



Trust Your Bible

Luke 1:1-4

To hear some people, the Bible is just _____ ancient book written by humans and filled with myths, errors, and contradictions. Others think the Bible is just one sacred book among _____. They've suggested the Bible is merely the _____ of a later community that took some truths from Jesus and then embellished the story. But these objections don't fit the _____. The Bible is a unique book, unlike any other book in all _____. The Bible claims to be the Word of God and says that it will _____ us in the last day. If this is true, then we need to _____ to everything it has to say.

What if, for just a moment, we looked at the credibility of the New Testament as a _____ document. Can we _____ it? A man named Harvey W. Everest, in his book, *The Divine Demonstration*, listed seven criteria by which historical testimony may be _____. Testimony is judged to be the _____ when it meets these criteria.

First, testimony is true when the witnesses are honest, competent and have an opportunity to _____. Peter affirms this in 2 Peter 1:16-18.

Second, testimony is true when the witnesses _____ in the general statement, although they may differ on minor points. On the day of Pentecost all twelve apostles stood _____ as eyewitnesses of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:22-24). As you _____ through the four gospel accounts, you're going to find an amazing correlation of the basic _____ about the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. They were _____ knowledge (Acts 26:26). If what the apostles said was not _____, it could easily and immediately have been shown to be false; but these facts stood _____!

Third, testimony is true when there is no known _____ for imposture or faking. The apostles and preachers of the first century didn't become rich or honored by men _____ of their testimony. They didn't _____ for gold or glory. Peter told the lame beggar, "I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I _____ to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene—walk!" (Acts 3:6). It was a _____ miracle and no one could deny it. Peter and John gained _____ from this healing, but were arrested. In fact, history records the apostles' numerous persecutions by the Romans, their opposition from the Jews, and the difficult lives that they faced in order to _____ Jesus as the Christ. They were _____ believers.

Fourth, testimony is true when the _____ recorded are strongly against the faith or interest of the narrator, that is the one telling the story. The book of Acts records the persecution of the church and those who suffered for their _____, including Stephen and James who became martyrs. Church tradition teaches that _____ the apostles suffered death for their teachings (except the apostle John, who was imprisoned on the isle of Patmos according to Revelation 1:9-10).

Fifth, testimony is true when such witnesses are _____. Jesus made several appearances in the forty days after his resurrection and He demonstrated himself to be the Son of God by _____ convincing proofs (Acts 1:1-3). Paul said that Jesus appeared to more than _____ brethren at one time (1 Corinthians 15:6). The eyewitnesses to Jesus' resurrection were abundant and unanimously convinced that He is the _____ of God! If this were not the case, people would have _____ challenged it. The Jewish leaders knew that Jesus was _____; they knew Jesus was everything He claimed to be (John 11:47-48; Acts 4:16).



Sixth, testimony is true when the _____ facts and the existing facts are related as cause and effect. The places, people, culture and circumstances recorded by the authors of the New Testament represented the way things _____ were. Christianity is built upon the _____ of real people and real events in a real place. Unlike the Book of Mormon, you can actually find the cities mentioned in the New Testament. Nor does the New Testament speak of things that were not in existence at the _____. The New Testament is not _____ with nameless, mythical people who could never have lived. Rather, archaeology and secular historical records _____ the credibility of the New Testament. The dates of the New Testament _____ historical realities in the world of that era. In fact, no events of the ancient world have been studied so _____ as those described in the New Testament.

Seventh, testimony is true when the facts recorded are sustained by _____ monuments, coins, games or other public institutions. The fact that the _____ itself exists is a marvelous testimony to the resurrection of Jesus Christ and to the truth of the apostles' teaching. The church _____ at a time and place where men could have disproved the resurrection if it were a lie. But the testimony of the apostles to the resurrection _____. According to Acts 6:7, even many of the _____ were obedient to the faith and became Christians. The whole world is _____ because of Jesus Christ. There would never have been a church had the _____ not believed in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The fact that churches after twenty centuries still _____ on the first day of the week, the Lord's resurrection day, is a testimony to the fact that the events of the New Testament are real.

Jesus said in Matthew 24:35 that, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My _____ will not pass away," and they haven't. In fact, we have more ancient manuscripts of the New Testament than we do of any ancient _____, some 5,480 manuscripts. The _____ is for people in all places for all time (1 Peter 1:24-25).

The primary reason for _____ the Bible is because it indeed is inspired of God Himself. The Bible makes this claim of inspiration more than _____ times. One may say about any passage of the Bible that God is the _____ of it (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

The remarkable evidence of fulfilled _____ is just one case in point. Hundreds of Bible prophecies have been _____, specifically and meticulously, often long after the prophetic writer had passed away. For instance, Micah the prophet in the eighth century B. C. foretells that Jesus would be _____ in Bethlehem of Judah (Micah 5:2). And when the _____ men from the East asked Herod about it, Herod turned to the chief priests and scribes, and they knew _____ where Jesus was to be born, Bethlehem!

Each of you should read the _____, meditate on it, memorize it, love it, obey it, and teach it to your children. It can make so much difference in your _____. If you will take the _____ to read the Word, it will build your faith and change your life (John 7:17). This book is no ordinary book; it's God's _____ Word. Don't _____ God out of your life. He truly is the _____ to all your needs. When the influence of the Bible is _____, people's moral lives are better; but when it's _____, people's lives become filled with every evil thing.

If you're not a Christian why not become one. Nobody and _____ for you: you have to make up your mind to _____ the Lord. Believe with all your _____, repent of your _____, confess the _____ of Jesus, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the _____ of your sins as the Bible teaches in Acts 2:38 and in 22:16. Your sins will be forgiven when you're baptized and you'll become a _____ of God. If you're a wayward child of God, come _____ to God today.