

Why I Believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God

www.cvillechurch.com

Introduction: What does it mean to believe in Christ? (**Heb 11:6**)

- A. Far too many people are offended by those who have questions in these areas.
 - 1. Those who are offended often think that belief in Christ should just be automatic, like being born. This is false!
 - 2. For any man to have faith they must go through a reasoned process of examining evidence! There are no exceptions. (**Heb 11:1; Jn 5:36; Jn 10:25**)
- B. Rather than being offended, we should welcome such questions and be ready with answers! (**1 Pet 3:15**)
 - 1. We are facing a society that is increasing in its unbelief and ignorance of God's word.
 - 2. Sadly those who claim faith in Christ are quick to retreat in the face of questions. Some say: "Because the Bible says so" and leaves it at that. When you give reasoned answers many are surprised greatly!
 - 3. There are good opportunities waiting! (UAB Discussion on the existence of God)
 - 4. There are some who use doubts as a shield against a root moral problem. (**Jn 3:19-20**)
- C. Another result of these studies will produce a greater faith in us.
 - 1. There are times where we must lay out the evidence for our own good. At these times we must respond like Peter. (**John 6:66-68**)
 - 2. Do you "know the certainty" of these things? (**Luke 1:1-4**)

I. Because of the Character of the witnesses.

- A. They are accurate in things we can check.
 - 1. Consider the known history and geography of the region. The Bible makes several statements concerning these things. (**Luke 1:5; Acts 11:28**)
 - 2. Consider the testimony of one historian.
 - a. Sir William Ramsay.

"So far is such from being the case, however, that the greatest of all New Testament archaeologists, Sir William Ramsay, who made the most extensive studies anyone has ever undertaken on the authenticity of these data recorded in Acts, finally said (even though he began his studies as a skeptic), "Luke is a historian of the first rank; not merely are his statements of fact trustworthy; he is possessed of the true historic sense,... In short this author should be placed along with the very greatest of historians."

- b. Listen to the challenge of another writer.

"On the contrary, no statement in the New Testament has to this date been refuted by an unquestioned find of science or history. This in itself is a unique testimony to the amazing accuracy and authenticity of the New Testament records."

- c. This shows that these men were there. They were acquainted with the facts and were not imaginary men produced by some future writer far removed from the events. (**1 John 1:1-3**)

- B. Testimony of History concerning the life and the Resurrection of Christ.

- 1. The existence and crucifixion is shown by the **Roman Historian Tacitus**.

"Christus, the founder of the name, had undergone the death penalty in the reign of Tiberius, by sentence of the procurator Pontius Pilatus, and the pernicious superstition was checked for a moment, only to break out once more, not merely in Judaea, the home of the disease, but in the capital itself... *Annals* (15:44)"

- a. You will not find knowledgeable atheists disputing this fact!

b. Jesus is no myth! Who is he?

2. Consider what the non-Christian, Jewish historian Josephus said:

The Jewish historian Josephus, who lived from A.D. 37 to 95, wrote about the administration of Pilate in his *Antiquities*. Here is what he had to say about Jesus in .3.3.(63): There was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if indeed it be right to call Him a man; for He was a doer of marvelous works, a teacher of men who received the truth with pleasure; and He won over to Himself many Jews and many of the Greek [race] also. This one was the Christ. And when, upon accusation of the leading men among us, Pilate had condemned Him to the cross, those who had loved Him at the first did not cease; for He appeared to them alive again on the third day, as the divine prophets had spoken these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning Him. And even until now the "sect" of Christians, named after this one [man], has not ceased.

3. Consider the challenge of two modern historians.

a. Thomas Arnold, formerly Professor of History at Rugby and Oxford, one of the world's great historians, could say:

"I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better, fuller evidence of every sort, to the understanding of a fair enquirer, than the great sign which God hath given us that Christ died, and rose again from the dead."⁸⁻¹

b. Consider the conclusion of Simon Greenleaf, the developer of the Harvard Law School.

"It was therefore impossible that they could have persisted in affirming the truths they have narrated, had not Jesus actually risen from the dead, and had they not known this fact as certainly as they knew any other fact."⁸⁻²

C. The Motive and lives of the witnesses.

1. There was nothing to gain by these men making up lies. **(1 Cor 15:30-32)**
2. These men all died a martyr's death, except John.

II. Because of the Testimony of the Old Testament Prophets

A. Jesus said the prophets spoke of Him. **(John 5:39; Luke 24:27; 44)**

1. This point is also made by New Testament writers. **(Acts 3:18)**
2. All of these writings were in existence before the birth of Christ. The Dead Sea scrolls prove this.

B. Consider the descriptions of the death of Christ.

1. Here is a detailed description of Christ's crucifixion. **(Psa 22:1, 6-8, 14-18)**
2. Look at the account of the New Testament writers. **(Matt 27:35, 41-46)**

C. There are many other examples like this! (Isa 53)

III. Because of the Miracles of Christ

A. Jesus pointed to these without contradiction. **(John 5:36; 10:25)**

1. The blind man Jesus healed could see the implications. **(John 9:32-33)**
2. What other answer is possible?

B. Jesus predicted his own resurrection to his enemies. **(John 2:19-21; Matt 27:63-64)**

1. This made the enemies work harder to prevent it.
2. This was "the sign" to all unbelievers. **(Matt 12:39-40)**

Conclusion: "But who do you say that I am?" **(Matt 16:15)**

- A. Yes we can know! Are you willing to weigh the evidence?
- B. When we do believe, this should change our lives. **(2 Cor 4:13-18)**