about 14% of the total population) who are confident evolution is correct but not unreligious

actually do believe God exists and made the universe, but think God used evolution to make it happen. To this particular author, that is like saying that God – who *could make the earth in 6 days – or 6 seconds – if He wanted to* – actually chose to take billions of years for the heck of it. A whole book could be written against this kind of thinking as both a matter of absurd logic as well as evolutionary fraud, but this discussion will be content to say this: even these people find it *unbelievable* that creation could exist without God.

So after looking at decades of evolutionary theory being nearly-exclusively taught in our public schools, still only about 20% of people both believe that evolution happened and God had nothing to do with it.

What Present Culture Believes about Evolution		
Convinced Theist Creationists	Not convinced of evolution despite being taught it as fact from childhood but not committed either way	Convinced Evolutionary Atheist/Agnostic
~33%	~50%	~14%
The remaining 3% is within the margin of error for the survey.		
Conclusion: Despite decades of near-exclusive teaching of evolution as fact, the general populace still finds it to be basically <i>unbelievable</i> , putting the burden of proof exclusively on the evolutionist to prove its reality.		

Any sociologist will tell you that any subject in any field that is not an exact science (like politics, literature, sociology, etc.) that between 20-30% of any population will take a certain position *no matter what*. In politics, everyone knows that 30% will be Democratic at almost any one time, and 30% will be Republican at any one time – it is *always* the 40% in the middle that swing elections one way or the other. It is the

independent, open-minded, thinkers in any population that allow themselves to shed dogma, evaluate evidence, and attempt to come up with objective conclusions. This does *not* mean these voters are right; it merely means they find it *unbelievable* to dogmatically accept either polar view by default.

This author does not mean that God, nor the Bible, nor Jesus, are not 100% accurate; this author certainly thinks they are all 100% true and accurate. However, in the context of talking about sheer secular believability, evolution is either somewhat or strongly *unbelievable* to most of our present population, even after decades of the near-exclusive teaching of it. This means we can legitimately question it simply on that basis. What makes evolution unbelievable, and thus creation, by default – the better answer?

Human beings, though flawed as we are, inherently believe things we think are true. If something is flagrantly odd, our gut instinct is to reject it, or at best, see it as mildly strange. One thing we do not do with unbelievable things is just say, “That’s different! And just because it’s different, I’ll believe that!” (Well, maybe between the ages of 9 and 18!) No, anything foreign to our mindsets requires a long time – by nature – to integrate into our thought processes, if it ever does.

For that same reason, confidence in evolution has never really caught on with the masses. On the opposite end, most are now uncomfortable admitting the opposite – that God made the world in six literal days – simply because the stigma for believing anything “that religious” is deeply unpopular and often penalized in our present culture. So, being faced with something inherently unbelievable like evolution, or stigmatized with creation, about 50% of the population presently does not express a strong view one way or the other, *due to both social (for*

creation) and “*believability*” (for evolution) factors not likely to be resolved en masse anytime soon.

This is sad, certainly, but this is also why the arguments for creation are *presently* the weakest in the apologist’s toolbox – the social stigma against creation is a bar too high for most people to accept for reasons *external of the evidence itself*. All the same, people in general just cannot seem to get behind the believability of the idea they came from primordial soup over billions of years of random chance and natural process. So stuck between social pressure and issues of believability, we will be stuck in a stand-still on this issue for the foreseen future *in our present culture*. Social pressures and stigmas change, and when they do, the doors will be open again for an honest debate about the merits of creation versus the continuing *unbelievable* nature of evolution. Until then, this author encourages you to dive into the more profitable subject of proof from and for the Bible:

When engaging someone in a discussion over evidences for Christianity, believe it or not the Bible is your single best resource. For one, the Bible has been questioned, burned, maimed, rewritten, manipulated, and persecuted for the better part of 2000 years and yet it still stands. It will outlive both you and your opposition, have no doubt.

Is the Bible Correct, or the Skeptics?	
Bible Survived against every attack:	All skeptics - 1 st to 19 th centuries:
2000+ years	Dead
Jesus alive after:	All skeptics today:
2000+ years	Will die
Church still serving God:	Man-made institutions:
2000+ years	All come, all go
Is this chart really fair? Yes, if you are going to base your life on the	

philosophies of men, it is temporary ground at best!

Second, the Bible is a truly unique book: no other “holy” or secular book or compilation of books has any comparison to the Bible’s makeup, history, geographic span, authorship, or coherency.

Third, if we accept the idea that the idea of a “supernatural God” is going to defy any conventional understanding we have of anything anyway (because by definition “supernatural” means beyond anything we know in our present, natural state will be superseded), then if we are going to know anything about such a God, He would have to *reveal* it to us. The most obvious way to find out if God has left obvious revelation for us about Him and His potential plan for man is to examine each “holy book” known to man and examine them to see if there is one or more that really stand out from the rest for reasons perceptible to anyone.

This author truly believes that the *believability* of an issue is of paramount importance, and this particular issue of believability is one – if not the best – tool by which to show God, Bible, and Jesus are all what Biblical Christianity says they are. For if anything is by default unbelievable, it truly would be cruel of God for Him to expect people everywhere to accept what their brains are constantly trying to convince them is nonsense. *This is what is happening with evolution*, as demonstrated above – it is by default unbelievable, and a good majority of the population agrees with that assessment. Such a statement could not be made of the Bible, nor polled of it – even with the social stigma against conservative Christianity in our present culture, most people are still afraid to dismiss the Bible entirely. By default, the Bible is *believable*, simply due to its incredible impact on culture since its inception and the

attacks it has repeatedly endured, and that makes it the apologists' most potent tool for evangelism.

Let us do an easy compare of the Bible with just two of the most common “holy books” of other world-wide religions: the Koran and the Book of Mormon.

Comparison of “Holy Books”			
	Bible	Koran	Book of Mormon
Time span written	1600+ years	22 years	~10 years
Geographic span	3 continents	Middle East	North America
# of authors	40+	1 (Mohammed)	1 (Joseph Smith)
# of sections	66 Books (1189 Chapters)	114 Chapters	15 Books (239 Chapters)
Conclusion: The Bible’s geographic and time spans, authorship breadth, and coherency is unparalleled with any other “holy book”, begging the question: what makes the Bible so incredibly unique and influential?			

It is simply not remarkable if the Koran and Book of Mormon have an inherently coherent message – they were, after all – each wrote by one man well within his own lifetime!

However, consider the Bible – written over 40+ generations worth of time, on three different continents, by over 40 authors, spanning 66 books → if the message was coherent at all, it would be a miracle! Yet, the message is remarkably coherent (and of course to many it is inerrant, as this author ultimately takes his position).

If someone is not convinced that the Bible is “miraculous” in its ability to put together a coherent story from beginning to end, then

simply ask them to walk into any library anywhere and find 66 books, written by at least 40 different authors, over a 1600 time span, on at least 3 different continents and come up with a coherent message. It cannot be done!

This internal evidence for the Bible is one of the single most unique and strong evidences available. Do not be surprised – again – the Bible has survived every attack possible in the last 2000 years. Nobody has truly invented anything new since that time and the Bible has stood up to them all.

What about external evidence for the truthfulness of the Bible?

Many skeptics point out that there are conflicting manuscripts in the original language of the Bible. True, not all of the original-language manuscripts available match one another. However, one could – if one desired – to eliminate every passage that had a discrepancy – and one would not come out with anything but a very-slightly thinner Bible. The number of discrepancies is about 1% of all verses of the Bible total and many of these verses, if not all of them in some form, are repeated where there is solid manuscript evidence. This is why this issue is really not commonly questioned; the manuscript evidence for the Bible is *objectively superior to absolutely any other literature of antiquity* – not even Shakespeare’s plays, written only a few hundred years ago – have the manuscript evidence the Bible enjoys!

Ancient Biographical Evidences for...		
The Bible	Shakespeare’s Plays	The Iliad & Odyssey
5,289+ (discovering more regularly) – up to 24,000 if every shred is counted	233 (it is now near-universally accepted Shakespeare did <i>not</i> write these plays!)	643

Conclusion: Absolutely no other book or ancient collection of books comes *anywhere near* the evidence for the Bible.

What about the supposed contradictions? Some would say that the resurrection appearances vary, for example, or the creation story from Genesis 1 and 2 vary, for another example?

There are two simple answers to the accusation of inconsistencies:

Let's say a newspaper reported that a basketball game occurred and Team 1 scored 97 points, and Team 2 scored 95 points.

Then another newspaper reported that at that same basketball game, Team 1 scored 98 points, and Team 2 score 96 points.

From the above, there is an obvious contradiction *in the score of the game*, however, *nobody questions the game happened!*

Therefore, even if (and this author does not take this view) there is a contradiction in Scripture (say one account says one angel only was present, and another account says two angels were present, at a particular moment), all that means is that one author is reporting some details differently but both authors agreed that the event reported happened! So even if one does not accept inerrancy in Scripture, it is completely dishonest to throw out the entire account of something simply because two authors disagreed on a detail or two here or there!

The second answer to supposed contradictions is the following: if there is an account of an event where two or more authors agree the event occurred, but some details differ, should we 1) throw out the whole account, because some details differ or 2) attempt to harmonize

the accounts, since all of the authors agreed the event itself did occur, even if they did record it differently?

Logic *demand*s the second approach. Unlike evolution (the author is being serious here), we *can* observe this same effect fully in the real world. News events like ball games are commonly reported with slightly differing details every day, yet nobody questions that the events occurred. And if it is important to reconcile the details in those stories, every effort is made to do so. All the same, any story in the Bible that is repeated elsewhere with different details should be given the shadow of a doubt just like any news event is given: if the two stories can be harmonized, it should be done, for the sake that the reader of the story will therefore have a most complete and accurate account possible of the story presented.

What Do We Do With Two Accounts of One Story?		
Two accounts of a basketball game	Two accounts of a Bible story	Do we throw the story out because there are obvious, inherent, unique features to each account? No!
One account emphasizes Player X, the other Player Y	One account discusses two angels present, another one angel talking	Do we assume that the different details mean the game, or the story, never happened? No!
Harmonize for more complete story	Harmonize for more complete story	Consistent standards result in a consistent science and discipline of history and news reporting

This author has never witnessed the account of a basketball game thrown out because two reporters gave stories that varied slightly one from another. All the same, it is absolutely presumptuous to throw out any Bible story, no matter how fantastic, just because some details may vary from one account to the other. Just like any piece of journalism that may be harmonized with another, we too should harmonize any Scriptural story that is told two or more times in order to come up with the most complete and accurate story possible. Anything less is at the least incorrect procedure, and at the most, flagrant dishonesty.

This author does want to emphasize that harmonizing these so-called inconsistencies have been covered in great detail by a great many scholars. So, harmonization does work, can be demonstrated, to the same standards any journalist would hold themselves to when “really getting to the bottom” of a story.

What about explaining miracles and other supernatural phenomena in the Bible that some people simply find unbelievable?

This is a better question than some would say, because again we are dealing with the *sheer believability* of something. Are miracles and other supernatural phenomena believable in today’s world of scientific “wonders” and technological advancement?

This question, though honest and deserving of an answer, is not difficult to resolve. There are two key answers:

1) Over the period of time the Bible was written (1600 years), less than 200 miracles happened TOTAL during that time. If averaged out, This means there was only about one miracle per two years, that at best a localized group of people saw, if anybody at all (for example, nobody witnessed creation until Adam and Eve were created right at the very end

of it). So if we were to say that miracles are happening today at least as often as they did in Bible times, and then there would only be one every couple of years, possibly witnessed by no one, or by a single localized group at any given time. Since over 70% of practicing medical doctors profess that miracles in medicine still happen today (and many subjectively testify to that fact), we can be certain that miracles are in fact *quite believable* and possibly, quite common.

Are Miracles Believable?	
Miracles in the Bible	Miracles Today?
Over 1600+ years Around 200 miracles total If averaged, one every other year May or may have been witnessed If witnessed, by one or at most, a localized group of people Witnessed by anybody from shepherds to kings to preachers to pagans to lame and blind to the rich and the poor.	2000+ years Some events not only unexplained by science or history, but unexplainable by any measure. Rare by definition. If witnessed, by one or at most a localized group of people. 70% of Medical Doctors say miracles occur (and many subjectively testify to that fact).
Conclusion: the same basic regularity, nature, and witness of miracles in the Bible are what we would expect to see today, and indeed, we do.	
One primary difference: any miracles today are done by the hand of God directly; Biblical miracles sometimes had God using men to perform them for the purpose of confirming the message the men were speaking.	

2) If a “supernatural God” exists at all, by definition who He is and what He does is beyond any understanding we have in the natural world as we know it. Therefore, the only thing logically keeping anybody from believing in miracles is not their possible regularity, or their supernatural origin, but rather *a predisposed assumption that God does not exist, and therefore*

miracles cannot occur. Any phenomena, by default, in a humanist/secularist worldview, simply cannot be a miracle, *because their worldview does not allow it.* Ironically, the Christian view is much more freeing – if a “miracle” happens – we are free to try to understand if what happened was natural but unknown, or miraculous in origin. The atheist/humanist, however, has no such choice in the matter. To be an atheist is to be intellectually enslaved to one philosophy!

Which Worldview Allows Intellectual Freedom?	
Christian	Atheist/Agnostic
Free to understand an unexplained event could be miracle, or nature unknown	Worldview requires that an unexplained event, no matter how fantastic or unlikely, is a matter of nature unknown
The Christian is free to decide on their own if an unknown event may be divine in origin (miraculous) or simply nature unexplained. The Atheist/Agnostic has their mind made up for them by their worldview.	

The final topic, and the most important, is the person of Jesus Christ. Although creation is interesting and supporting of God (most demonstrably gives us an idea of God’s incredible power), and the Bible is likely the most potent tool anyone has to prove to an unbeliever the divine nature of the Gospel, Jesus Christ is the linchpin to the entire Christian belief system. Even if one believes in a literal six-day creation, and the Christian God did it, without Jesus, we are still in our sins, and our faith is futile (the Bible says so – 1 Corinthians 15:1ff). So the burden of proof is on us to prove that even with God and the Bible that the Jesus of the Bible is who it says He is, and did what it says He did, for all of our faith depends on it!

Not by any accident, we have more than one account of Jesus' life – we have four. No other Bible character – in fact no other central religious character in any other holy book – has this much testimony of their life recorded by so many. There is even external evidence for Jesus' life outside the Bible – most notably Josephus' writings. Josephus was a non-Christian, Jewish historian, so his mentioning of Jesus and Christianity is naturally unbiased.

Is Jesus' Bibliography Sufficient?		
	Jesus	Any other ancient historical character
# of ancient written accounts of his life	4 + external reports outside the Bible	1, maybe 2
Results?	#1 most recognizable historical character in the world #1 religion in the world in population #1 bestseller (Bible)	Mostly local legacy; some world-wide religions but none with the breadth, span, or continuous impact like Jesus' religion - Christianity

The four accounts we have of Jesus' life in the Gospels record dozens of miracles, teachings, parables, claims, and events that happened mostly in just a three year span of time. The gist of the Gospels is that Jesus was the promised Messiah (and not just promised from the Jews, for the Jews –but promised to all of mankind from Genesis 3:15 on), that Jesus claimed to be God, proved He was God, and then died on a cross as a final, perfect sacrifice for all of mankind's violations of God's edicts since the beginning of time. Then, Jesus' resurrection as recorded at the end of every Gospel and recorded further in the book of Acts and

commented on in virtually every book thereafter in the Bible, lies the victory Jesus had over the grave, thus ultimately giving anyone hope to the forgiveness of their sins and the hope of heaven if they follow Jesus' terms of pardon as taught by Him and His Apostles, if one believes in the above account(s).

What makes the above *believable*? If any subject is believable/plausible, then by default the opposite position has the burden of proof.

First, Jesus did claim to be God, dozens of times, in all four accounts of His life. So, logically, we are forced by Jesus' own words to make a conclusion about Him: either He was deceived (thinking He was God, but really was not), the deceiver (knowing He was God, but faking it), or He really was God. There is no fourth alternative that has any logical bearing.

Who is Jesus, Really?		
Deceived (Lunatic)	Deceiver (Liar)	Deity (Lord)
Did Jesus think He was God but was wrong?	Did Jesus know He was not God, but faked it?	Did Jesus claim to be God, and Indeed, He was God?
How did Jesus arrange for his mother to fake a virgin birth? How did he manage to get the witness of nearby shepherds and wise men from the east to recognize him as Messiah, when he wasn't? How did he argue with the doctors of the law at 12 years old, being unschooled? How did he perform 36+ miracles, faking each one, even ones like rising a dead man ceased for 4 days? Why would he subject himself to death on a cross? How could he fulfill 336+ prophecies		Jesus fulfilled 336+ prophecies. Jesus was believed by and written about by 4+ authors. Jesus' disciples fully believed His resurrection, to the extent they each died in the preaching of it.

<p>about himself when he had no control over a great many of them? How did Jesus raise from the dead, when proven dead, to convince so many he really was alive, so convincingly that should risk their lives continually for his message and die for it as martyrs?</p>	<p>The impact of Jesus' religion today is unparalleled. The Bible is the world's all-time #1 bestseller.</p>
<p>Conclusion: logic says Jesus is Deity. What do you say?</p>	

Some would claim (especially recently – and in this author's opinion – out of desperation to the unequivocal rationale of the above) that Jesus never existed at all, because if Jesus never existed, then the Deceived/Deceiver/Deity argument can be thrown out. However, logic again must take precedence – if one is prepared to throw out Jesus from history – then one must throw out Alexander the Great, all the Roman emperors, Homer, Confucius, and virtually any other character of historical antiquity because none have *anywhere near* the preservation of documents and historical witnesses to Christ's earthly life. If one accepts any facet of ancient history, Christ is the prime example of that group.

Did Jesus Exist?	
Jesus	Most other historical characters
<p>4+ biographical accounts with remarkable consistency between them</p> <p>Outside the Bible mentions by unbiased ancient, same-time authors like Josephus</p> <p>5,289+ manuscripts of His Bible</p> <p>24,000 manuscripts if every shred is counted</p> <p>More ancient witness testimony</p>	<p>1, maybe 2 accounts</p> <p>Often embellished, contradictory accounts</p> <p>External accounts scant or contradictory</p> <p>Usually only a handful of manuscripts exist within a few hundred years of the person's existence, yet we do not question if that particular historical character</p>

than any other person of history.	lived or not.
Conclusion: consistent standards for historical evidence of an ancient character existence not only proves Jesus existed, but did so with far more overwhelming evidence than any other historical character, yet nobody rejects the historical reality of Homer, Alexander the Great, etc.	

Therefore, we are all faced with the Deceived/Deceiver/Deity logic: which was He? Was Jesus deceived into thinking He was the Messiah, when He really was not? This would require that Jesus be able to perform miracles unwittingly, teach with such authority and precision ignorantly, and become the world's most famous historical character entirely by accident. If one believes all of that, then this author thinks one would believe anything! (This author believes that it takes more faith *not* to believe than to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God)

If Jesus was the Deceiver, knowing He was not the Christ but faked it, how did He convince His mother to fake a virgin birth? How did He plan His own escape as a 2 year old to Egypt to fulfill prophecy? How did He force His parents to live in Nazareth after being born in Bethlehem, again to fulfill prophecy? (There are 336+ prophecies Jesus fulfilled – how could He have arranged to fulfill all of them so convincingly when He did not have any control or influence over a great number of them?) Why would He subject Himself to death on a cross? How did He raise from the dead? Why would His Apostles live the martyrs' lives they did if He did not raise from the dead and prove His Deity? How did Jesus become the most famous character in all of history, rising up both the world's most prolific religion as well as the #1 bestseller book of all time, merely by deception?

Instead, presented with just the independent facts of the Gospels and history, we can easily see that it is much more *believable* to conclude that Jesus was Deity (God). This also makes the most logical sense. Now, it does not resonate with the modern/secular/humanist/anti-supernaturalist mentality commonly out there today, but that is out of worldview bias, not of what logic demands!

The fact that Jesus is the #1 most recognizable name in the world, with the world's #1 and most prolific religion, with the world's #1 bestseller of all time, still changing lives by the testimony of tens of millions of Christians today, all points to the simple fact that He is Lord, both in the Bible, and now, as King over His Church. He is coming back by His own words, and if we can believe His own words about His death and resurrection, we can believe our Deity Jesus that He is indeed coming back!

In conclusion, God, the Bible, and Jesus are all absolute facts, inerrant in character and content, and true to every word and action the Word of God ascribes to them. The above is a summary approach of one way how to “prove” them all to be true according to logic and history.

Ultimately, however, always remember that souls are not won on the debate floor or the college classroom. Souls are won in the hearts of men, hearing the Word of Truth from someone they love and trust (and who loves and trusts them), and responding to it thereby (see Romans 10:10-17, especially vs. 17). “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” May we preach and not argue; may we defend and not estrange. God’s Word is too precious for our pride, and His offer of salvation too important to be worried about “winning” an argument!