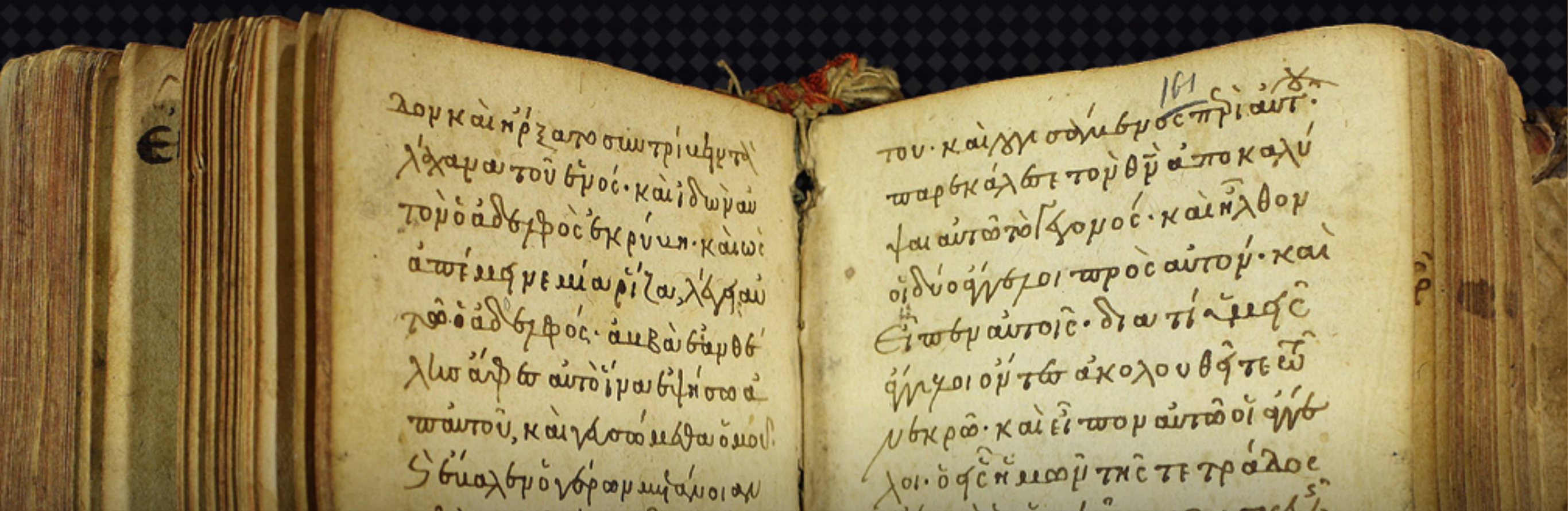


CAN WE TRUST THE TEXT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT?



The Reliability of The New Testament

**Has The NT Text Been
Corrupted?**

**CAN WE KNOW THAT THE NT WE
HAVE IS THE SAME AS IT WAS
WHEN IT WAS WRITTEN?**

The background of the slide features a close-up, slightly blurred image of an open, aged manuscript. The parchment is yellowed and shows signs of wear. A quill pen lies diagonally across the pages. The text is written in a dark ink in a historical script. The overall lighting is warm, creating a sense of antiquity and scholarly study.

The Reliability of The NEW TESTAMENT

Historically there have
been MANY enemies of
the scriptures,

The Reliability of The New Testament

The Bible Under Attack

◆ Not New . . .



- * Jews . . .
- * Rome . . .
- * Catholics . . .
- * Muslims . . .
- * Joseph Smith . . .
- * Watchtower . . .
- * Modern Atheists,
Agnostics & modernist

The Reliability of The New Testament

The Bible Under Attack



(Teachings of the
Prophet Joseph Smith)

◆ Not New . . .

- * "Many important points touching the salvation of men, had been taken from the Bible, or lost before it was compiled" - p.10
- * "I believe the Bible as it read when it came from the pen of the original writers. Ignorant translators, careless transcribers, or designing and corrupt priests have committed many errors" - p. 327

Psalm 119:89–96 (NKJV)

⁸⁹ Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven. ⁹⁰ Your faithfulness endures to all generations; You established the earth, and it abides. ⁹¹ They continue this day according to Your ordinances, For all are Your servants.

Psalm 119:89–96 (NKJV)

⁹² Unless Your law had been my delight, I would then have perished in my affliction. ⁹³ I will never forget Your precepts, For by them You have given me life. ⁹⁴ I am Yours, save me; For I have sought Your precepts.

Psalm 119:89–96 (NKJV)

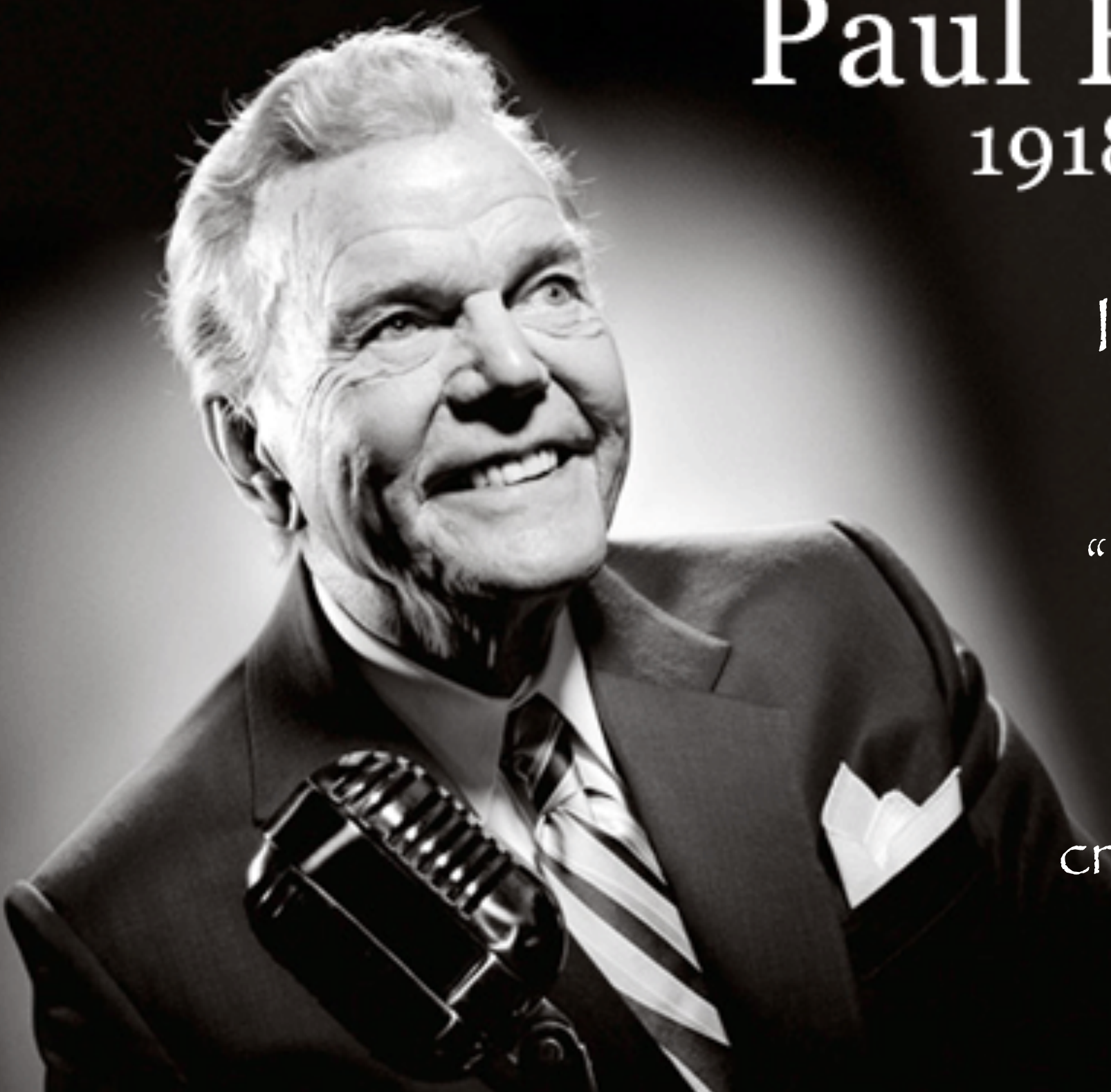
⁹⁵ The wicked wait for me to
destroy me, But I will consider
Your testimonies. ⁹⁶ I have seen the
consummation of all perfection,
But Your commandment is
exceedingly broad.

The Reliability of The New Testament

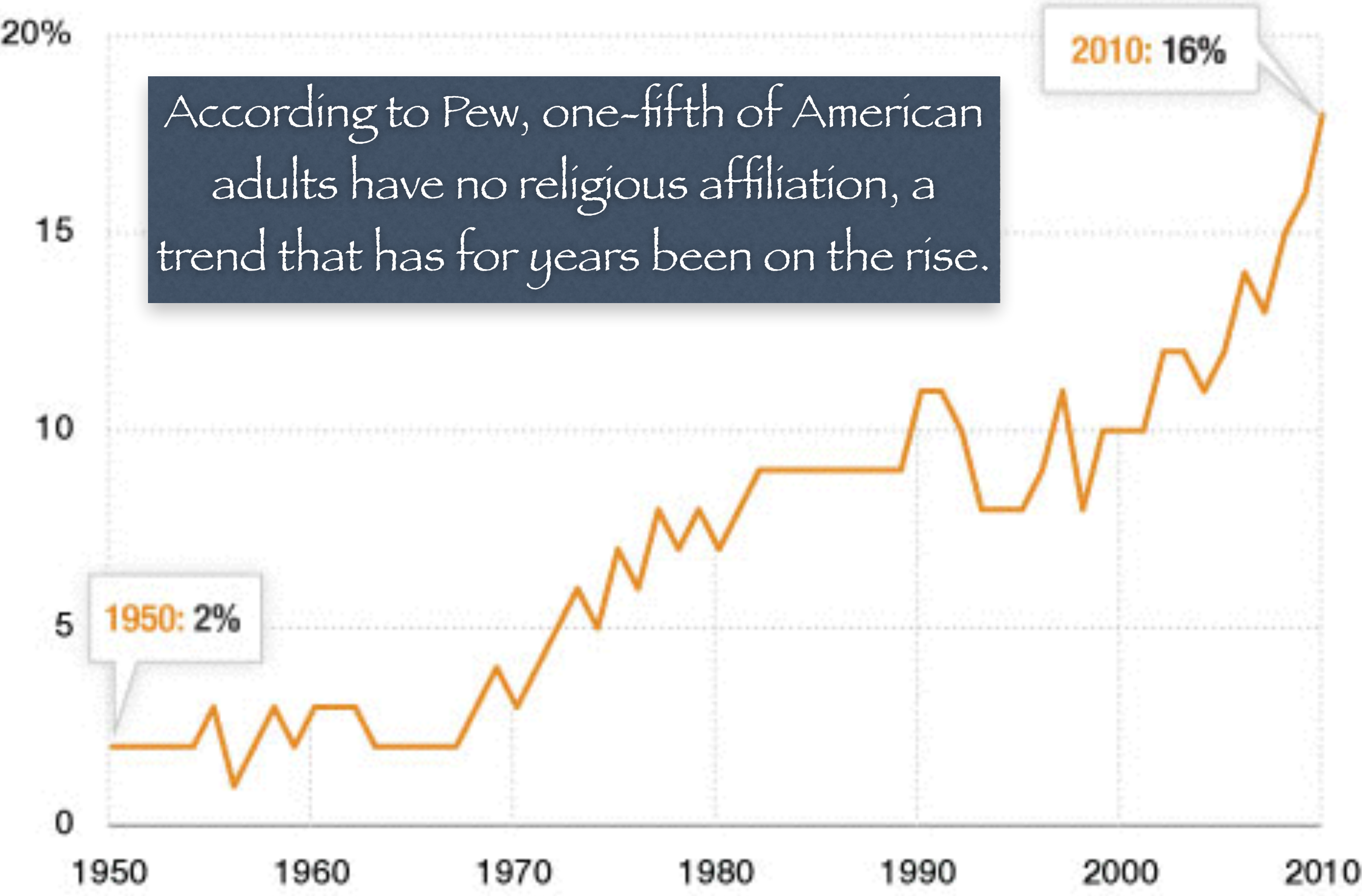
Paul Harvey
1918 - 2009

If I Were The Devil -
1965

“... I would whisper, ‘The Bible is a myth,’ I would convince them that man created God instead of the other way round...”



Percentage reporting "none" or "undesigned" as religious preference

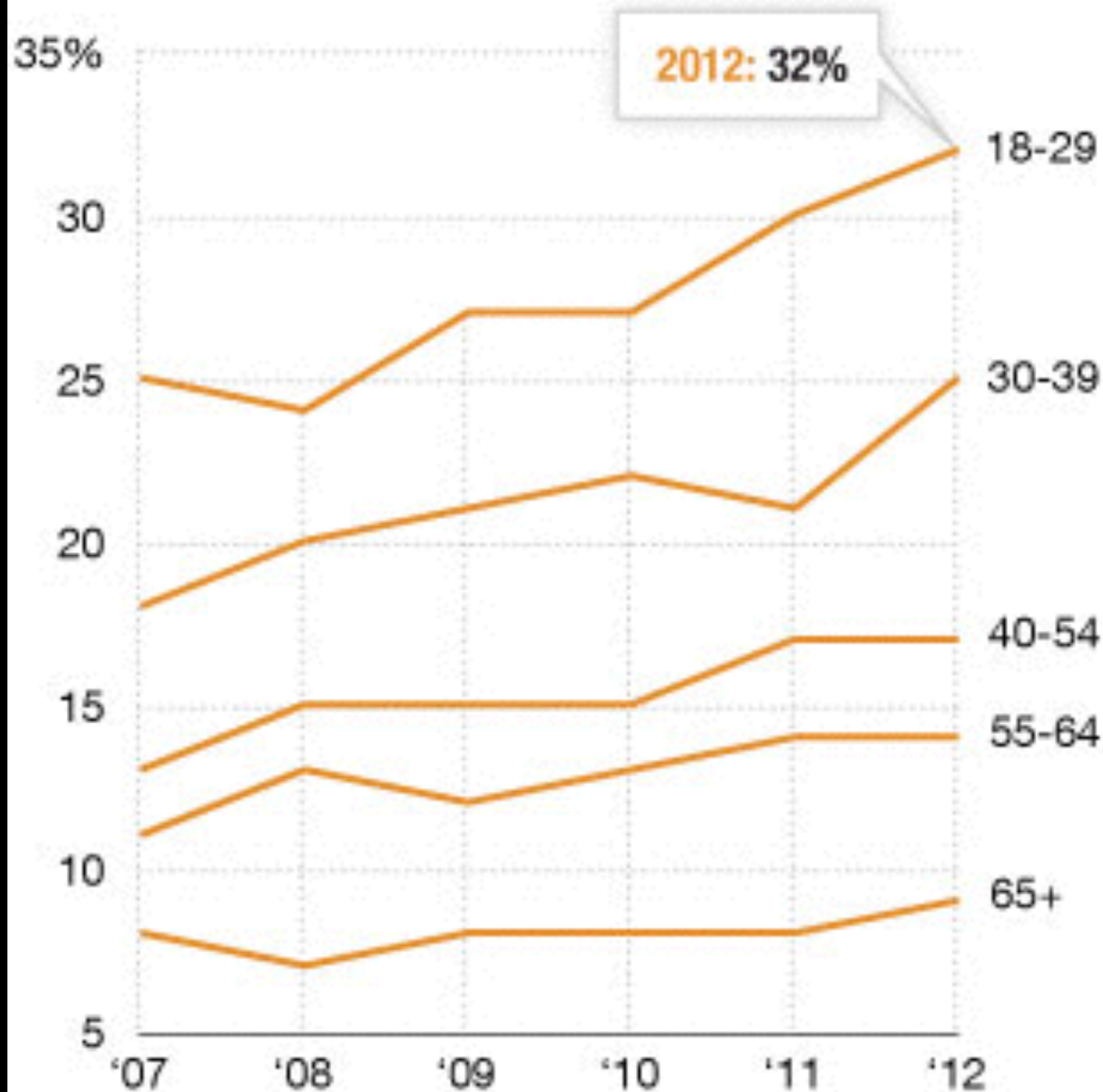


According to Pew, one-fifth of American adults have no religious affiliation, a trend that has for years been on the rise.

2010: 16%

1950: 2%

Percentage reporting no religious affiliation, by age



The Reliability of The New Testament

The Bible Under Attack



◆ Education

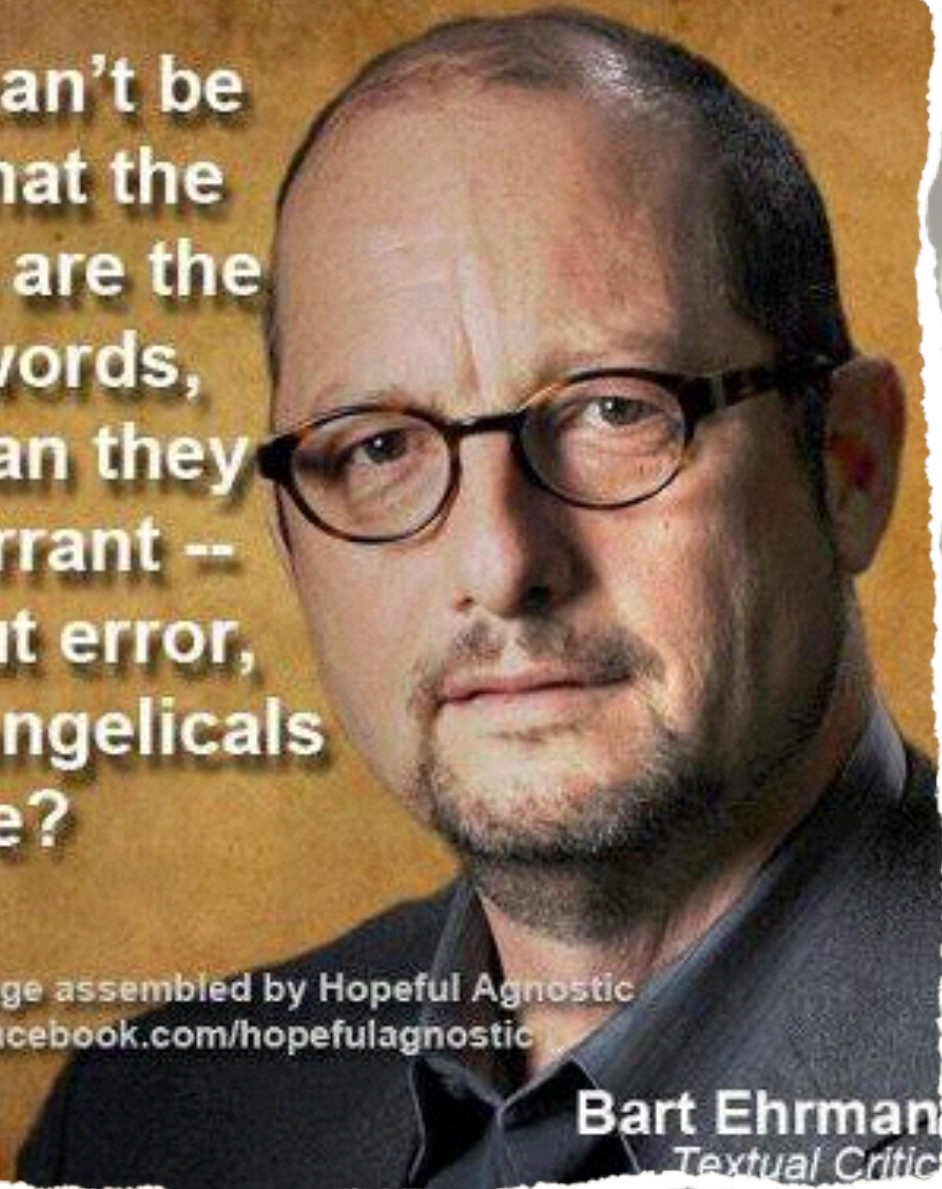
- * Naturalistic materialism rules the day in academia
- * Incapable of true reason & logic due to the acceptance of pseudo "reason" & "logic"
- * A populace conditioned to reject traditional values & "FAITH"

The Reliability of The New Testament

The Nature & Scope of Attacks

If we can't be sure that the words are the right words, how can they be inerrant -- without error, as evangelicals believe?

Text and Image assembled by Hopeful Agnostic
<http://www.facebook.com/hopefulagnostic>



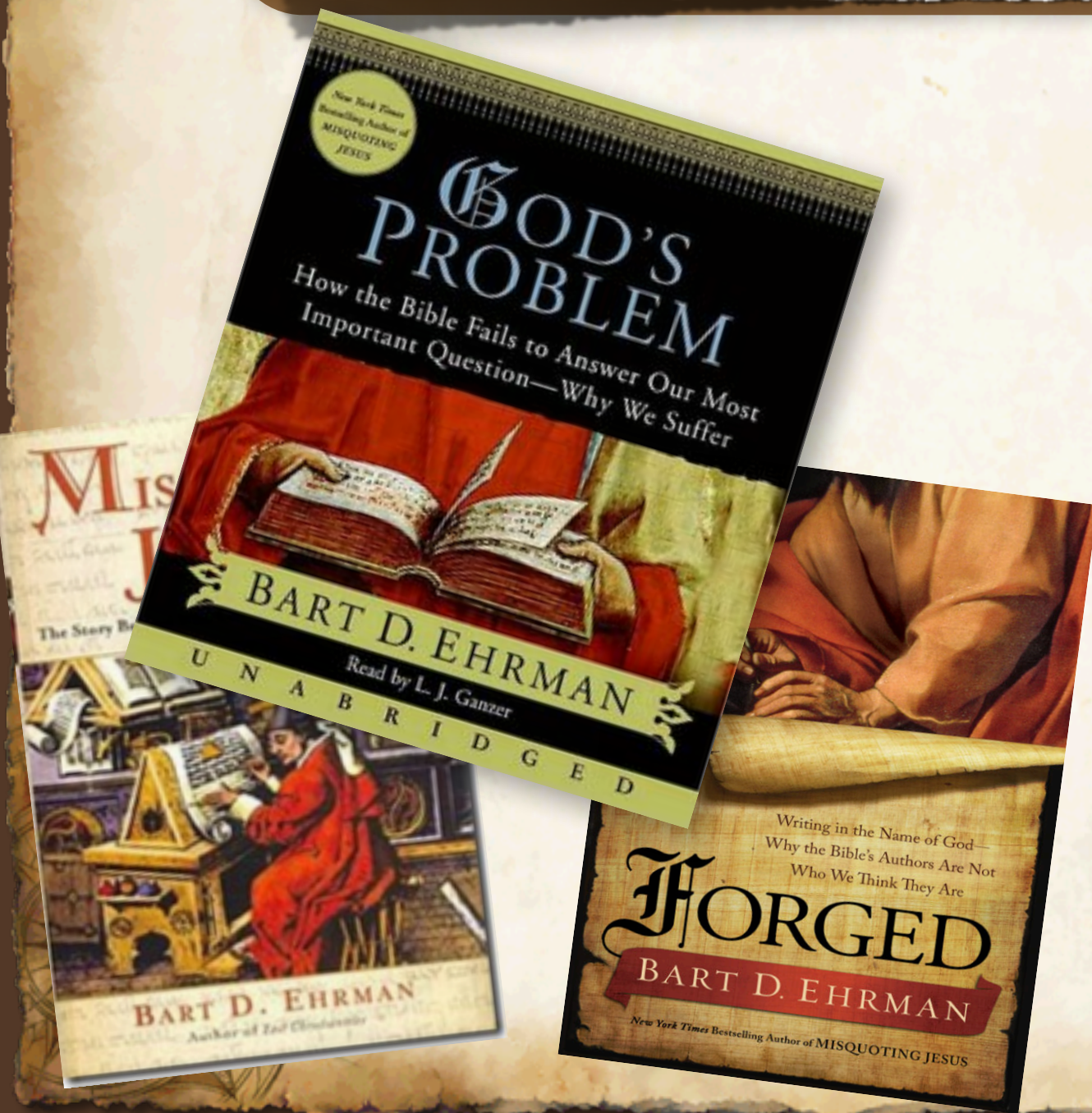
Bart Ehrman
Textual Critic

- ◆ The growing militance of the modern skeptic
- ◆ Technology / spread & availability of information / saturation of false & skewed information

The Reliability of The New Testament

The Nature & Scope of Attacks

- ◆ The growing militance of the modern skeptic
- ◆ Technology / spread & availability of information / saturation of false & skewed information



The Reliability of The New Testament

The Nature & Scope of Attacks

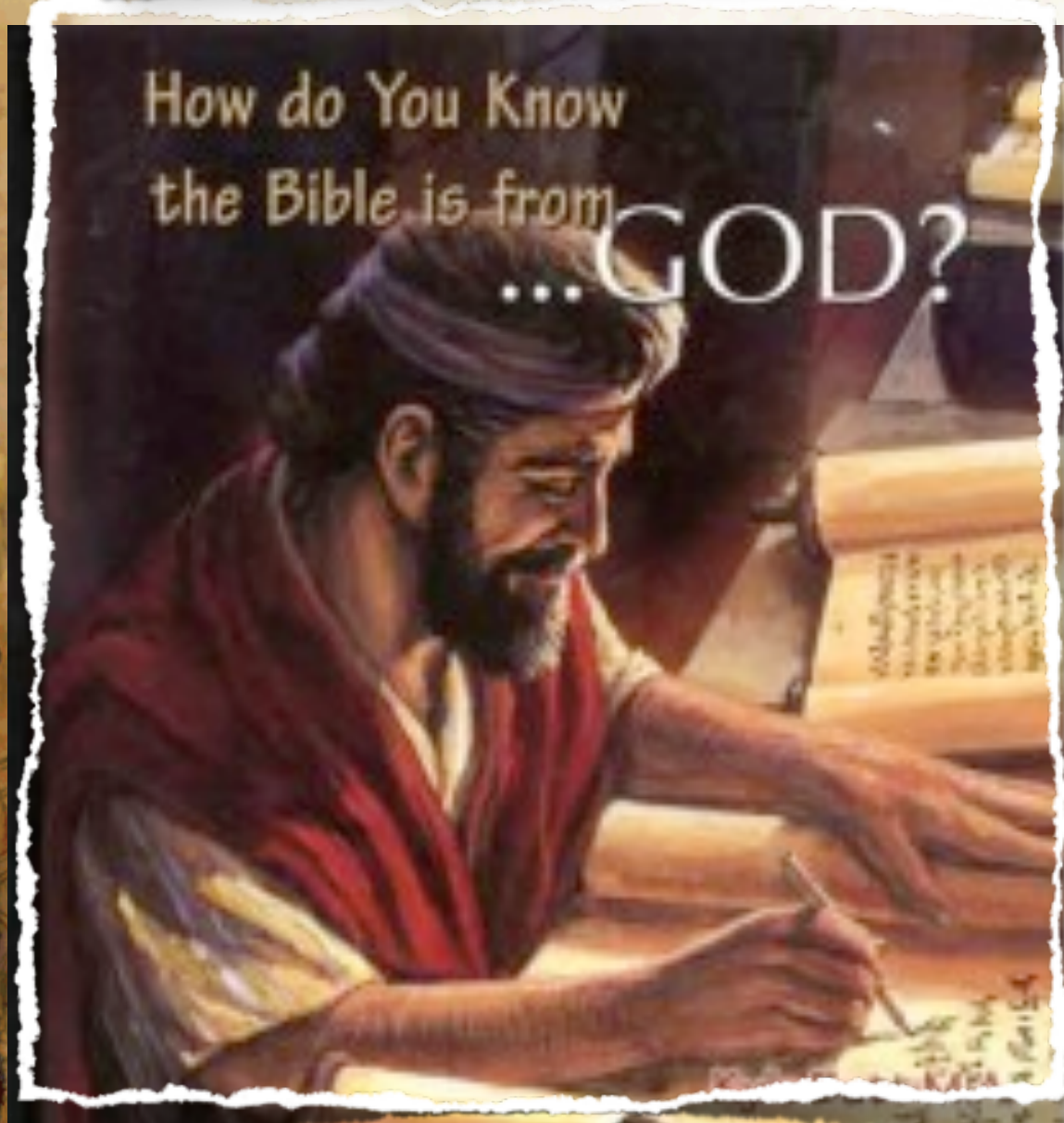
"Can Historians Prove That Jesus Was Raised from the Dead?" (I always argue that, no, no one can prove it.) "Are the Gospel Accounts of Jesus Reliable?" (No, not completely.) "Does the Bible Provide an Adequate Answer to Why There Is Suffering?" (No, not really.)

--Bart D. Ehrman



The Reliability of The New Testament

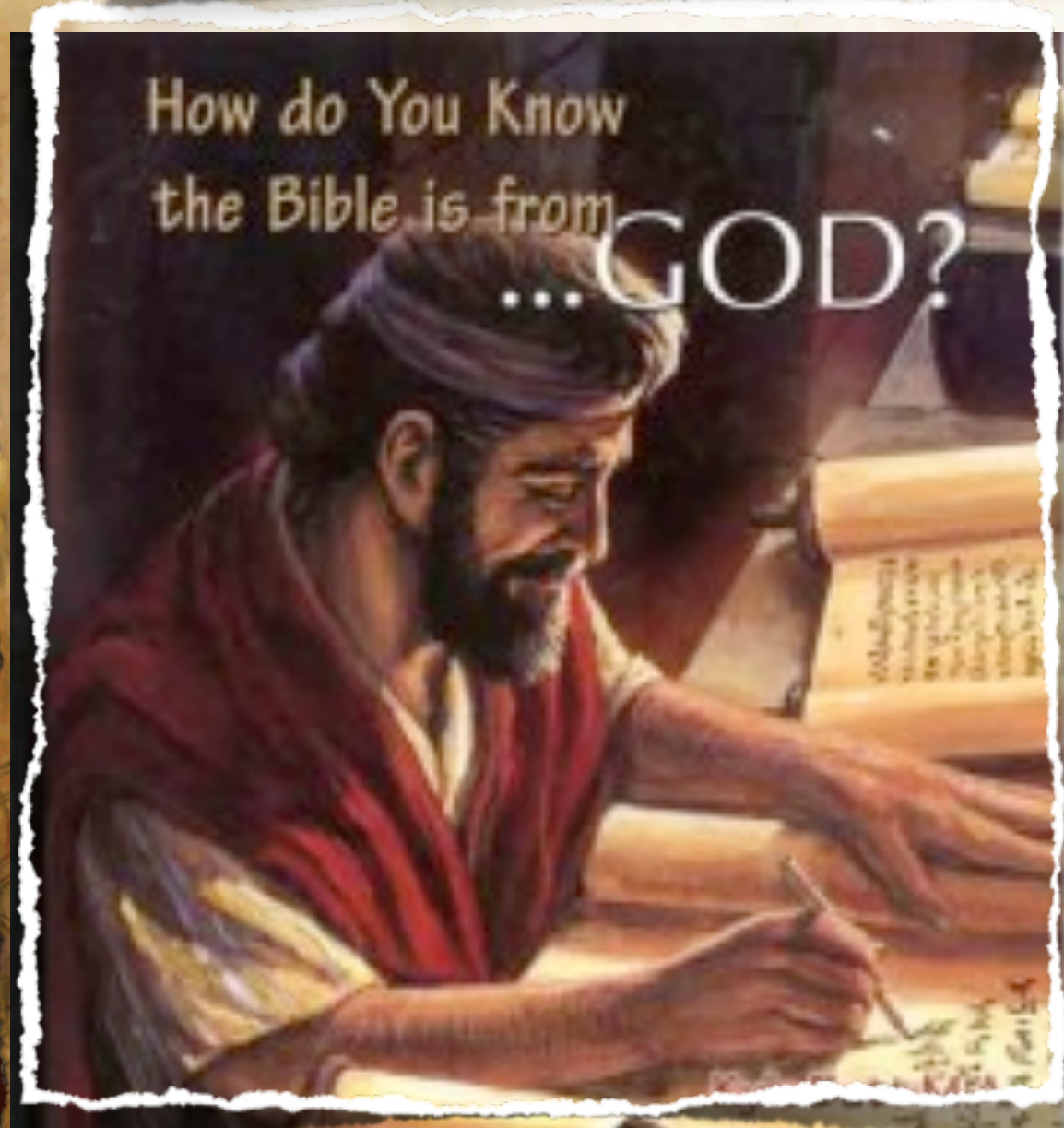
Evidence of The Accuracy of The N.T.



- ◆ **Faith (if it is faith) is NOT blind!!** – Is. 40:22-26; Heb. 11:1;6; Rom. 1:20; 10:17
- ◆ **There is more than sufficient evidence to support complete confidence in the NT –**

The Reliability of The New Testament

Evidence of The Accuracy of The N.T.



- ◆ **God has the power, will & desire to reveal Himself, & His will, to and for His creation –**
 - ✳ Power & Will – Isaiah 45:18; Rom 1:18–20; 16:26; Acts 17:23–31
 - ✳ He has revealed what He wants us to know – Deut. 29:29; 1 Cor. 2:10; Eph. 3:5; Titus 2:11,12; 1 Peter 1:10–12; 2 Pet 1:3
 - ✳ Promised to preserve His word – Luke 21:33; 1 Peter 1:22–25

The Reliability of The New Testament

Matthew 24:35 (NKJV)

Heaven and earth
will pass away, but my
words will by no means
pass away.

(cf. Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33)

The Reliability of The New Testament

1 Peter 1:22-25 (NKJV)

²² Since you have purified
your souls in obeying the
truth through the Spirit in
sincere love of the brethren,
love one another fervently
with a pure heart,

The Reliability of The New Testament

1 Peter 1:22-25 (NKJV)

²³ having been born again,
not of corruptible seed
but incorruptible,
through the word of
God which lives and abides
forever,

The Reliability of The New Testament

1 Peter 1:22-25 (NKJV)

²⁴ because "All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away,

The Reliability of The New Testament

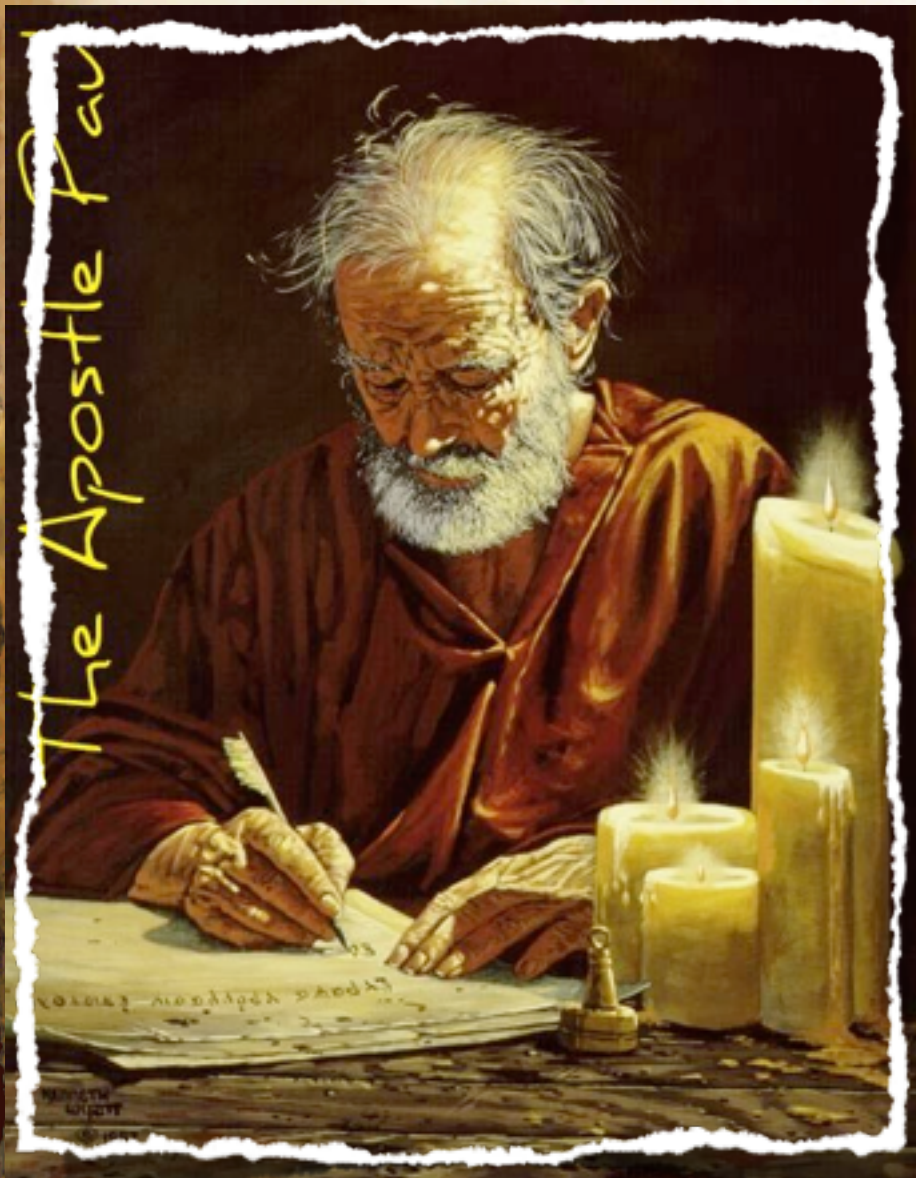
1 Peter 1:22-25 (NKJV)

²⁵ But the word of the Lord endures forever.”

Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.

The Reliability of The New Testament

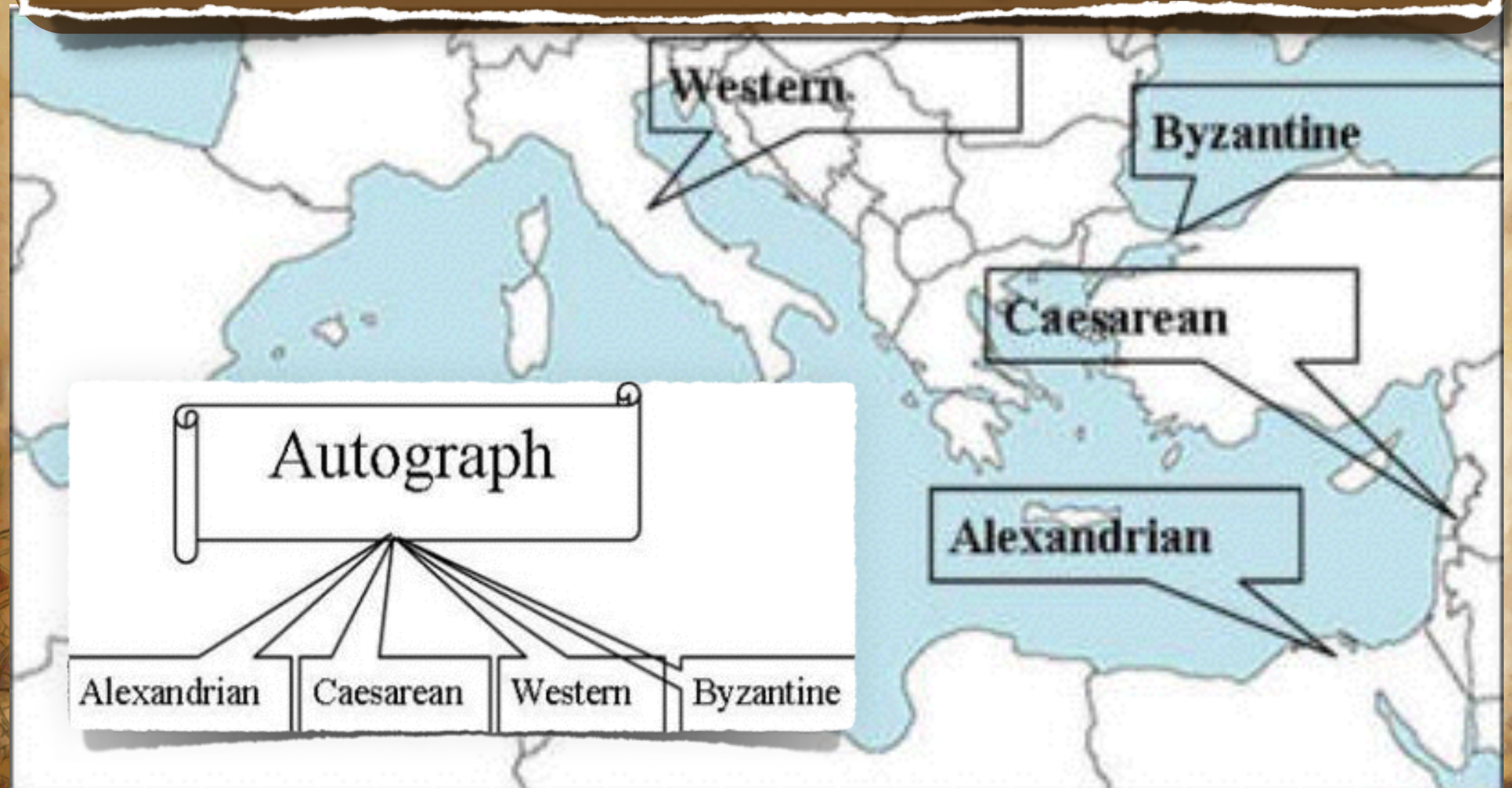
Evidence of The Accuracy of The N.T.



- By around A.D. 100, revelation completed - (Jude 3; Rev. 22:18-19).
- No autographs exist today!
- Immediately upon completion of these writings, copies were made - (cf. Col. 4:16; 1 Thess. 5:27).

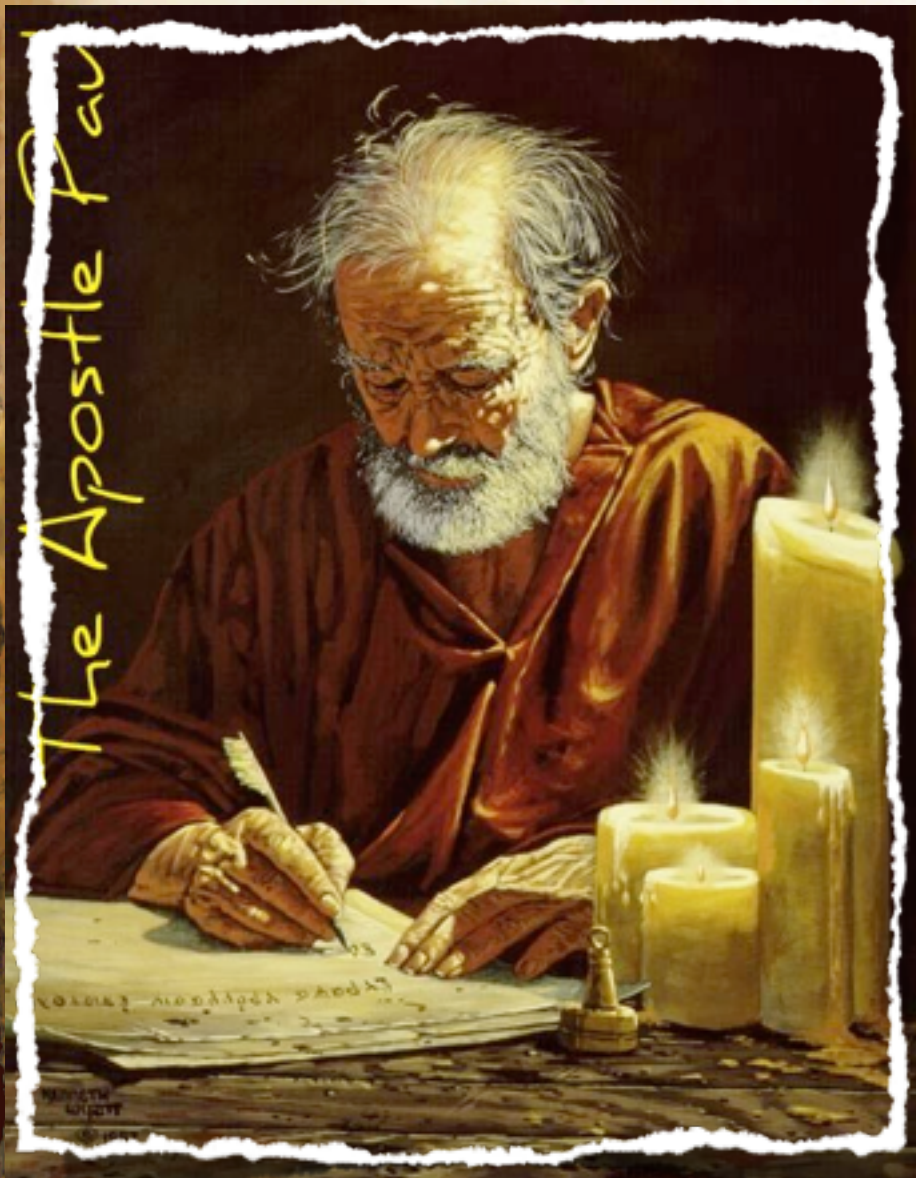
The Reliability of The New Testament

Evidence of The Accuracy of The N.T.



The Reliability of The New Testament

Evidence of The Accuracy of The N.T.



- There are over 5,780 Greek manuscripts of New Testament text available to us today.
- Over 2,200 Lectionaries (Books used in worship that cite the Bible).
- Ancient Versions – 9,000 manuscripts

The Reliability of The New Testament

Evidence of The Accuracy of The N.T.



WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia

- ◆ “The New Testament has been preserved in more than 5,800 Greek manuscripts, 10,000 Latin manuscripts and 9,300 manuscripts in various other ancient languages including Syriac, Slavic, Ethiopic and Armenian.
- ◆ Even if the original Greek versions were lost, the entire New Testament could still be assembled from the translations.”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Testament


The Reliability of The New Testament

Evidence of The Accuracy of The N.T.

Manuscript	Date	Contents
John Rylands	125-130 in Egypt	John 18:31-33,37
Bodmer Papyrus	150-200	Most of the first 14 chapters of John
Chester Beatty Papyri	200	Major portions of N.T. Matthew-Acts, Epistles of Paul to churches, Hebrews, Revelation
Codex Vaticanus	325-350	Most of the N.T. through Hebrews
Codex Sinaiticus	350	Entire N.T. & large portions of Greek O.T.
Codex Alexandrinus	400	Greek O.T. & most of the N.T.

The Reliability of The New Testament

Evidence of The Accuracy of The N.T.



Rylands Library Papyrus P52, also known as the
St. John's fragment - 125-130 AD - Egypt

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rylands_Library_Papyrus_P52



Rylands Library Papyrus P52, also known as the
St. John's fragment - 125-130 AD - Egypt

Gospel of John 18:31-33 (recto)

ΟΙ ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΙ ΗΜΕΙΝ ΟΥΚ ΕΞΕΣΤΙΝ ΑΠΟΚΤΕΙΝΑΙ
ΟΥΔΕΝΑ ΙΝΑ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΙΗΣΟΥ ΠΛΗΡΩΘΗ ΟΝ ΕΙ-
ΠΕΝ ΣΗΜΑΙΝΩΝ ΠΟΙΩ ΘΑΝΑΤΩ ΗΜΕΛΛΕΝ ΑΠΟ-
ΘΗΣΚΕΙΝ ΙΣΗΛΘΕΝ ΟΥΝ ΠΑΛΙΝ ΕΙΣ ΤΟ ΠΡΑΙΤΩ-
ΡΙΟΝ Ο ΠΙΛΑΤΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΕΦΩΝΗΣΕΝ ΤΟΝ ΙΗΣΟΥΝ
ΚΑΙ ΕΙΠΕΝ ΑΥΤΩ ΣΥ ΕΙ Ο ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΤΩΝ ΙΟΥ-
ΔΑΙΩΝ

the Jews, "For us it is not permitted to kill **anyone," so that the** word of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he **s-**
oke signifying what kind of death he was going to **die. Entered** therefore again into the Praeto-
rium Pilate and summoned Jesus **and said** to him, "Thou art king of the **Jews?"**



Rylands Library Papyrus P52, also known as the
St. John's fragment - 125-130 AD - Egypt

Gospel of John 18:37-38 (verso)

ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΕΙΜΙ ΕΓΩ ΕΙΣ ΤΟΥΤΟ ΓΕΓΕΝΝΗΜΑΙ
ΚΑΙ (ΕΙΣ ΤΟΥΤΟ) ΕΛΗΛΥΘΑ ΕΙΣ ΤΟΝ ΚΟΣΜΟΝ ΙΝΑ ΜΑΡΤΥ-
ΡΗΣΩ ΤΗ ΑΛΗΘΕΙΑ ΠΑΣ Ο ΩΝ ΕΚ ΤΗΣ ΑΛΗΘΕΙ-
ΑΣ ΑΚΟΥΕΙ ΜΟΥ ΤΗΣ ΦΩΝΗΣ ΛΕΓΕΙ ΑΥΤΩ
Ο ΠΙΛΑΤΟΣ ΤΙ ΕΣΤΙΝ ΑΛΗΘΕΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥΤΟ
ΕΙΠΩΝ ΠΑΛΙΝ ΕΞΗΛΘΕΝ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΥΣ ΙΟΥ-
ΔΑΙΟΥΣ ΚΑΙ ΛΕΓΕΙ ΑΥΤΟΙΣ ΕΓΩ ΟΥΔΕΜΙΑΝ
ΕΥΡΙΣΚΩ ΕΝ ΑΥΤΩ ΑΙΤΙΑΝ

a King I am. For **this I have been born**
and (for this) I have come into the **world so that I would test-**
ify to the truth. Everyone who is **of the truth**
hears of me my voice." **Said to him**
Pilate, "What is truth?" **and this**
having said, again he went out unto **the Jews**
and said to them, "I find **not one**
fault **in him.**"

The New Testament is the best attested book of antiquity by far!

Chart from "Evidence That Demands A Verdict" pg 42

Author	Time Written	Earliest Copy	Time Span	Manuscripts
Caesar	100-44 B.C.	A.D. 900	1000	10
Josephus,	A.D. 80	A.D. 950	870	
Plato (Tetralogies)	A.D. 427-347	A.D. 900	1200	7
Tacticus (Annals)	A.D. 100	A.D. 1000	900	1
Pliny the Younger (History)	A.D. 61-113	A.D. 850	750	1
Sophocles	496-406 B.C.	A.D. 1000	1400	193
Euripides	480-406 B.C.	A.D. 1100	1500	9
Demosthenes	383-322 B.C.	A.D. 1100	1300	200
Aristotle	384-322 B.C.	A.D. 1100	1400	49
New Testament	A.D. 45-100	A.D. 125	25-250	5300

The Reliability of The New Testament

Evidence of The Accuracy of The N.T.



Sir Frederic G. Kenyon,

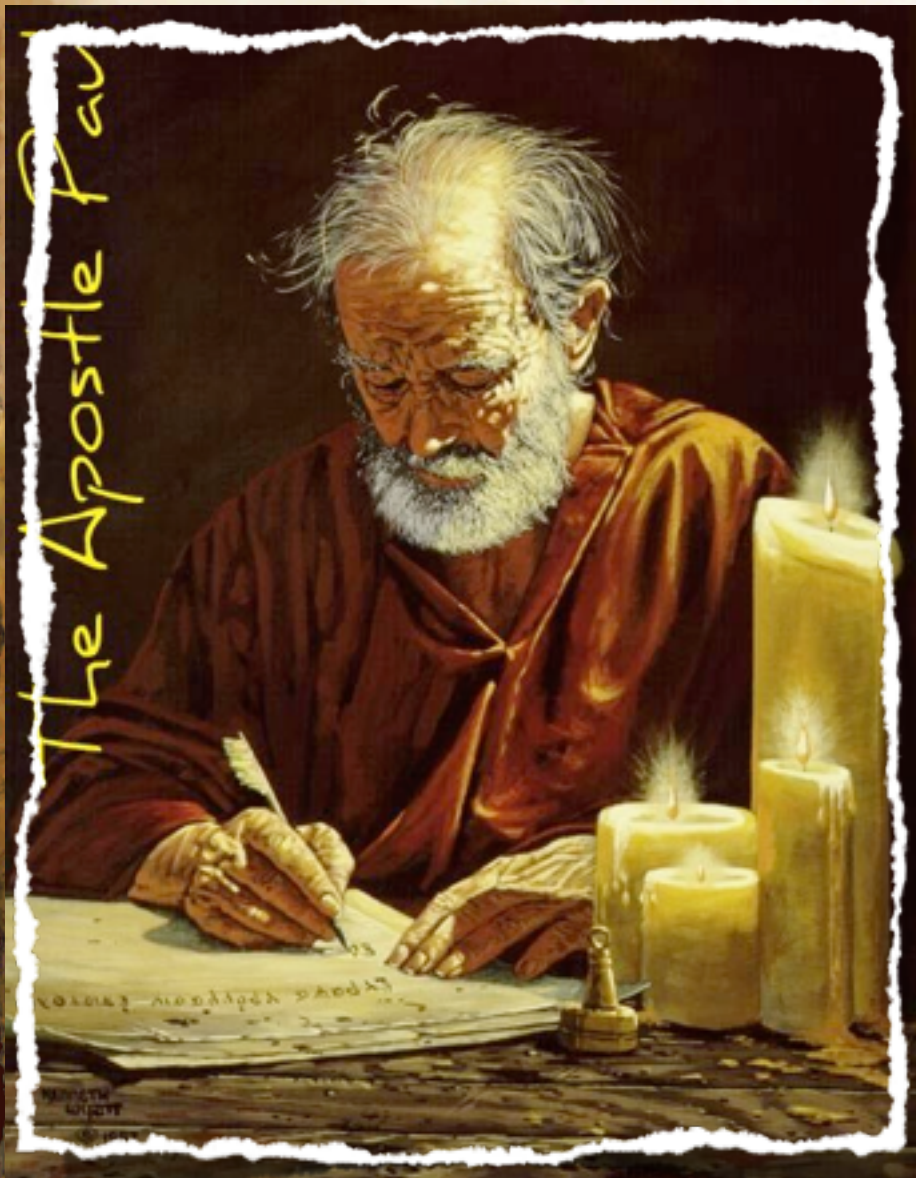
(The Bible and Archaeology, former director and principal librarian of the British Museum, stated about the New Testament),

"The interval, then, between the dates of original composition and the earliest extant evidence becomes so small as to be in fact negligible, and the last foundation for any doubt that the Scriptures have come down to us substantially as they were written has now been removed. Both the authenticity and the general integrity of the books of the New Testament may be regarded as finally established."



The Reliability of The New Testament

Evidence of The Accuracy of The N.T.



- 📌 Church "Fathers" – ca. 36,000 citations –
- 📌 Scholars say that all but four verses of the entire New Testament text could be reconstructed from the citations of the early Church Fathers alone!

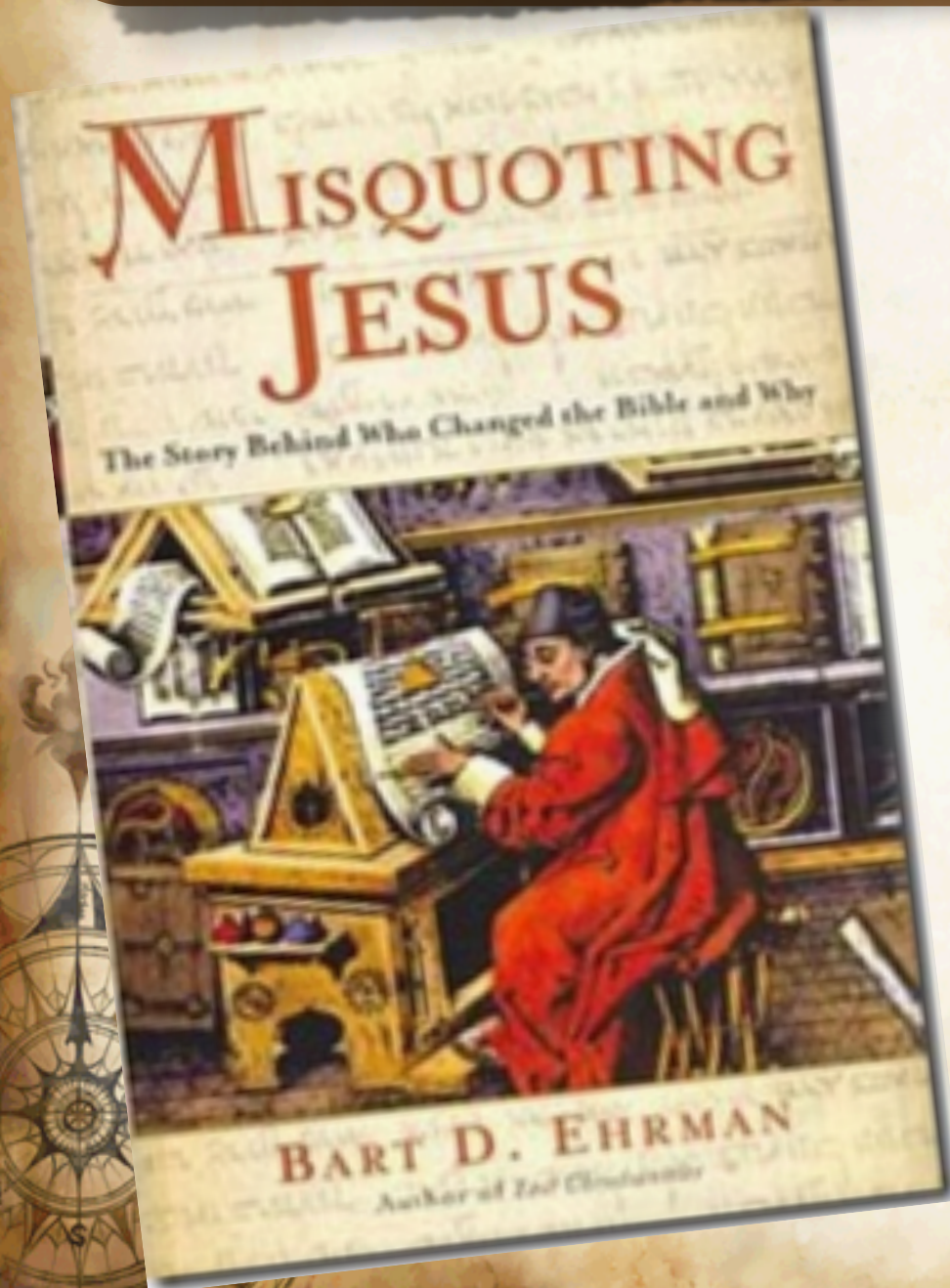
The Reliability of The New Testament

Evidence of The Accuracy of The N.T.

Writer	Gospels	Acts	Pauline Epistles	General Epistles	Revelation	Total
Justin Martyr	268	10	43	6	3	330
Irenaeus	1,038	194	499	23	65	1,819
Clement Alex.	1,017	44	1,127	207	11	2,406
Origen	9,231	349	7,778	399	165	17,922
Tertullian	3,822	502	2,609	120	205	7,258
Hippolytus	734	42	387	27	188	1,378
Eusebius	3,258	211	1,592	88	27	5,176
Totals	19,368	1,352	14,035	870	664	36,289

The Reliability of The New Testament

What About Variations In The Text?



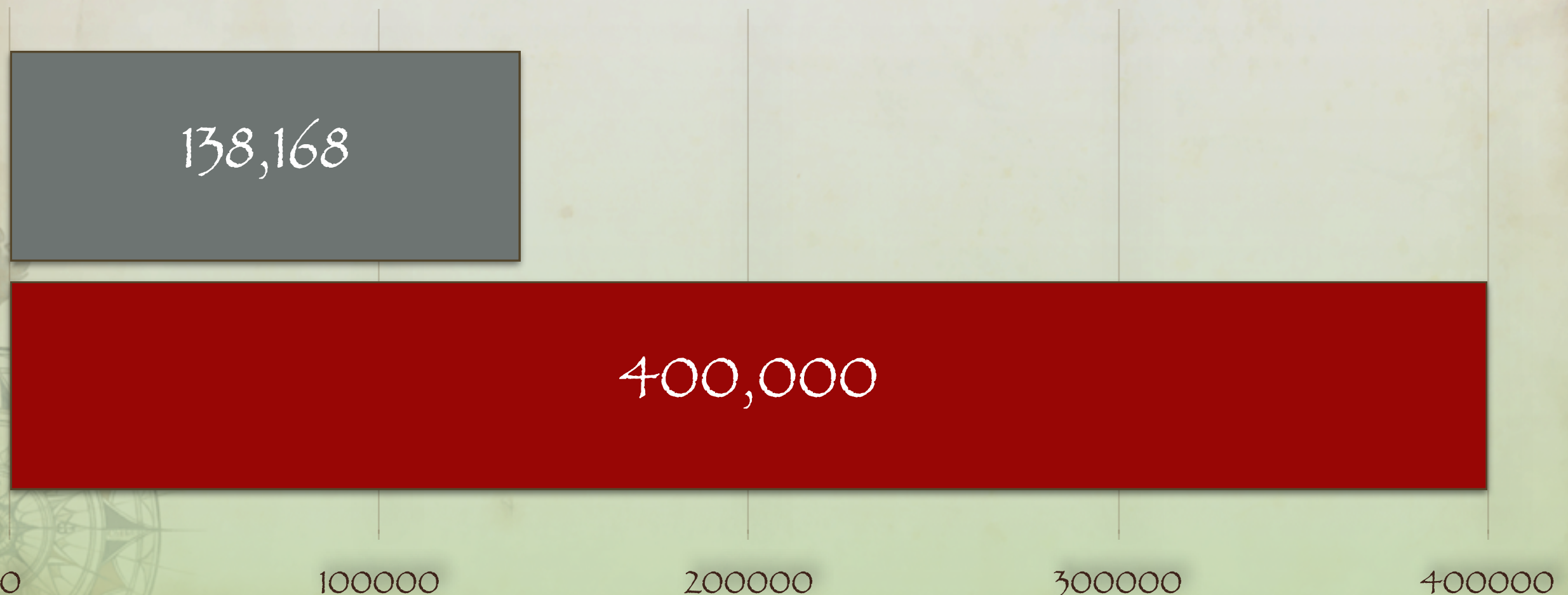
- ◆ Bart D. Ehrman has estimated that there are "between 200,000–400,000 variants [in] several million pages of manuscripts."
- ◆ This equates to "more variations" among our manuscripts (over 5,780), than there are words in the New Testament, (App 138,162).

The Reliability of The New Testament

What About Variations In The Text?

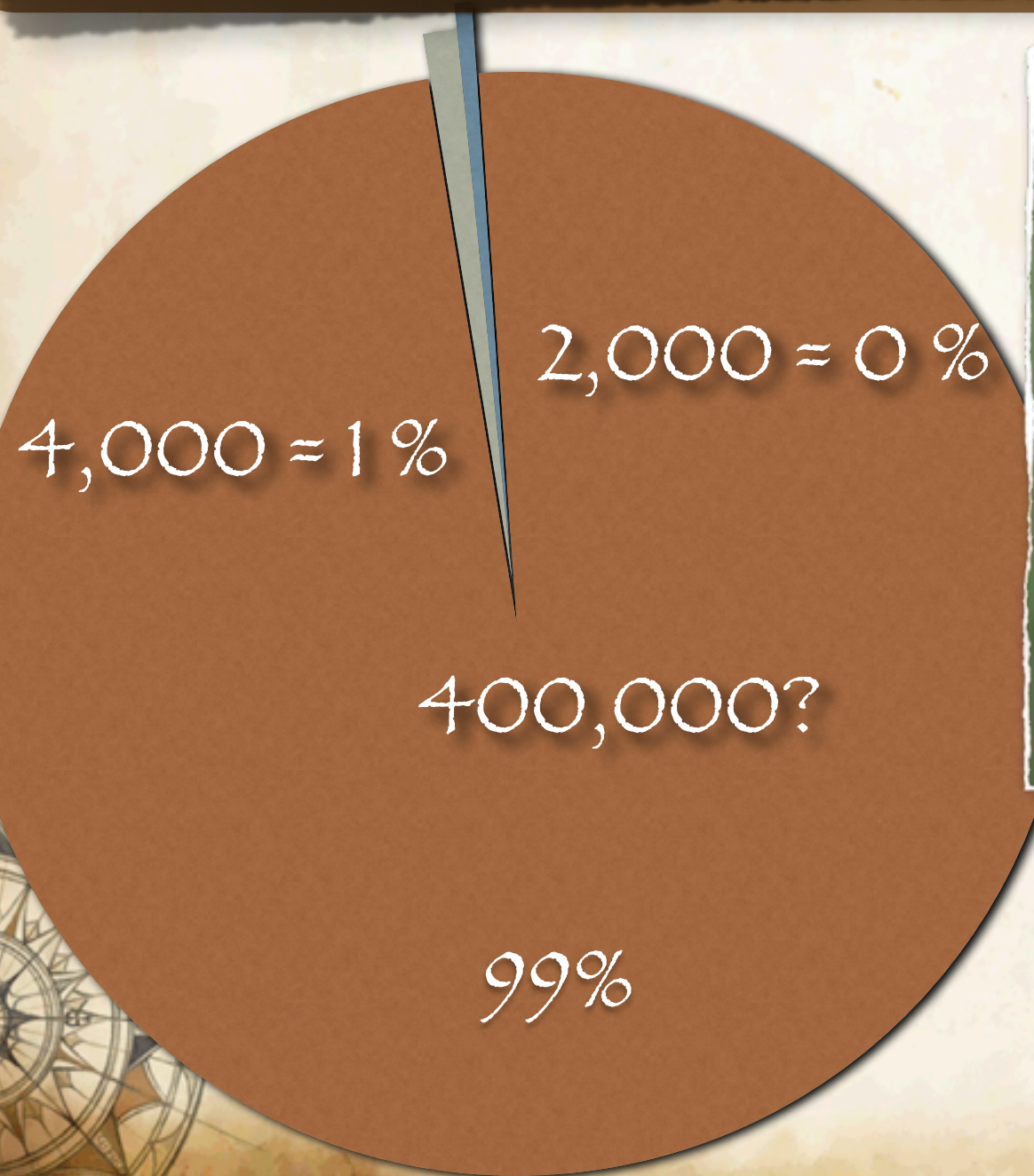
The Current Onslaught

■ Words ■ Alledged Variants



The Reliability of The New Testament

What About Variations In The Text?



Over 5,780 Manuscripts (Average 200 pages each ~ 1.3 million pages of handwritten text) ~ The more manuscripts the more variants.

99% of variants among the 5,780+ manuscripts have NO impact on the meanings of the text!

- Variants 400,000
- Meaningful Variants 4,000
- Viable Variants 2,000

The Reliability of The New Testament

What About Variations In The Text?



- 📌 The vast majority are very minor (spelling, differences in phraseology, etc.; modern translations often note the differences in footnotes)
- 📌 Only 1/2 of one percent is in question (compared to 5 percent for the Iliad by Homer w/ 643 manuscripts)

The Reliability of The New Testament

What About Variations In The Text?

The Current Onslaught



Words



Viable Variants

138,168

2,000

0

35000

70000

105000

140000

The Reliability of The New Testament

What About Variations In The Text?

THE CASE FOR CHRIST

*A Journalist's Personal Investigation
of the Evidence for Jesus*

LEE STROBEL

"The more often you have copies that agree with each other, especially if they emerge from different geographical areas, the more you can cross-check them to figure out what the original document was like. The only way they'd agree would be where they went back genealogically in a family tree that represents the descent of the manuscripts.

The Case for Christ". 1998. Chapter three, when quoting biblical scholar Bruce Metzger

The Reliability of The New Testament

What About Variations In The Text?



It can be stated:

"No fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith rests on a disputed reading...It cannot be too strongly asserted that in substance the text of the Bible is certain: especially is this the case with the New Testament." ~

Sir Frederick Kenyon (authority in the field of New Testament textual criticism)

The Reliability of The New Testament

What About Variations In The Text?

B. F. WESTCOTT AND F. J. A. HORT:

“It is not superfluous therefore to state explicitly that the bulk of the words of the New Testament stand out above all discriminative process of criticism, because they are free from variation, and need only to be transcribed . . .

THE
GREEK NEW TESTAMENT
with Dictionary

B. F. WESTCOTT
and F. J. A. HORT

The Reliability of The New Testament

What About Variations In The Text?

B. F. WESTCOTT AND F. J. A. HORT:

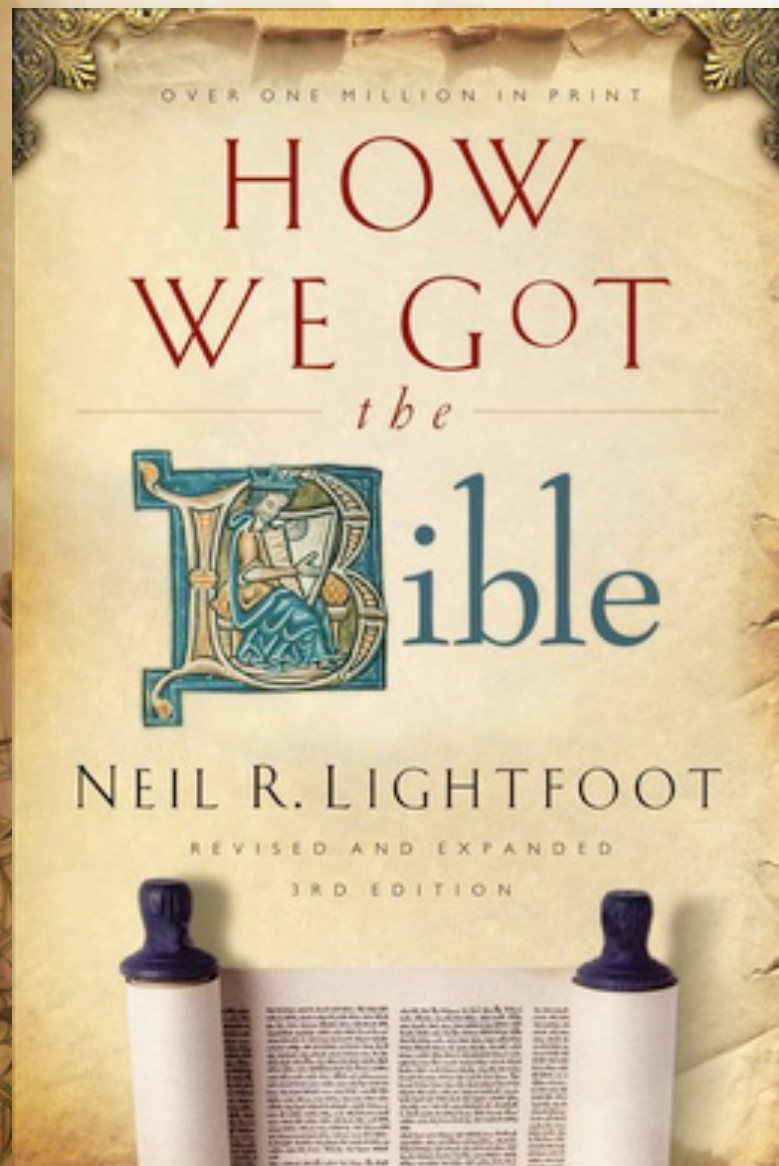
If comparative trivialities such as changes of order, the insertion or omission of the article with proper names, and the like are set aside, the works in our opinion still subject to doubt can hardly mount to more than a thousandth part of the whole New Testament."

THE
GREEK NEW TESTAMENT
with Dictionary

B. F. WESTCOTT
and F. J. A. HORT

The Reliability of The New Testament

What About Variations In The Text?



NEIL LIGHTFOOT:

“The variant readings in the manuscripts are not of such a nature that they threaten to overthrow our faith. Except for a few instances, we have an unquestioned text; and even then, not one principle of faith or command of the Lord is involved.

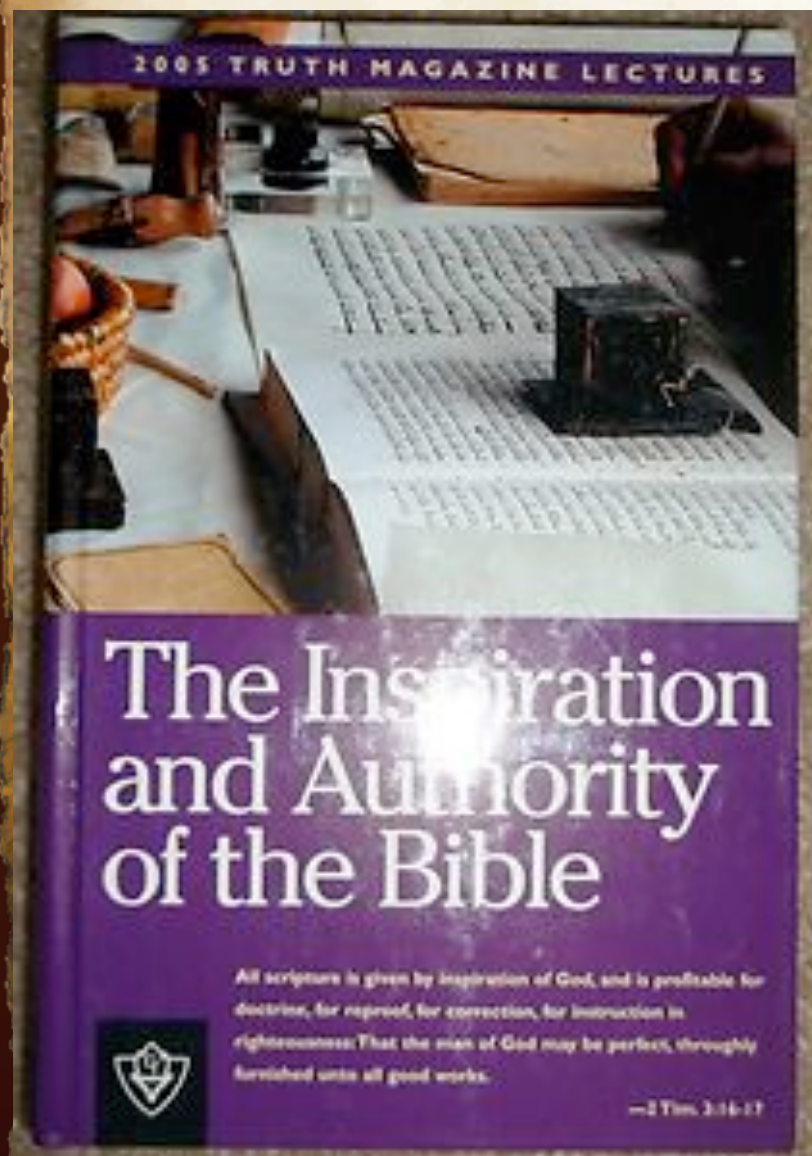
The Reliability of The New Testament

What About Variations In The Text?

JOHN A. SMITH:

(The Inspiration & Authority of The Bible - Truth Lectures 2005; pg 331)

“Amazingly there are only four passages in the New Testament that are seriously challenged. They are John 7:53-8:11; 1 John 5:7; Mark 16:9-20; & Acts 8:37.



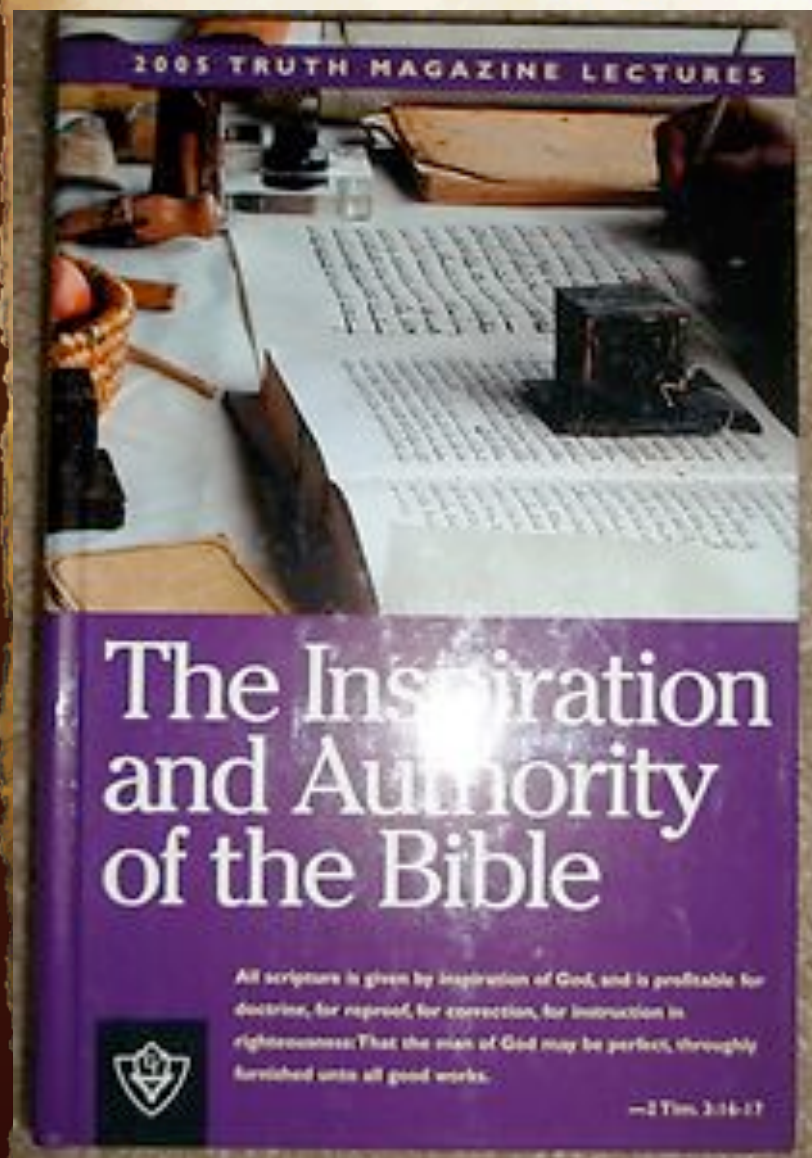
The Reliability of The New Testament

What About Variations In The Text?

JOHN A. SMITH:

(The Inspiration & Authority of The Bible - Truth Lectures 2005; pg 331)

Even if these passages were dismissed as spurious, not one significant matter of faith would be disrupted. What is taught in these disputed passages is repeated in other passages that are beyond doubt.



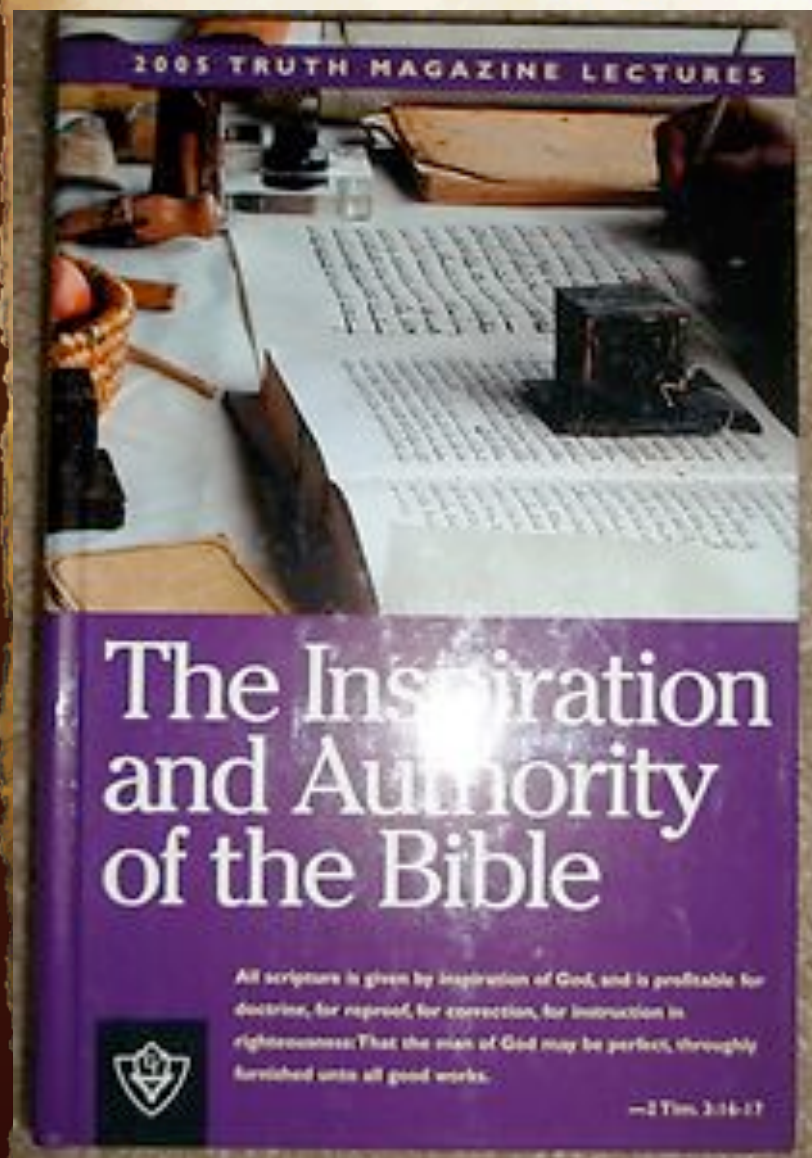
The Reliability of The New Testament

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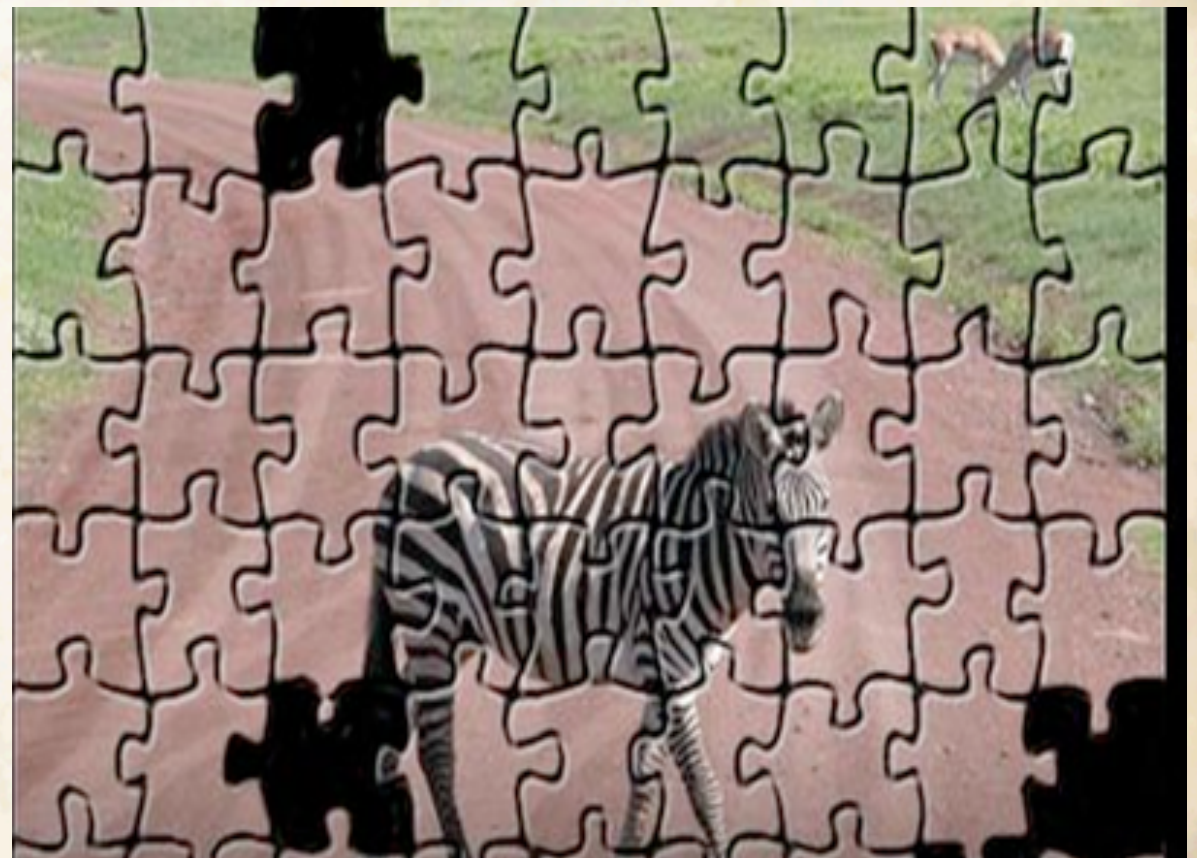
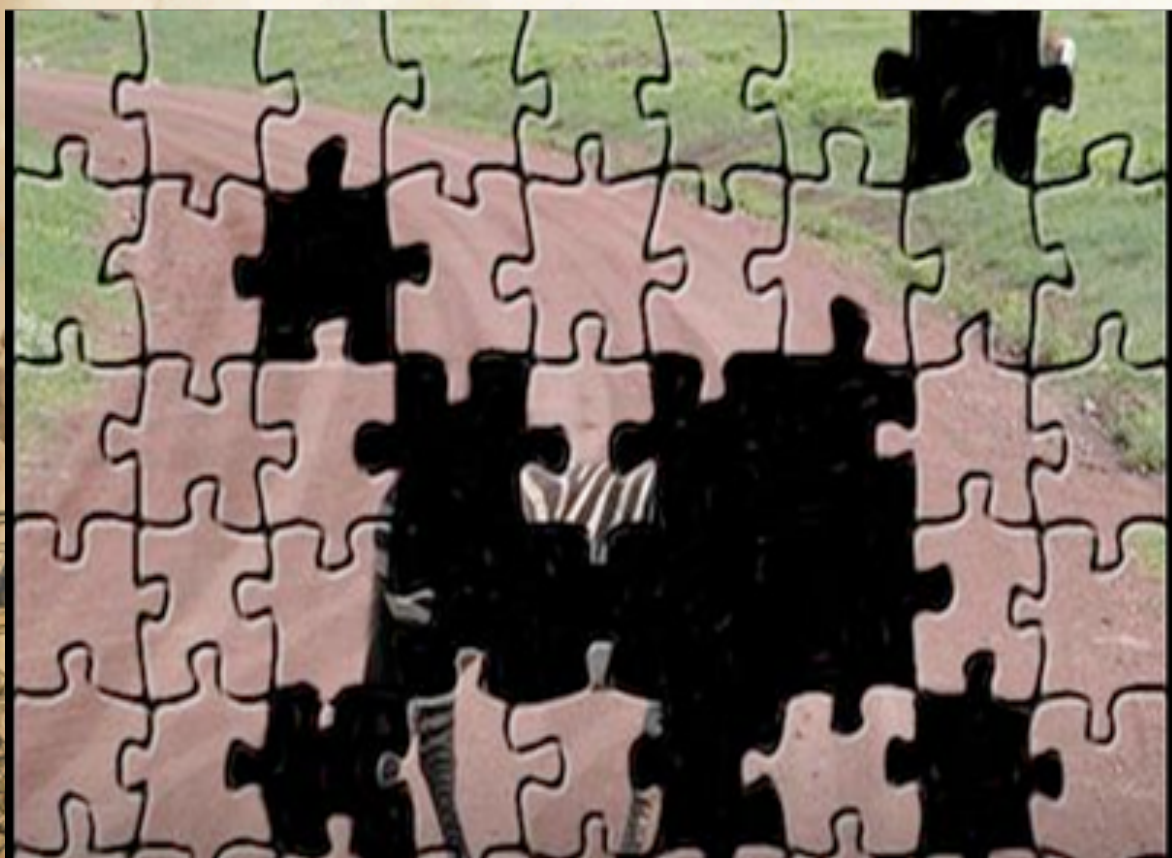
Not one contradictory notion is presented in any of these disputed passages. I find that amazing and faith building.”



The Reliability of The New Testament

What About Variations In The Text?

What Part of the Puzzle is Missing?



The More We Have, The More Confidence We Have!

The Reliability of The New Testament

We Should Have Complete Confidence

THE ANVIL OF GOD'S WORD



Last eve I passed beside a blacksmith's door
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime:
Then looking in, I saw upon the floor
Old hammers, worn with beating years of time.
"How many anvils have you had," said I,
"To wear and batter all these hammers so?"
"Just one," said he, and then, with twinkling eye,
"The anvil wears the hammers out, you know."
And so, thought I, the anvil of God's word,
For ages skeptic blows have beat upon;
Yet though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The anvil is unharmed . . . the hammer's gone.

Author unknown

God is quite capable of
preserving His word, and it is
only His word—in all its
purity—which can preserve us.



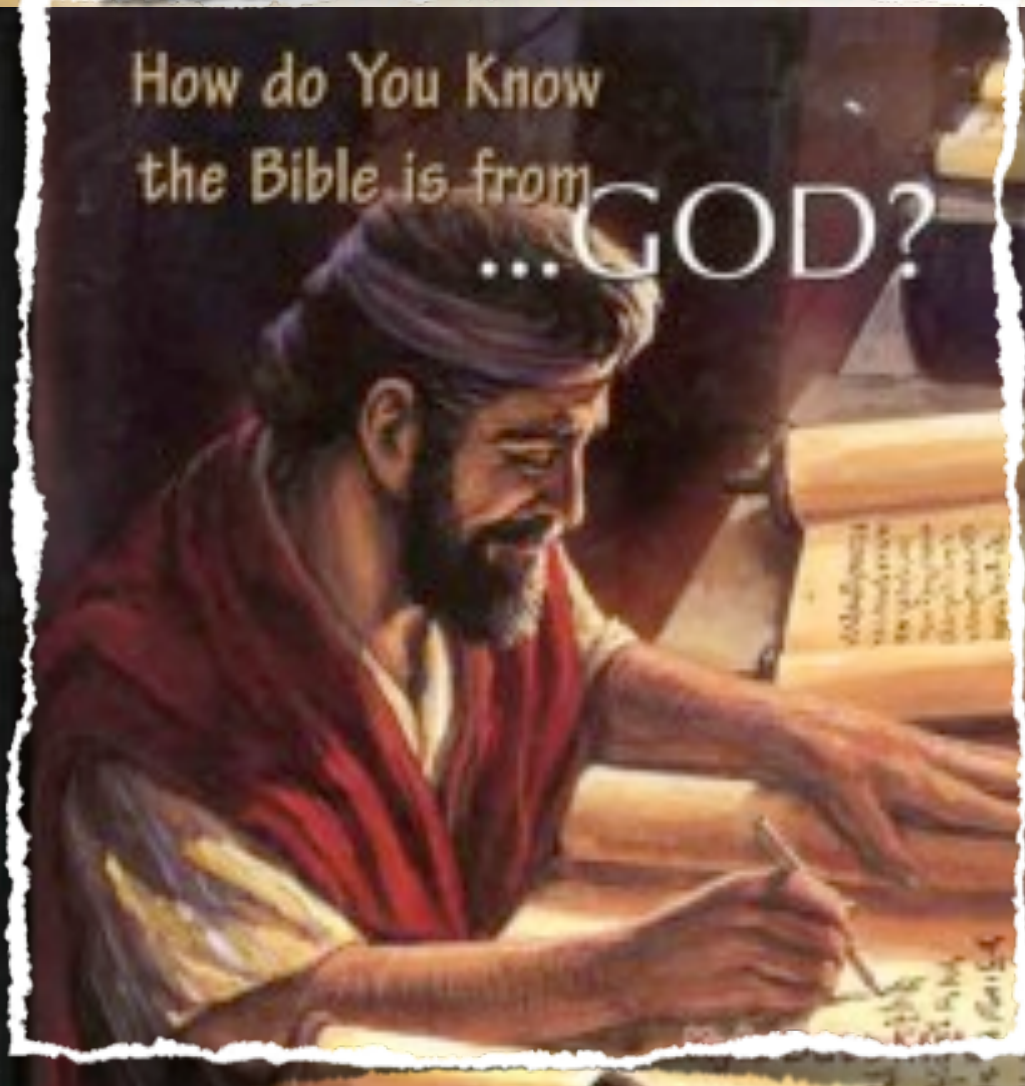
Censoring
The Bible



The Reliability of The New Testament

It Answers Every Human Need!

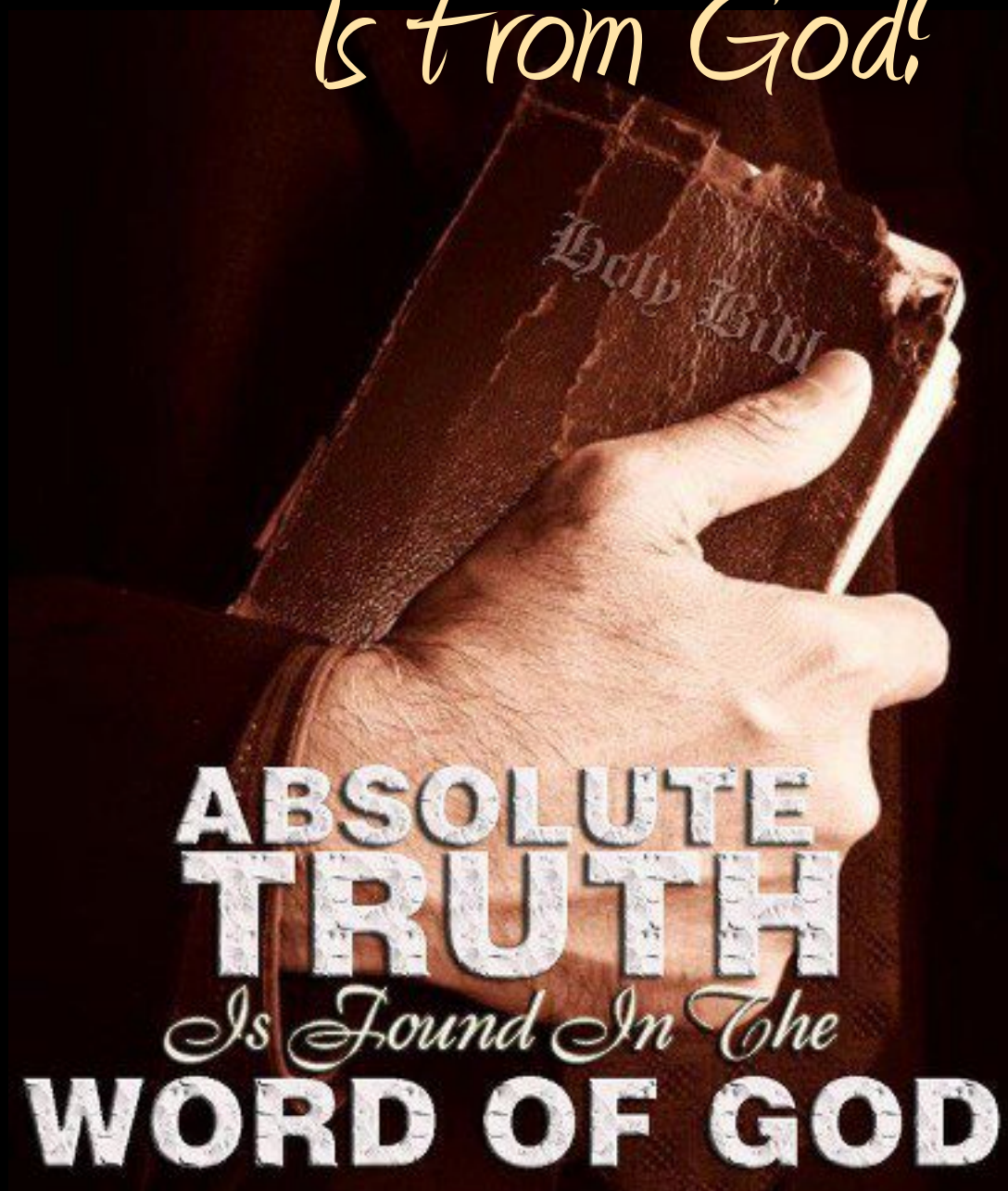
How do You Know
the Bible is from
...GOD?



- ✳ Where did we come from? (Gen. 1:1)
- ✳ Why are we here? (Ecc. 12:13)
- ✳ What about salvation - (Acts 2:38)
- ✳ How should we live? (Titus 2:11,12)
- ✳ What about religion - (John 4:24)
- ✳ What about life after death? (Ecc. 3:11; 12:14; Acts 17:26-31)

Can We Trust The Bible?

*It Is True! It Is Accurate! It
Is From God!*



**Hear It
Believe It
Obey It
Follow It
Be Blessed
Through It!**

The Reliability of The New Testament

What About Variations In The Text?

Charts by Don McClain

Prepared August 28-30, , 2014

Preached August 31, 2012

West 65th Street church of Christ

P.O. Box 190062

Little Rock AR 72219

501-568-1062

Prepared using PPT 2010

Email - donmcclain@sbcglobal.net

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<http://w65stchurchofchrist.org/coc/sermons/>

Note - Many of the transition effects used in this presentation may be lost using PPT 2007 Viewer

<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?>

[FamilyID=cb9bf144-1076-4615-9951-294eeb832823&displaylang=en](http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyID=cb9bf144-1076-4615-9951-294eeb832823&displaylang=en)