

Introduction to Evidences for Christianity

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GENESIS ONE

I. **Introduction-** What does the Bible teach about creation? (Gen. 1:12:15) along with 77 other references.

II. Five Principles of Creation

- A. Creation involved the wise, intelligent mind of the Creator. (I Tim. 1:17; Ps.104:24; Pr. 3:19; Jer. 10:12)
- B. Creation was purposeful- (Ps. 19:1; Col. 1: 16b)
- C. Creation was orderly and planned. (Isa. 45:18; Ps. 115:16)
- D. Creation involved the sudden direct action of God. (Gen. 1:3,6,9,11,14,20,24,26) point to eight specific creative works of God, going from simple to complex. God spoke these things into existence (Ps. 33:6, 148:5; Heb. 11:3)
- E. Creation is to be viewed as valuable- God viewed it that way! (Gen. 1:10,12,18,21,25,31)- His work was good.

III. The Order of Creation

- A. According to the Principles of science, the universe consists of Time, Space and Matter. This is in perfect agreement with Gen. 1:1- Time = Beginning, Space = Heavens, Matter = Earth.
- B. Faith is our basis for accepting God's creation, (Heb. 11:3).
- C. The universe is finite, though extensive. During Creation God singled out the Earth for special attention, it was unformed and unfilled until God did something about it.
- D. Compare the first three days of creation to the last three days.
 - 1. Day 1 to Day 4 Light to sun, moon to stars
 - 2. Day 2 to Day 5 Water and Sky to fish and birds
 - 3. Day 3 to Day 6 Land and plants to Man and animals
- E. Day 1- (1:3-5), *Let there be light*, note light precedes sun.
Day 2- (1:6-8), The firmament, the atmosphere
Day 3- (1: 9-13), dry land and vegetation
Day 4- (1: 14-19), the luminaries- to divide night and day and to signal the seasons.
Day 5- (1:20-23), marine and bird life
Day 6- (1:24-27), animals and man

[NOTE: Each group was commanded to reproduce after its own kind. Only man contains the "breath of life," and is made in God's image. (Gen. 2:7,1:26) MAN IS UNIQUE, the Crown of God's creation.]

Day 7- (2:2) God quit creating.

IV. Textual Analysis-

- Verse 1- "In the Beginning" does not indicate when.
2- "Waste and void" No one knows how long the Earth was in this state.
5- "day"-since sun and moon were not put into place until Day 4, we have no proof that Days 1 to 3 were 24 hours in length.
11- "after their, kind" simply means dogs have puppies, cats have kittens, pear trees have pears, etc. It allows for variations within the species.
26- "Let us make man..."- Of the three Hebrew words we translate "create," all are used in reference to man's creation.
27- "His own image"-That is, man is an eternal spirit, and a creature of choice.
28- "replenish" to fill, not to do a second time.

V. Hypotheses of Creation

- A. The Gap Theory- There is an indefinite period of time between Gen. 1:1 and 1: 2. Some who hold this theory feel that other ages may, have pre-existed the Adamic age and were destroyed by God, similar to the Flood.
B. Initial Chaos Theory- This theory also holds that a long period of time existed between verses 1 and 2, during which time the earth aged.
C. Multiple Gap Theory- Places indefinite periods of time between each day of creation. This hypothesis is suggested by many of the so-called theistic evolutionists.
D. The Day/Age Theory- holds that each day of creation represents a long period of time. These periods compare to the evolutionists geological time periods.
E. The Pictorial/Day Theory- God took an indefinite time to create the world, but used six days to explain it to man.
F. The Literal Theory- There were six 24-hour days. God created everything "old," that is, man was created full-grown, why not the earth plants, etc? So even at the moment of creation the earth appeared old.

VI. Conclusion

It is well to remember Heb.11.3 when thinking about creation. Faith is the Key. There are many things we cannot know about the creation, but the purpose behind God giving us Gen. 1 can be summed up as follows:

- 1) To show mankind that the world originally proceeded from the creative activity of God.
- 2) That Godhood alone, is the creator of the world.
- 3) That through His creation He reveals Himself to be the Eternal God, omnipotent, omniscient, and infinitely good.

- 4) Finally, to inform man of the noble origins of his ancestors, and of the exalted dignity attached to mankind, because we are created in the image of God.

The most important thing to know concerning creation is neither when nor how God did it, but that GOD DID IT!

Sources:

Creation: Evidence From Science and Scripture, Roy B. Zuck
I Believe Because (chapter 12), B.B. Baxter

THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE

Part One: What Does Inspiration Mean?

INTRODUCTION

In this lesson concerning the inspiration of the Bible we will discuss three views as to what inspiration means and examine two areas of supporting evidence showing the scriptures to be the inspired Word of God. In two future lessons we will examine four additional areas of supporting evidence.

THREE VIEWS OF INSPIRATION

ONE: Universal Inspiration

Einstein, Michaelangelo, and Beethoven have all been inspired. Some liberal scholars feel that this is the type of inspiration the Bible writers possessed.

This definition does not really cover the idea of inspiration: God-given genius, maybe; exceptional talent, absolutely; Biblical inspiration, not hardly.

TWO: Partial Inspiration

The scholars who hold this view say that the principles and ideals that the Bible set forth are God-given, but the historic facts, doctrines, rules and regulations were the ideas of the writers themselves. This theory leaves it up to man to sort out the good from the bad, something that man has done a poor job of on his own through the years.

THREE: Full Inspiration

In this view we find the gospel writers using their own personalities and styles to write down exactly what God, through the Holy Spirit, guided them to write.

In 2 Pet. 1:20,21, Peter states the case for full inspiration. Add to this the statement of Paul in I Cor. 2:12-13, and we see that the Bible writers themselves believed in full inspiration.

It is obvious from the different styles of writing that the individual's personality, background and vocabularies were used. Therefore we used the word "guided" instead of "dictated" when discussing how the books were written.

In his book, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, Dr. Benjamin Warfield wrote: "Inspiration is, therefore, usually defined as a supernatural influence exerted on the sacred writers by the Spirit of God, by virtue of which their writings are given Divine trustworthiness."

AREAS OF SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

There are six major areas of supporting evidence that show that the Scriptures are the fully inspired Word of God. They are:

- 1) The Scriptures claim to be inspired.
- 2) The influence of the Bible.
- 3) The unusual style of the Scriptures.
- 4) The unity of the Scriptures.
- 5) The fulfilled prophecies of the Scriptures.
- 6) The scientific foreknowledge of the Bible.

[In this lesson we will examine areas one and two.]

ONE: The Scriptural Claim of Inspiration

As we have seen in 2 Pet. 1:20-21 and 1 Cor. 2:12-13, the writers claim to be inspired. But who are these writers that claim this God-breathed gift? In most instances they were unlearned and ignorant, untrained and uneducated. Despite their lack of formal training, they confidently affirm to be speaking from and for God.

How did such men produce the finished product we have before us today? How did they become aware of these great truths, if God did not inform them? Dr. Henry Thiessen in his book, *Introduction to the New Testament*, put it this way:

How could uninspired man write a book that commands all duty, forbids all sin, including the sin of hypocrisy and lying, denounces all human merit as insufficient for salvation, holds out as man's only hope faith in atoning death, physical resurrection, and present intercession of Christ, and condemn to hell for all eternity all who reject this one way of salvation and persist in sin?

TWO: The Influence of the Bible.

Mt. 7:16 states a principle of truth as does James 3:11,12. What is this truth? The Bible lifts whoever it touches to a higher plane. Through its study better husbands and wives; fathers and mothers; sons and daughters; employees and employers have come forth.

Could a continuous influence of good come from a hoax, a fabrication? The law of cause and effect tells us that the good effects seen from true Bible followers could only come from a good, true source.

Many institutions and governments have used principles set forth in the Bible to establish themselves in this world. Without the influence that the Bible has had for good, our world would indeed be a tragic place in which to live.

CONCLUSION

Do any of our trained writers of today express themselves any better than the writers of the Bible? This in itself is an evidence of their inspiration. Add to this their claim of inspiration as well as the positive influence their writings have had, and the source of their inspiration becomes clearly indicated. The Bible could not be a hoax and still have integrity and usefulness some 2000 years after its completion.

[This lesson adapted from: *I Believe Because...*, (Chapter 21) by Batsell Barrett Baxter.]

THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE

Part Two: The Unusual Style of the Scripture

Introduction

In Part One of our study of the inspiration of the Bible we mentioned six areas of supporting evidence that the Bible is indeed inspired. Let us review these six areas:

- 1) The scriptures claim to be inspired.
- 2) The influence of the Bible.
- 3) The unusual style of the scriptures.
- 4) The unity of the scriptures.
- 5) The fulfilled prophecies of the scriptures.
- 6) The scientific foreknowledge of the Bible.

We examined areas 1) and 2) in our first lesson, in this lesson let us take a look at area 3).

The Unusual Style of the Scriptures

We will now examine the scriptures from five different viewpoints to show what we mean by an "unusual style."

- 1) The brevity of entire books.
- 2) The brevity of Bible incidents.
- 3) The omissions of the scriptures.
- 4) The impartiality of the scriptures.
- 5) The calmness of the scriptures.

By examining these five aspects we hope to show characteristics so unusual in style that only the superintendence of God through the Holy Spirit could account for them.

ONE: The Brevity of Entire Books

In only 50 chapters, the Book of Genesis:

- (1) describes the origin of the world and all that is in it,
- (2) the first 2500 years of man's existence, and
- (3) uses only 34 verses to tell of the creation of the material universe including plants, animals and man.

Contrast this to the writings of man. It takes a modern day news reporter more space to describe a high school football game than Moses used in describing the creation of the universe. *The Reader's Digest* uses more words every month than the entire Book of Genesis! Imagine how long the gospels' of Christ would be if uninspired man had written them?

TWO: The Brevity of Bible Incidents

- Gen. 3:1-24 - In 24 verses Moses describes man's fall: This includes the origin of sin, suffering, death, toil and the necessity of a Messiah. All explained in this compact writing.
- Mt. 3:13-17 - Only five verses to describe the baptism of Jesus.
- Mt. 17:1-8 - Eight verses for the transfiguration, including Moses and Elijah appearing from the grave and a lesson on the superiority of Christ.
- Appearances of Christ after His resurrection: Matthew - 2; Mark -3; Luke - 3; John - 4.
- Paul's life before and after conversion.
- Death of the apostle James - 11 words.

It is unnatural for man to write with such restraint!

THREE: The Omissions of the Scriptures

- Compare what Mark and John have to say about the first 30 years of the life of Christ (nothing) with two uninspired writers of the second century. One ancient work uses 25 chapters to describe supposed events of the life of Jesus between the time of Mary's conception and Herod's infant slaughter. Another ancient book uses 50 chapters to tell of Christ's first twelve years. Even Matthew and Luke who do tell of the virgin birth and childhood spend very little time with these events.
- Christ's total life covered more than 18,000 days and His active ministry more than 1,870 days. Combined the four gospels describe only 34 different days. Out of 879 verses in the gospel of John, 237 (27%) pertain to the same day. Jn. 20:30-31;21:25
- Acts of the Apostles only concerns Peter and Paul. In Paul's case it even omits his appearances before Nero.
- Imagine a modern novelist or historian describing the events of 2 Cor. 11:24-27.
- Where is the physical description of Jesus in the Bible? Could his likeness have been preserved? Was the technology available? ABSOLUTELY, by stone sculpturing. Not only could a physical description been given but a physical likeness could have been handed down. Obviously God's will was against these things.

FOUR: The Impartiality of the Scriptures.

The Bible tells good and bad about its heroes. Friends and foes are described in a nonpartisan fashion.

- Look at the flaws of Abraham mentioned in Gen. 12:10-12; 20:1-12.
- David and Bathsheba, 2 Sam. 11:1-21.
- James and John are shown in a poor light in Lk. 9:51-55 and Mt. 20:20-22.
- Peter's denial, Mt. 26:69-75.
- Judas' betrayal, Mt. 26:14-16; 47-50.

No apologies, no reproaches, just facts. Prejudiced historians often hide flaws of their heroes or explain away their faults. No Watergates or sex scandals kept in the closet.

FIVE: The Calmness of the Scriptures

- Where are the emotions of the Bible writers?
- Why are the wonderful and the everyday described alike?
- Could you describe the transfiguration of Christ as calmly as Matthew did (17:1-5) if you were a companion of the witnesses?
- The murder of John the Baptist, Mt. 16:6-12.
- Miracles and resurrections.
- The events of the betrayal night are told without anger.
- The crucifixion, the resurrection, the events of Pentecost are all described calmly, Where are the words "amazing, unbelievable, unprecedented, stupendous, colossal, unrivaled?"

Conclusion

Men do not write like this. The only possible explanation for this unusual style, is that God guided and limited their writing. Add to this the background of the writers, many of whom were unlearned and ignorant and we conclude that the Bible is truly God's book.

- We must study it to learn his will for us.
- We must obey its commands to please God and receive salvation.

[Adapted from Chapter 22 of Batsell Barrett Baxter's book, *I Believe Because...*]

THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE

Part Three: Unity, Prophecy and Scientific Foreknowledge

Introduction

In Parts One and Two we examined three areas of evidence to support our contention that the Bible is inspired. (Scriptures claim to be inspired, the influence of the Bible, and the unusual style of the scriptures.) In this lesson we will examine the remaining three areas of evidence.

The Unity of the Scriptures

The Bible:

- 1) contains 66 books;
- 2) written independently by 40 men;
- 3) using three languages;
- 4) over a period of 1600 years.

The degree of unity found among the books of the Bible could not have been achieved by uninspired writers. How does the structure of the Bible compare to other religions' scriptures, such as Moslem or Buddhist writings? James Orr in his book, *The Bible Under Trial* made these comments:

It is the simple fact that there is nothing that can be properly called history in these other sacred books of the world. They are, as every student of them knows, for the most part jumbles of heterogeneous material, loosely placed together, without order, continuity, or unity of any kind. There is no order, progress or real connection of parts... The Bible, on the other hand, is a history with a beginning, a middle and an end; a history of revelation; the history of a developing purpose of God, working up to a goal in the full-orbed discovery of the will of god for man's salvation in His Son Jesus Christ. There is nothing like this, nothing even approaching it, in any other collection of sacred books in the world.

Fulfilled Prophecies

The definition of prophecy involves two ideas: 1) foretelling and 2) forth-telling. Foretelling is predicting the future, while forth-telling is stating information that could not have been known without inspiration. A prophecy is more than an educated guess.

Real prophecy is only found in the Bible, it is God's means to an end. It is not incidental or accidentals but has a reason behind it similar to the purpose of spiritual gifts in the New Testament: to prove that the speaker was from God!

In Deut. 18:9-22, Moses calls for a new prophet similar to himself. In Isa. 41:22,23, Isaiah calls for the idols to prophesy to prove they are gods.

Biblical prophecy is often minute in detail, such as Daniel e (Nebuchadnezzur's dream). Sometimes prophecy contradicts human wisdom's prediction as to the destruction of such mighty cities as Babylon and Jerusalem.

Critics of the Bible make four charges against prophecy:

- 1) vague language,
- 2) artificially fulfilled,
- 3) prophecies written after the event,
- 4) other religions have similar fulfilled prophecies.

Our answer to the critics' first three complaints is for them to carefully examine our list of 60 prophecies concerning Christ or any similar list of Biblical prophecies. (Refer to list.)

1. He was to be the seed of the woman (Gen. 3:15; 4:2; Matt. 1:18).
2. He would be the Son of God (Ps. 2:7; Luke 1:32-35).
3. He would overcome the serpent (Gen. 3:15; Heb. 2:14).
4. The seed of Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3; 17:7; 22:18; Gal. 3:16).
5. The seed of Isaac (Gen. 21:12; Heb. 11:18).
6. The seed of Judah (Gen. 49:10; Heb. 7:14).
7. The seed of David (Ps. 132:11; Jer. 23:5; Acu 13:23; Rom. 1:3).
8. The time of His coming and death (Dan. 9:24-27; Luke 2:1).

9. Born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:18; Luke 2:7).
10. He was called Immanuel (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:22, 23).
11. Born in Bethlehem of Judea (Mic. 5:2; Matt. 2:1; Luke 2:4-6).
12. Great men shall come and bow down to Him (Ps. 72:10-15; Matt. 2:1-11).
13. Children slaughtered, that He might be killed (Jer. 31:15; Matt. 2:16-18).
14. Introduced by John the Baptist (Isa. 40:3; Ma]. 3:1; Matt. 3:1-3; Luke 1:17).
15. Was anointed by the Holy Spirit (Ps. 45:7; Isa. 11:2; 61:1; Matt. 3:16, 17; John 3:34; Acts 10:38).
16. He was a prophet like unto Moses (Deut. 18:15-18; Acts 3:20-22).
17. He was sent as a deliverer to the people (Isa. 61:1-3; Luke 4:16-21, 43).
18. He is the light to Zebulun and Naphtali (Isa. 9:1-3; Matt. 4:12-16).
19. He comes to the temple and cleanses it (Hag. 2:7-9; Mal. 3: 1; Luke 19:45; John 2:13-16).
20. His poverty (Isa. 53:2; Mark 6:3; Luke 9:58).
21. He was meek, and without ostentation (Isa. 42:1-2; Phil. 2: 7-9).
22. His compassion (Isa. 40:11; 42:3; Matt. 12:15-20; Heb. 4:15).
23. Was without guile (Isa. 53:9; I Pet. 2:22).
24. Great zeal for the house of God (Ps. 69:9; John 2:17).
25. He taught by the use of parables (Ps. 78:2; Matt. 13:34-35)
26. He wrought miracles (Isa. 35:5, 6; Luke 7:18,23).
27. Rejected by His brethren (Ps. 69:8; Isa. 53:3; John 1:11; 7:5).
28. Hated by the Jews (Ps. 69:4; Isa. 49:7; John 15:24,25).
29. Rejected by their rulers (Ps. 118:22; John 7:48; Matt. 21:42).
30. A stone of stumbling and rock of offense (Isa. 8:14; Rom. 9:32; I Pet. 2:8).
31. Betrayed by a friend (Ps. 41:9; 55:12,14; John 13:18-21).
32. Forsaken by His disciples (Zech. 13:7; Matt. 26:31-56).
33. Was sold for thirty Pieces of silver (Zech. 11:12; Matt. 26:15).
34. This money was given to buy the potter's field (Zech. 11:13; Matt. 27:7).
35. He was patient and silent in all His sufferings (Isa. 53:7; Matt. 26:63; 27:12-14).
36. Smitten on the cheek (Mic. 5:1; Matt. 27:30).
37. His sufferings were intense (Ps. 22:14,15; Lk. 22:42-44).
38. Was scourged and spit upon (Ps. 35:15; Isa. 50:6; Mk. 14:65 ; Jn. 19:1).
39. His visage was greatly marred (Isa. 52:14; 53:3; John 19:1-5).
40. He suffered that He might bear away our sins (Isa. 53:4-6; Dan. 9:26; Matt. 20:28; 26:28).
41. The rulers, Jews and Gentiles, combine against Him to put Him to death (Ps. 2:1-4; Lk. 23:12; Acts 4:27-28).
42. He was extended upon the cross, and His hands and His feet were nailed to the wood (Isa. 25:10,11; Ps. 22:16; John 19:18; 20:25).
43. This agony was increased by being numbered among thieves (Isa. 53:12; Mark 15:28 [sic. 271).
44. They gave him gall and vinegar (Ps. 69:21; Matt. 27:34).
45. He was cruelly mocked (Ps. 22:7,8; 35:15-21; Matt. 27:39-44).
46. He suffered alone; even the Father's presence was withdrawn (Isa. 63:1-3; Ps. 22:1; Matt. 27:46).
47. They parted His garments among them, and cast lots for His vesture (Ps. 22:18; Matt. 27:35).
48. He thus became a curse for us, and bore our reproach (Ps. 22:6; 79:7; 9:20; Rom. 15:3; Heb. 13:13; Gal. 3:13).

49. He made intercession for the murderers (Isa. 53:12; Luke 23:34).
 50. After His death they pierced Him (Zech. 12:10; John 19:34-37).
 51. But did not break a bone of His body (Ex. 12:46; Ps. 34:20; John 19:33-36).
 52. He was buried with the rich (Isa. 53:9; Matt. 27:57-60).
 53. His flesh did not see corruption (Ps. 16:8-10; Acts 2:31).
 54. He rose from death the third day, according to the Scriptures (Ps. 16:8-10; 30:3; Luke 24:6, 31,34).
 55. He ascended into the heavens (Ps. 68:18; 24:7-9; Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9).
 56. He became a priest after the order of Melchizedek, who was king and .priest at the same time (Ps. 110:4; Heb. 5:5,6; Zech. 6:12,13).
 57. He received for Himself a kingdom that embraces the whole world (Ps. 2:6; Luke 1:32; Dan. 2:44; 7:13, 14; John 18:33-37; Matt. 28:18, 19; Phil. 2:9,10).
 58. His law went forth from .Zion and His Word from Jerusalem (Isa. 2:1-3; Mic. 4:12; Luke 24:46-49; Acts 2:1-40).
 59. The Gentiles should be admitted into His service (Isa. 11:10; 42:1; Ps. 2:8; John 10:16; Acts 10:44-48; Rom. 15:9-12).
 60. The righteousness of His reign (Isa. 9:6, 7; Ps. 45:6, 7; John 5:30; Rev. 19:11).
- [Adapted from D.R. Dungan's, *Hermeneutics*]

As for criticism number four, we quote from Randolph S. Foster's book; *Evidences of Christianity, the Supernatural Book*:

No well accredited prophecy is found in any other book or even oral tradition now extant, or that has ever been extant in the world. The oracles of heathenism are not to be classed as an exception, there is not a single one of them that meets the tests required to prove supernatural agency, which every scripture prophecy evinces.

What is the probability that pure chance would have a man named Jesus fulfill even 25 prophecies. A 1 out 5 chance would be a very low estimate of the probability of any of the 25 prophecies. At that rate, the odds of fulfillment for all 25 is 1 chance out of a thousand trillion! In other words, NO WAY, without divine intervention.

Scientific Foreknowledge of the Scriptures (Dates confirmed are approximate)

EVENT	BIBLE	MAN
Earth Spherical	700 BC - Solomon and Isaiah	384 BC - Aristotle
Earth Revolves Daily	2000 BC - Job	384 BC - Aristotle
Earth Not Supported	2000 BC - Job	1687 AD - Sir Isaac Newton
Universe Spreading	1475 BC - Moses and Jeremiah	1924 AD - not confirmed until 1950 AD
Stars Innumerable	600 BC - Jeremiah, Hebrew writer	1608 AD - Galileo
Stars Emit Sounds	2000 BC - Job	1963 AD - radio-telescope
Earth Has Been Submerged	1475 BC - Noah (Gen. 1:2,6,9)	1924 AD - postulated by Edward Suess, 1885
Ocean Currents	1000 BC - David (Psa. 8:8)	1855 AD - Matthew F. Murray
Lightening Causes Rain	2000 BC - Job	1930 AD - confirmed 1965
Universe is Decaying	700 BC - Isa. 51:6, (Ps., Heb.)	1850 AD - 2 nd Law of Thermodynamics
Mankind is of One Origin	63 AD - Paul (Acts 17:26)	1775 AD - confirmed 1900

(Chart adapted from A.O. Schnabel's book: *Has God Spoken?*)

Conclusion

How could the unity of the scriptures have been achieved without divine guidance? How could prophecies have been made hundred of years in advance, without divine foreknowledge of future events? How did the Bible writers know scientific facts years before men discovered them? The evidence is clear, the verdict: **THE BIBLE IS INSPIRED!**

[Adapted from Chapter 23 of B.B. Baxter's book: *I Believe Because...*]

EVIDENCES OF THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST

INTRODUCTION

The center of Christianity is the belief in Jesus as the divine Son of God.

All respectable scholars agree that a man named Jesus of Nazareth: 1) lived on the earth, 2) had a great influence on people and 3) died as a martyr.

THE QUESTION

The question remains in many minds, whether Jesus was God incarnate or merely a great teacher and leader.

To answer this question let us examine some of the qualities and characteristics of the life of Jesus.

Evidence 1- Christ was sinless

- (1) (Heb.4:14-16) Milligan suggests that in this section the Hebrew writer is emphasizing Christ as the High Priest of the New Covenant and that through His intercession we can boldly approach God the Father. The writer makes four main arguments as to why we can rely on Jesus:
- 1) He is a heavenly High Priest,
 - 2) He can approach God directly,
 - 3) He is the Son of God (compare ch. 1),
 - 4) He is tender and sympathetic because he has been tempted as we, but remained sinless.
- (2) (I Pet. 2:21,22) Verses 18-25 deal with the duties of servants to masters. We see that servants must obey their masters whether they are good or evil. It is a commendable thing if one suffers because he is determined to do right. However, if we suffer because we commit sin, we deserve it. Furthermore we are to follow the example of Jesus' suffering. In verse 22 Peter alludes to Isa. 53:9 and Zeph. 3:13. NO SIN, NO GUILT. Verse 23- He did not return evil for evil.
- (3) Examine the scriptures for yourself and try to find even a questionable act or thought or word attributed to Jesus. Did He ever injure anyone? Take advantage of anyone? Speak an improper word to anyone?

Evidence 2- Christ was holy separate, apart, consecrated

Christ was not only sinless, but also holy. He practiced what he preached and he was pious. If Jesus is not deity, then his life was a lie and the deception and false front He condemned in Mt. 23 would be sins of which He would be guilty; things such as moral inconsistency, mistreatment of brethren, abusing oath taking and tithing and neglecting inward purity.

Evidence 3- Christ's words were the greatest ever spoken

Why? Dr. Bernard Ramm in his book *protestant Christian Evidences* tells us Christ's words have the statistical edge because they are read more, quoted more, translated more, used in more art and music " than anyone else's. But, Dr. Ramm adds, "They are the greatest because they are pure, spiritual and authoritative when it comes to answering questions like: Who is God? Does He love and care for me? How do I please Him? How do I treat my brethren? How does He view my Sin?"

Evidence 4- Christ's influence on history and man can not be measured

Philip Schaff in his tract *The Person of Christ* spoke concerning Christ's influence:

... this Jesus of Nazareth, Without money or arms, conquered more millions than Alexander, Caesar, Mohammed, and Napoleon; without science or learning, He shed more light on things human and divine than all philosophers and scholars combined; without the eloquence of schools, He spoke such words of life as were never spoken before or since, and produced "effects which lie beyond the reach of orator or poet; without writing a single line, he set more pens in motion, and furnished themes for more sermons, orations, discussions., learned volumes, works of art, and songs of praise, than the whole army of great men of ancient and modern times.

Evidence 5- Christ performed supernatural acts

These included such things as His birth, His healing, His escapes from danger, His appearances, and His knowledge. He commanded nature and disease; He restored hearing and sight; He controlled demonic powers; and He raised the dead.

Evidence 6- Christ manifested the love of God

In (Mk. 12:28-31) Christ was asked: "Which is the first commandment?" That is, which is the most important? Jesus replied, First, Love the Lord and second, love your neighbor. In words and example Jesus showed pure, unselfish love. Even in death He prayed for His murderers.

(1 Jn. 4:8) In his *Commentary on the Epistle of John*, Guy N. Woods paraphrases this verse as follows: "He that will not continually love (agapo) is not acquainted with God." God is love because He is the originator of all things, of which love is one.

(Jn. 14:9) is Jesus' reply to Philip when he asks Jesus to show them the Father.

Now, connecting the two thoughts of these verses we see: If Jesus is an image of the Father and God is love, then Jesus is the perfect physical manifestation of that love. Who then can claim divine Sonship more rightfully than the one who has most fully demonstrated the love of the Father?

THE CONCLUSION

An unknown author had these moving things to say about Jesus:

Here is a man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a Peasant woman. He grew up in another village, and that a despised one. He worked in a carpenter shop for thirty years, and then for three years He was an itinerant preacher, He never wrote a

book. He never held an office. He never owned a home. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never put His foot inside a really big city, He never traveled, except in His infancy, more than two hundred miles from the place, where He was born. He had no credentials but himself.

While still a young man the tide of popular opinion turned against Him. His friends ran away. One of them betrayed Him. He was turned over to, His enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed upon a cross between two thieves. His executioners gambled for the only piece of property

He had on earth, His seamless robe. When He was dead He was taken down from the cross and laid in a borrowed grave through the courtesy of a friend. Nineteen wide centuries have come and gone, and today Jesus is the centerpiece of the human race, and the leader of all human progress.

I am well within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, all the navies that were ever built, all the parliaments that have ever sat, and all the kings that have ever ruled put together have not affected the life of man upon his earth like this one solitary personality.

All time dates from His birth, and it is impossible to understand or interpret the progress of human civilization in any nation on earth apart from His influence. Slowly through the ages man is coming to realize that the greatest necessity in the world is not water, iron, gold, food and clothing, or even nitrate in the soil; but rather Christ enshrined in human hearts, thoughts and motives.

His life and His teachings demonstrate the uniqueness of Jesus of Nazareth. Even under great pressure no flaw appeared in His character. There is no higher system of morals or ethics to be found in any teachings of any religion in the world. Jesus has demonstrated total, unconditional, unselfish love. He truly is the Son of God!

[Adapted from chapter 26 of Batsell Barrett Baxter's book: *I Believe Because*.]

EVIDENCES OF THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

INTRODUCTION

If the center of Christianity is the belief in Jesus as the Divine Son of God, then the center of that belief is His Resurrection. His Resurrection would establish His divinity in the minds of even the most hardened skeptics.

Jesus emphasized His Resurrection, the apostles used it as the basis of their preaching, and man through the years has held it to be the most crucial evidence for the divinity of Jesus.

THE QUESTION

The question to be answered in this lesson: was Jesus resurrected? We will examine five pieces of empirical evidence to determine the answer. Empirical evidence is the kind that has been seen by the human eye, touched by the human hand and heard by the human ear. In the sense of law: eyewitness testimony. As we look at these evidences, see if they pass the empirical test!

Evidence 1- The Old Testament

- (1) (Psalms 16:8-11) is the crucial text in Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost. (Acts 2:25-32.)
- (2) To find Messianic Prophecy of the Old Testament referred to as being fulfilled in the New Testament is very common. In future lesson on the Unity of the Scriptures we will examine some of the references in more depth.

Evidence 2- The New Testament

- (1) Christ anticipated His resurrection in His actions and teachings. (Jn. 2:19-22; Lk. 9:22; Mt. 12:40; 16:21; 20:18-19)
- (2) The remainder of the NT gives us the where, when, why and how of Christ's death and resurrection. From the NT we learn:
 - 1) Who got His body, how he got it and where he laid it,
 - 2) the resurrection was on the first day of the week,
 - 3) the empty tomb was discovered by the women,
 - 4) the stone was rolled away,
 - 5) Angels were present,
 - 6) after the resurrection Jesus appeared to individuals and groups, and
 - 7) They recognized him as the Master of the pre-crucifixion days, possessing the same powers and perhaps additional ones.
- (3) The preaching of the apostles gave precedence to the Resurrection. From Pentecost to the Isle of Patmos, it was the crucial evidence used to show Jesus as the Christ.

Evidence 3- Church History

Throughout the uninspired writings of the early church, the resurrection is accepted as fact and never disputed. What else can explain the spread of the early church, the conviction of the apostles and the conversion of Saul?

In his book, *The Mission and Message of Jesus*, H.D.A. Major says concerning the Resurrection:

Had the crucifixion of Jesus ended His disciples' experience of Him, it is hard to see how the Christian Church could have come into existence. That Church was founded on faith in the Messiahship of Jesus. A crucified Messiah was no Messiah at all. He was one rejected by Judaism and accursed of God. It was

the Resurrection of Jesus, as St. Paul declares in Rom. 1:4, which proclaimed Him to be the Son of God with power.

[To many minds, the following evidences are the most significant.]

Evidence 4- The Empty Tomb

- (1) The Gospels are full of evidence pertaining to this fact. The testimonies of the women, the apostles, even the Roman guard entrench this piece of evidence beyond the reach of skeptical criticism.
- (2) Skeptics have attempted to explain the empty tomb through four traditional arguments:
 - 1st] The body was stolen by the disciples.
 - 2nd] The body was removed by Joseph of Arimathea.
 - 3rd] The women went to the wrong tomb.
 - 4th] The so-called "swoon theory", that is: Jesus was not dead when placed in the tomb.
- (3) Our answer to the first two arguments: What was the Roman guard doing while this was going on? To the third argument we answer: if the women went to the wrong tomb, so did the divinely directed Angels. Finally, to the fourth argument: when and where did Jesus die? Where was His body? Were the Roman soldiers incapable of determining death?
- (4) The burden of proof lies with the skeptics. To prove that Jesus was not resurrected, they must produce the corpse!

Evidence 5- The Post-resurrection Appearances

- (1) During the time between His resurrection and His ascension, Christ appeared at least ten times to His disciples. The scriptures records the eyewitness accounts of these appearances. (A study of the Fourfold Gospels and Acts would examine these appearances in detail) His death, they saw Him die on the cross and they saw Him alive after that time. This is the empirical evidence we were talking about! He was, seen touched and heard, after His death!
 - (2) Once again the critics object.
 - 1st] The vision hypothesis- mass visions.
 - 2nd] The television theory- Jesus televised pictures of Himself into the, minds of the disciples.
- The answer to both of these theories is the same. How do you touch a vision? How does a vision eat physical food?
- (3) An additional witness on the list is Paul. The one formerly called Saul knew every available argument against Jesus as the resurrected Son of God. This same Saul is convinced, convicted and converted by his eyewitness experience.
 - (4) Dr. Wilbur Smith in his book, *Therefore Stand*, wrote: "

To reject the Resurrection is to go against every law of logic which man has discovered; to reject the Resurrection is to put out the one great light that can illuminate our future; to reject the

Resurrection is to involve ourselves, for the rest of life, in all kinds of efforts to explain the principles and teaching and work and influence of Jesus Christ; to deny the Resurrection of Christ is to forfeit any right to preach in a Christian pulpit, to talk to others about the blessings of following Jesus, or to kneel down at the bedside of a dying man or woman and expect to bring them any comfort.

THE CONCLUSION

If the Resurrection was a hoax, then why did the Romans or the Jews not produce the body? This would have discredited Jesus once and for all.

If it was a hoax, what was to be gained by being a First Century Christian? Nothing of worldly significance. From the worldly viewpoint they were a hated sect, following a despised martyr. Many of them became martyrs for His cause. They did so willingly holding true to their conviction that Jesus Christ is the Son of God- dead, buried and resurrected!

[Adapted from Chapter 27 of Batsell Barrett Baxter's book: *I Believe Because.*]

During a lunch table discussion a good friend of mine basically equated religious leaders such as Mohammed and Buddha with Jesus. I remembered an outline I adapted from Josh McDowell's *Evidence That Demands A Verdict, Volume 1*, and used it to compose this email message. I asked my friend to consider the following question:

JESUS - LORD, LUNATIC, OR LIAR?

This question poses only three alternatives and we will try to demonstrate that there are indeed only three alternatives.

Many skeptics of Christianity want to affirm that Christ was a good moral man and teacher, while rejecting His deity. This is not a choice, as we shall see. In the words of C.S. Lewis: *"You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and call Him a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come up with any patronizing nonsense about Him being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to."*

Is Jesus Christ God?

1. He claimed to be God.

(Mk. 14:61-64 - *But He kept silent and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked Him, saying to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" Jesus said, "I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "What further need do we have of witnesses? "You*

have heard the blasphemy! What do you think?" And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death.)

This passage shows that Christ was crucified for being who he really was, namely: (1) Son of the Blessed, (2) The one who would sit on the right hand of power, and (3) The Son of Man who would come on the clouds of heaven

(Jn. 10:30-33 - "I and My Father are one." Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, "Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?" The Jews answered Him, saying, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God.")

Here we see Jesus claiming to be one essence (or nature) with the Father, thus equal.

(Jn. 5:17,18 - But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working." Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.)

Once again claiming equality with God.

(Jn. 8:58 - Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.")
"I Am" - Here Jesus claims to absolute deity, by asserting His preexistence.

(Jn. 5:23,24-26 - For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.)

(Jn. 8:19 - Then they said to Him, "Where is Your Father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also.")

(Jn. 14:1,9 - Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. Jesus said to him, Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?)

(Mt. 5:20,22,26,28,etc. - For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire. Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny. But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.)

2. He asked for and accepted worship as God.

The kind of worship reserved only for God. Ⓓ (Mt. 4:10 -*Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.' "*)

He received the kind of worship reserved for God

(1) The leper - (Mt. 8:2 - *And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean."*)

(2) The man born blind - (Jn. 9:35-39- *Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?" He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you." Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshiped Him. And Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind."*)

(3) The disciples - (Mt. 14:33 -*Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God."*)

(4) Doubting Thomas - (Jn. 20:27-29 - *Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."*)

Others claimed He was Lord.

Paul - (Phil. 2:9-11 - *Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*)

John the Baptist - (Lu. 3:22 - *And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."*)

Peter - (Mt. 16:15-17 - *He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven."*)

William Biederwolf drew this conclusion: "A man who can read the New Testament and not see that Christ claims to be more than a man, can look all over the sky at high noon on a cloudless day and not see the sun."

According to the Apostle John in his Gospel 20:30,31. (*And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.*) In other words the whole purpose of the gospel according to John was to present Jesus as the Son of God, that is, on equality with God the Father

Now, if Jesus was not (is not) God then only two alternatives exist: He was a liar or a lunatic!

Was Jesus Christ a Liar?

If so, he was also a hypocrite - because he demanded honesty from others, while he was living a monstrous lie.

If a liar, then a demon, because just like Satan he called on others to entrust Him with their eternal destiny.

If a liar, then a fool, because his claim led to his death. Mk. 14:61-64 (see above)

If he was a liar, then he deserved to die under the Hebrew law (Jn. 19:7 -*The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God."*)

Philip Schaff in his tract from 1913, *The Person of Christ*, made these remarks concerning Jesus as an impostor: *"The hypothesis of imposture is so revolting to moral as well as common sense, that its mere statement is its condemnation. It was invented by the Jews who crucified the Lord to cover their crime, but has never been seriously carried out, and no scholar of any decency and self-respect would now dare to profess it openly. How in the name of logic, common sense, and experience could an impostor - that is a deceitful, selfish, depraved man - have invented, and constantly maintained from the beginning to end, the purest and noblest character known in history with the most perfect air of truth and reality? How could he have conceived and carried out a plan of unparalleled beneficence, moral magnitude, sublimity, and sacrificed his own life for it, in the face of the strongest prejudices of his people and ages?"*

Was Jesus Christ a Lunatic?

If we reject the theory that Jesus was a liar, then maybe he just thought himself to be God and was mistaken. It is possible to be sincere and wrong!

We judge those that claim to be God today (or his latter day Apostles) as full-fledged nut cases. (Koresh, Jim Jones, The Ayatollah, Saddam Hussein, etc.)

C.S. Lewis in his book, *Miracles - A Preliminary Study*, offers these thoughts on the lunatic theory: *"The historical difficulty of giving for the life saying and influence of Jesus any explanation that is not harder than the Christian explanation is very great. The discrepancy between the depth and sanity of his moral teaching and the rampant megalomania which must lie*

behind His theological teaching unless He is indeed God has never been satisfactorily explained. Hence non-Christian hypotheses succeed one another with restless fertility of bewilderment."

Philip Schaff (from Person of Christ tract): *"Is such an intellect $\text{\textcircled{D}}$ clear as the sky, bracing as the mountain air, sharp and penetrating as a sword, thoroughly healthy and vigorous, always ready and self-possessed - liable to a radical and most serious delusion concerning His own character and mission? Preposterous imagination!"*

Some final thoughts...

You must decide for yourself who Jesus is. However, remember that to make him out to be only a great moral teacher is not a legitimate option, based on His own teaching concerning Himself. He is liar, lunatic, or Lord.

Bible evidence is in favor of Jesus as our Lord and Savior!

[All scriptures quoted from the NKJV]