

## Lesson 9: Is The New Testament True? (Continued)

### TWO QUESTIONS for investigating the reliability of the New Testament:

1. Do we have an accurate copy of the original NT documents?
2. Do the original NT documents tell the truth? (Part 1)

### The Six E's – Evidence That The NT Is True

1. Early Testimony
2. Eyewitness Testimony
3. Embarrassing Testimony
4. Excruciating Testimony
5. Expected Testimony
6. Extra-Biblical Testimony

#### 1. Early Testimony

Both internal and external evidence indicates that every NT book was likely written before AD 70.

#### 2. Eyewitness Testimony

Historical Cross-hairs in the text:

*In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene— during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. Luke 3:1-2 (NIV)*

Does it sound like he is making up a story? Nope – too many specifics.

1. An exact date is given – A.D. 29.
2. All eight people are known from history
3. All were known to live at this exact time.
4. This is not a “Once Upon A Time” story (myth)

Numerous confirmed eyewitness details:

1. Acts – 84 historically confirmed eyewitness details.
2. Luke includes several others in his Gospel
3. John-- 59 historically confirmed or historically probable eyewitness details
4. New Testament Documents cite more than 30 people confirmed by secular sources or archaeology.

Scholars say:

Acts Is Authoritative:

“I began with a mind unfavorable to it [Acts]....; but more recently I found myself brought in contact with the book of Acts as an authority for the topography, antiquities, and society of Asia Minor. It was gradually borne in upon me that in various details the narrative showed marvelous truth.”

(Archaeologist William Ramsey, *St. Paul the Traveler and Roman Citizen*, p. 8)

Acts Is Historically Accurate:

“For Acts the confirmation of historicity is overwhelming..... Any attempt to reject its basic historicity must now appear to be absurd. Roman historians have long taken it for granted.”

(Roman historian A.N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament*, p. 189)

Archaeology: Corroborates The Historicity of the Bible

“In Extraordinary ways, modern archaeology has affirmed the historical core of the Old and New Testaments – corroborating key points of the stories of Israel’s patriarchs, the Exodus, the Davidic monarchy, and the life and times of Jesus.”

(Jeffery Sheler, “*Is the Bible True*”, U.S. News and World Report, October 25<sup>th</sup>, 1999, p. 52)

### 3. Embarrassing Testimony

**“If there is something in a document that is embarrassing to the authors, it is probably true.” (Nobody lies to make themselves look bad!)**

#### **\*\*\*They Are Dim-witted**

>>> They fail to understand what Jesus is saying.  
(Mark 9:32, Luke 18:34, John 12:16)

#### **\*\*\* They Are Uncaring**

>>> They Fall asleep on Jesus twice.  
>>> They make no effort to give Jesus a proper burial.

### **\*\*\* They Are Rebuked**

>>> Peter is called Satan by Jesus. (Mark 8:33)

>>> Paul rebukes Peter for being wrong about a theological issue. (Gal 2:11)

### **\*\*\* They are Cowards**

>>> Peter denies Christ three times.

>>> The disciples (inc. Apostles) run away!

>>> The women are the brave ones.

(All 4 Gospels say that the women discovered the empty tomb. Why make this up when a woman's testimony was considered much less than that of a man?)

### **\*\*\* They Are Doubters**

>>> Despite being taught several times that Jesus would rise from the dead (John 2:18, 3:14-18; Matt. 12:39-41; 17:9, 22-23), The disciples are doubtful when they hear of his resurrection.

>>> Some are even doubtful after they see Him risen (Matt 28:17)!

## **3) Potentially Embarrassing Testimony About Jesus**

>>> Is considered "out of his mind" by his own family who come to sieze Him to take him home (Mark 3:21, 31).

>>> Is deserted by many of His followers (John 6:66).

>>> His own brothers do not believe in Him (John 7:5).

>>> Is thought to be a deceiver (John 7:12).

>>> Turns off Jewish believers to the point that they want to stone him (John 8:30-59).

>>> He is called a "madman" (John 10:20).

>>> He is called a "drunkard" (Matt. 11:19).

>>> He is called "demon-possessed" (Mk. 3:22, Jn 7:20, 8:48).

>>> He has His feet wiped with the hair of a prostitute (Luke 7:36-39).

>>> Two prostitutes are in the genealogies of Jesus.

>>> Is crucified despite the fact that "anyone who is hung on a tree is under God's curse" (Deut. 21:23).