



## ● Quick Backdrop

Today, perhaps more than ever, we hear questions or objections to the Bible. And let's be honest, a book that is thousands of years old, written by different people in different cultures and languages can generate a lot of skepticism. So, how do we know we can trust it?

## 1 Digging In (God, Show Me!)

The main focus and message in the Bible is the story about Jesus' death and resurrection. That is the foundation belief of Christianity. We believe that Jesus is the perfect God-man, that He is sinless, that He died for the sin of all humanity and three days later rose from the dead, defeating sin and death so that anyone who believes in Him and follows Him will not die but be saved for eternity.

If the story of Jesus coming back to life is not true, then Christianity is "futile" and "useless" (1 Cor. 15:13-19). So, let's start there, with Jesus' resurrection.

### How do we know that Jesus rose from the dead?

1. Even the most fervent skeptics of Christianity admit that Jesus existed and died. Ancient scholars and historians wrote about Jesus outside of the Bible. One such prominent historian was Josephus who lived from AD 37-100, approximately the same time as Jesus and His disciples.
2. All four of the gospel books, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, give an account of Jesus' death and resurrection. Other than slight variations, they don't disagree.
3. More than 500 people were eyewitnesses to Jesus being alive after his death (1 Cor. 15:6). It's difficult to convince 500 people to tell the exact same lie. If you were making up the story, you're not likely to admit to 500 collaborators.
4. Tradition tells us that nearly all of Jesus' disciples, including those who wrote gospels in the Bible, died excruciating deaths for claiming that Jesus rose from the dead. John died of old age but had been tortured for claiming Jesus was risen from the dead. If they would have admitted that the resurrection story was a lie, life would have been a lot easier for them. These guys died for the truth.

## 2 Taking It Inward: The Four Reasons (God, Teach Me!)

### 1. History shows it true.

The Bible books Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are called gospels; they biographies of Jesus' time on earth. How do we know that what the gospels say are true? The original copies of the gospels were written between AD 40-100; that's the ancient equivalent of play-by-play. Historians have more than 5,000 copies or partial copies (which is a vast amount when using ancient literature standards) that date back to AD 150 which is about as close as you can get to the originals without the originals (and yes, we have no originals). Although there are some slight variations, the copies tell the same account of Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

### 2. It changes your life.

#### 2 Timothy 3:16-17

*All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work."*

If you pause every time before you read, and you ask God to show you something new or teach you, He will *always* answer that prayer with a "yes."

### 3. It never changes.

The Bible never changes. For thousands of years, believers have turned to the Scriptures for direction and instruction. The same teaching that someone received in 1015 is the same truth we receive in 2015.

### 4. It has an answer for everything.

While you may not find a check list of do's and don'ts for specific issues, you will find that the Bible teaches wisdom and principles of truth. For example, the Bible doesn't say "don't cheat on a test in school." But it does say "be honest, tell the truth, and live by integrity." Those principles of truth should give you the answer you need when you're tempted to cheat.

The Bible doesn't say "don't look at pornography." But it does say "Do not commit sexual sin or lust in your heart."

## 3 Seal the Deal (God, Change Me!)

We can trust the Bible. But go ahead, test it for yourself. Each day this week, commit to reading a passage and every time ask God to show you something or teach you something. See what happens!

Fold or Cut