

TEXTUAL EVIDENCE FOR CHRISTIANITY

Dr. Craig A. Evans is the John Bisagno Distinguished Professor of Christian Origins at Houston Baptist University in Texas. A graduate of Claremont McKenna College, he received his M.Div. from Western Baptist Seminary in Portland, Oregon, and his M.A. and Ph.D. in Biblical Studies from Claremont Graduate University in southern California. He has also been awarded the D. Habil. by the Karoli Gaspar Reformed University in Budapest. A well-known evangelical scholar, Dr. Evans is an elected member of the prestigious Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas, an academic Society for the furtherance of New Testament studies internationally.

Every Christian needs a good mentor in faith. Dr. Johnston states, "I'm looking at every student here and I'm asking you a question. Whom have you asked to be your mentor? Who's training you? Who's teaching you? Who's helping you be the best at something that God has called you to be?"

The minute a student at a secular college says I believe in the Bible a professor has a nihilistic agenda to say you absolutely cannot trust it. Why is that?

It is part of a larger worldview. There's a desire of the secular person to have one's own truth, one's own worldview. Which means you can do whatever you want to do. "I'm in my 43rd year as a full-time payroll professor. I've seen that in my own discipline. People I know personally and they're academics and they're smart people. They know their stuff and they argue for things that I know are false. I suspect they know they're false too. But it's a preference."

The Jesus Manuscript

If there were changes in manuscripts, we would have evidence of that across the centuries. Eldon J. F. stated, "there are no surprises in the papyri. No one has tampered with the text. It has remained stable."

The Bible is a stable text. Claims the Biblical text was altered by scribes within the first 100 years are unfounded and have been disproven.

Claims that Jesus was illiterate, not the Son of God, or that scribes crafted the Bible to state these later with no basis are unfounded. A good scribe has no motivation to make changes to the Bible

The historical biographical information about Jesus is stronger than it is for Augustus, the greatest Roman emperor who ever lived.

Four biographies were written related to Jesus. Three biographies (Matthew, Mark, Luke) were written within just 30 to 35 years of Jesus's death on the cross, his resurrection, and the beginning of Christianity. A decade or two later the fourth biography (John) was written.

Emperor Augustus passed away in the year 14 AD. Only three biographies of his life were written almost 100 years after his death.

Christianity is unlike any other religion in the world because it can be tested against the facts of history.

It is a fact-based faith. We are not Christians because of a feeling, but the reality of Jesus.

“Unlike any other religion in the world, Christianity continues to put itself to the historical test. What does that mean? I am not a Christian because I woke up this morning and felt like a Christian. Did you know that? I wasn't vibing Jesus. I wasn't vibing anything when the alarm went off this morning. I wanted to stay in bed probably like you. I am a Christian because of the historical fact that Jesus Christ lived, he died on the cross for my sin and yours, and he rose from the grave physically bodily.”

We can provide you with excellent evidence and facts, but you must decide which worldview makes the best sense of the world.

Questions to Consider

1. How old, how many, and of what quality are the New Testament manuscripts?
2. Who were the early scribes/copyists who made copies of the New Testament writings and would they/could they change the text?
3. Who wrote the New Testament Gospels and when?