THE ONLY SURE FOUNDATION





2018 BARNA STUDY (US)

 Over half of practicing Christian young people say that evangelism is morally wrong. • About 51% of churchgoers in general don't know the Great Commission. • The percentage of *atheism* among young people has doubled in and only 9% of Gen Z (iGen) are engaged Christians.





MATTHEW 7:24-27 FINALE OF JESUS'S 'SERMON ON THE MOUNT'

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"REPENT, FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND." (Matthew 3:2 & 4:17)

The Sermon on the Mount is an exposition from our Lord himself on what defines the Kingdom of Heaven.



STARTS OFF WITH A LIST OF WHAT DEFINES TRUE CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM (Matthew 5:2-16)

Poor in spirit, those who mourn, meek, hunger and thirst for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers, persecuted for the sake of Christ, and live as the salt and light of the world...



LAST POINT OF JESUS'S SERMON (Matthew 7:13-27)

If you miss this, you've missed everything!



JESUS ENDS WITH ANSWERING THE QUESTION THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN BURNING ON EVERYONE'S MIND...



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WARNING OF FALSE PATHS (verses 13-14)

Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

POPULARITY NEVER DEFINED TRUTH



WARNING OF FALSE GUIDES (verses 15-20)

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits... A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit.

CHECK YOUR TEACHERS AND OURSELVES



WARNING OF FALSE CITIZENS (verses 21-23)

Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven...

TRUST IN CHRIST'S FINISHED WORK



HOW DO WE ENTER THE KINGDOM? (verses 24-27)

The parable of the houses tells us how to avoid a life that is spiritually doomed to catastrophic structural failure.

JESUS TELLS US – "BUILD YOUR LIFE UPON MY WORD. MAKE IT YOUR SURE FOUNDATION."



"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it." (Matthew 7:24-27)



1. WHY TRUST THE BIBLE AS OUR ONLY SURE FOUNDATION? 2. HOW DO WE MAKE THE BIBLE OUR **SURE FOUNDATION?**



1. WHY TRUST THE BIBLE AS OUR ONLY SURE FOUNDATION?

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1. WHY TRUST THE BIBLE AS OUR ONLY SURE FOUNDATION?

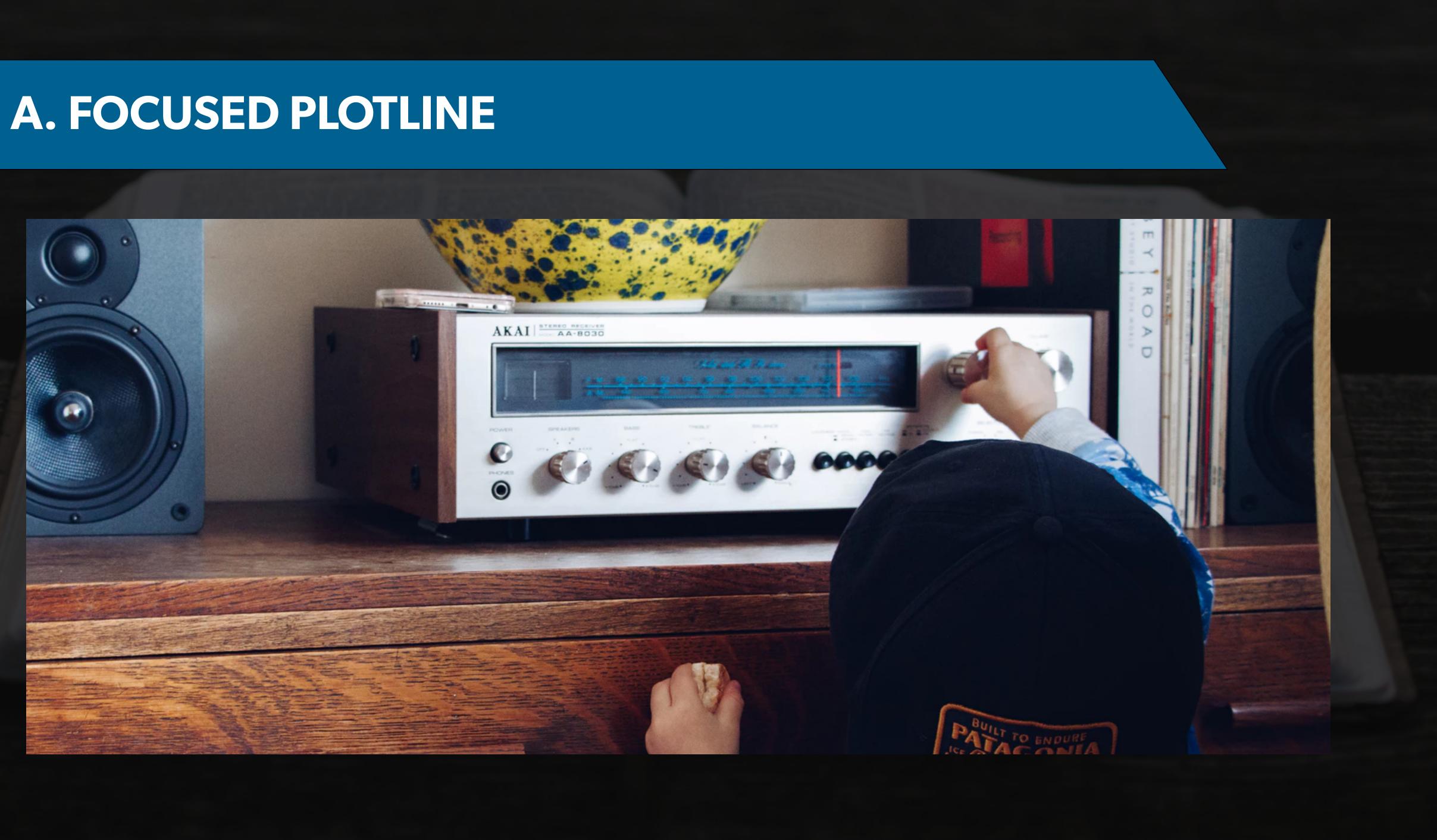
3 self-attesting internal qualities: A. FOCUSED PLOTLINE The Bible is one consistent message. **B. FULFILLED PROPHECY** The Bible shows God delivered on what He said. **C. FAITHFUL PRESERVATION** The Bible has stood the test of time.



A. FOCUSED PLOTLINE

If the Bible is ultimately the product of One Divine Author, then its collective message should be consistent across all of its books.





BIBLE VISUAL ARC (63,779 CROSS-REFERENCES)



The Bible tells the unified, coherent story of humanity's creation by God, subsequent **REBELLION** against God, and God's gracious **RESCUE** of His people.



"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life." (John 5:39-40)



"And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." (Luke 24:27)





TAKE AWAY: The Bible, as God's word, has One Ultimate Author telling ONE STORY of God's redemption. No other religious work has the same level of diversity of human authorship, yet consistency of a singular Divine message.



B. FULFILLED PROPHECY

If the Bible is the God's word, we should expect it to evidence a supernatural quality about what it predicts.



I. MESSIANIC PROPHECY

Jesus Christ fulfilled approximately over <u>300</u> specific Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah in his birth, life, death and resurrection.

This is the whole point of the Bible: to point to Jesus Christ as the long awaited Saviour of the world!



THE MESSIAH WOULD: be born of a virgin, in Bethlehem as a decendent of David have been the object of a murderous plot to kill him as a baby • be preceded by a messenger like Elijah be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver be forsaken and pierced but vindicated be resurrected and bring a new covenant



COULDN'T IT HAVE BEEN FORGED?

No. People don't fabricate false tales that don't advantage them and then willingly go to brutal executions for the sake of that lie.

Also, other external sources corroborate the evidence.



II. THE SUFFERING SERVANT (ISAIAH 52-53)

Clearly a prophecy pointing to Jesus.

Doubted for many years by critical scholars.



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This was the discovery of the **Dead Sea Scrolls**





The Great Scroll of Isaiah (356 - 103 BC)



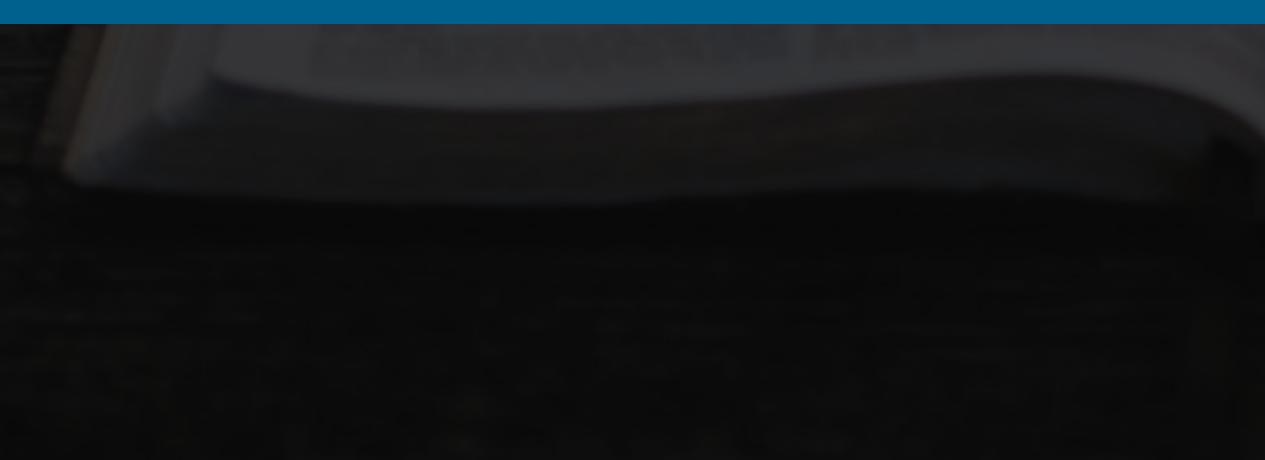
"The Word of God remains eternal. Those who have tried to bury it only find out that the Bible rises up to outlive its pallbearers." (Ravi Zacharias)







TAKE AWAY: The Bible's prophetic claims are accurately fulfilled. The many specific Messianic prophecies which are fulfilled in Jesus Christ are compelling evidences of its truth.





C. FAITHFUL PRESERVATION



If the Bible is God's word, He will preserve it for us so that we can be confident that what we have and read today is really what He meant for us to have.



How do we know that what was written down is what was originally taught by Jesus and the apostles?



1 CLEMENT 42:1-2 (c. 96 AD) "The Apostles received the Gospel for us from the Lord Jesus Christ, Jesus the Christ was sent from God. The Christ therefore is from God and the Apostles from the Christ."



IRENAEUS, AGAINST HERESIES 3.1.1 (c.130-202 AD) "We have learned from none others the plan of our salvation, than from those through whom the Gospel has come down to us, which they did at one time proclaim in public, and, at a later period, by the will of God, handed down to us in the Scriptures, to be the ground and pillar of our faith."





The Bible claims that God's word stands forever (Isa. 40:8), and Jesus even claims that heaven and earth would sooner pass away than even one of the smallest marks of his words (Matt. 5:18, 24:35 & Luke 21:33).

Does it live up to this claim?



PRESERVATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

The traditional Hebrew and Aramaic version of the OT which we have preserved today is called the Masoretic Text.



ALEPPO CODEX (10th century)

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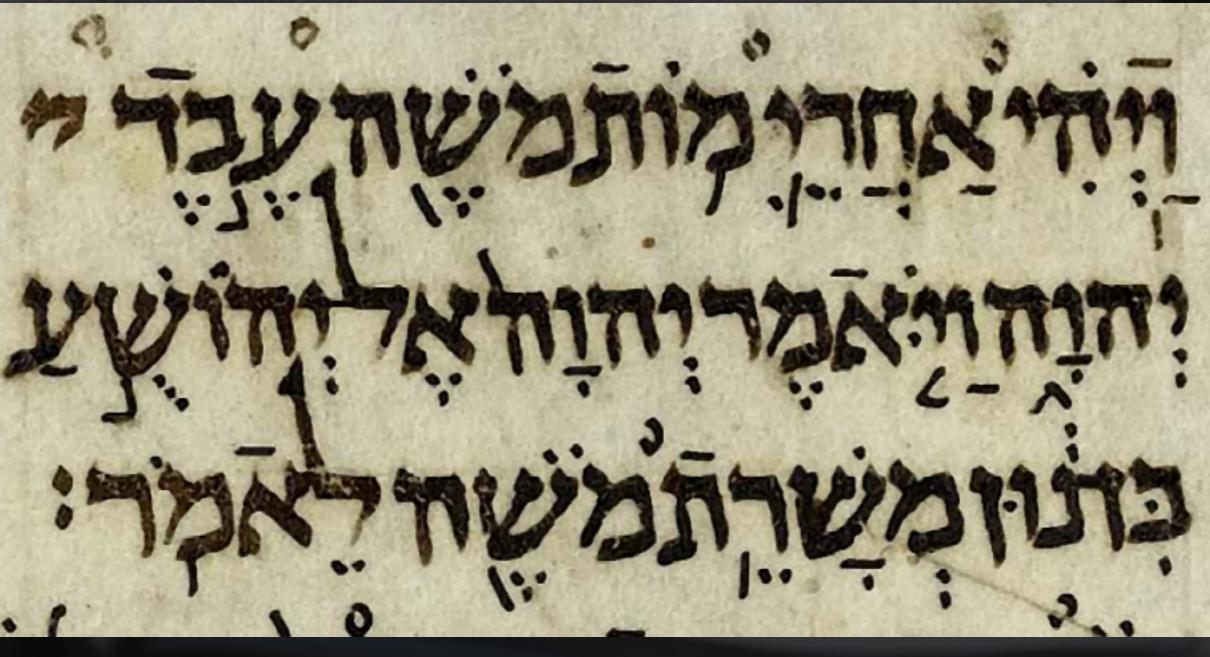
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PRESERVATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

For example, the Scroll of Isaiah was found to be **95% the same** - and the 5% difference was mainly in obvious scribal mistakes which made no difference to the meaning of the text.



PRESERVATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT



MS 206 Hebrew square book script. Iraq, 1st half of 11th c.

ויהוה הבחבלבטרבארץ יערים מכּכָּרפָרעה עלכסאו ערבטר השביאש בכית הפיר ובירביומיד תוהבפרצת ליליא ויייקטי לפופרא בארע רמי רמיירא יפרערשתיה למיתבשלפורסי בלטתוח ערבוקראר איניא יבבית אסירי וכל ביכרא,יי רבעירא וויקס פר עדליביד הואובל עברייויבל ביצרים י ויעהי בעקה גרלה בביבים ביאון ביתאשר אוזשכבית זםפרעהבליליאחואוכי נברוהי ובלמצראי והנית צוחתא רבתאבמין אריליתביתא׳ תביורילא תווח ביח כיתשיויקרא כשהורצעתיו ביבה ויאבר קומו צאופתוך עמי נסציתם נסבני ושראל ולכו עבורואת הנהפרברבסיקראלמשה וראחרובליליאנאם קומוי פיקו מינו עמי אהציתו אהי

גלפאיוהיה פיתכאיאלוארץ אשריתןיהוהלכהכאשרוכר שמרתם אתם עבנה הואתי יהיאריתיעלון לאך עא דייתנון ותנטרון ניי לפון בָּהָארמַלִיר תפירסנאהריו והנחבייארח אַלּיַבָּסַבְּעַבַסַמָּח מָאָר זְּאָת לְבָסיויהוי אָרִיי <u>הוובעכון כָּא פּילחַנָא הָרָין</u> לפון ואַנַרוּתָם זְבָּחַפָּסְחוֹזוּא דיהנה אָשֶׁרפָסַח ערבּתַיבע שראלברעריםכנגפי ארנ מערים ואתבתינו הצרויקר ם עם וישתחוויותיפרון דיבח חיסחוא קויירחס ערברנ בנישראלבמצר ברמחאות מעראוות בתנא שיזיבוקרע עבאוסגרריווילכוויעשובע ישראל באשר צוה יחוח את משהוציהרובן עשרי ואורו ועבדובניטבמא הפקיד ייותכים ואה ביו עבדין

SEPTUAGINT Codex Vaticanus, Codex Sinaiticus

SILVER SCOLLS

Paleo-Hebrew (587-586 BC)

האלהיר אעד ניו נמונו אותע איחנין שליא ונטאי איזר כאפיר לכיליאשר כאוץ כתהתואיד לשת שתחיותלאת נער והיוהאלהיך היחנא ני עלשלעיון בשונצוע לשנאר ותכי ולשתיו ביותי ליא ילשית נוים נקריותות לשנא וטראול יוסראול לשנף יצעותולציא נתף יכויו חיך לוא נאנשורנה נלרלא מלכתך שירך יהבריע כ שעע איאר איר עיין אלן ארן נא שטער עוט כוך יהוה א נקרשרי ניר אתצער יאת או MACLE פיץ יאדי בין יפיך ילוד אזוית 4:76 ++ די שולך ליפונטאן ליפתרצחל טר כוער ערשיאליאתחרת 2517 7155

דיחנירינלאייורבוצר אהנשפויה אשר צור נטוראו ברכר בניתה נינוץ לצוית יאירצלמט יהיר לחראיאו NASH PAPYRI Hebrew (150-100 BC)

Greek (4th Century)





PRESERVATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

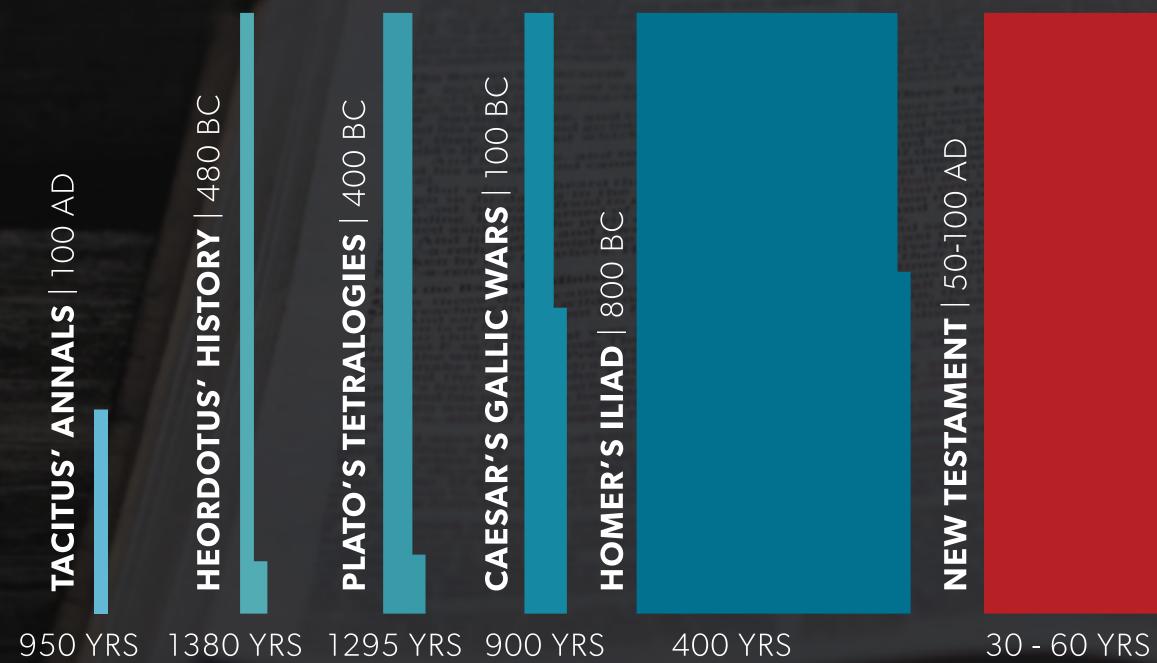
The evidence we have for the preservation of the New Testament is simply staggering - especially when compared to any other similar work of antiquity.



PRESERVATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

There are over **5700** Greek hand-copied manuscripts containing either parts or all of the NT. The average size of a NT manuscript is over **450** pages. Some of the earliest manuscripts are dated possibly to within **60** years of the originals





SEPARATION OF ORIGINAL TO EARLIEST MANUSCRIPTS

(GREEK MANUSCRIPTS ONLY)

(+OTHER EARLY TRANSLATIONS) MORE THAN 23,769



PRESERVATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Simply stated, **no other work of antiquity** has the same level of manuscript evidence to support the faithful transmission of the text as the New Testament documents.





Bart Ehrman: "There more textual variants than there are words in the New Testament."

How can we have any confidence about the text if there are that many 'mistakes' in the copies?



The reason we have so many variants is simply because we have so many <u>COPIES</u>!





22% DON'T IMPACT TRANSLATION

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75% SPELIN' MISTAYKZ



"...In fact, most of the changes found in our early Christian manuscripts have nothing to do with theology or ideology. Far and and away the [sic] most changes are the result of mistakes, pure and simple slips of the pen, accidental omissions, inadvertent additions, misspelled words, blunders of one sort or another" (Bart D. Ehrman, Misquoting Jesus)



THE TOTAL NUMBER OF VARIANT READINGS THAT ACTUALLY HAVE ANY SIGNIFICANCE AMOUNT TO LESS THAN 0.5%!



An Embarrassment of Wealth of Evidence





"...if the New Testament were a collection of secular writings, their authenticity would generally be regarded as beyond all doubt." (F.F. Bruce, The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?, pg 10)



WHY DO SKEPTICS STILL NOT BELIEVE?

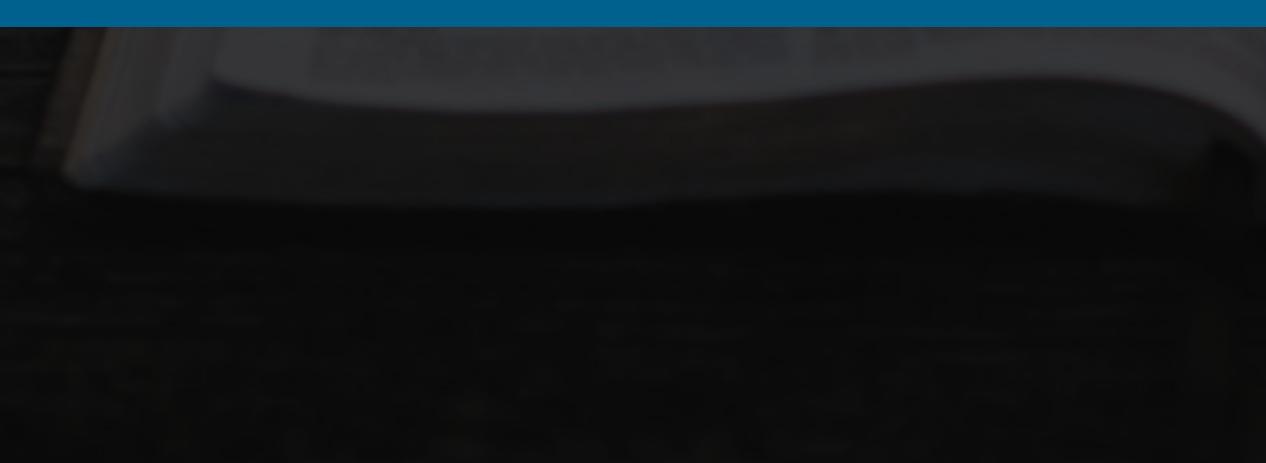
"And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil." (John 3:19)







TAKE AWAY: The historical record of manuscripts show how the biblical text has been faithfully transmitted to us in a way that shows God's providential preservation of His Word.





2. HOW DO WE MAKE THE BIBLE OUR SURE FOUNDATION?

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It is the God-ordained means to both entrance into His Kingdom and the spread of His Kingdom.

Every single authentic move of the Spirit and revival in a society was wrought by a return to fervent prayer and God's Word – in reading, studying and proclaiming it.



A. WE'RE ACCOUNTABLE TO WHAT GOD HAS SAID TO **US IN HIS WORD**

"...have you not read what was said to you by God?" (Matthew 22:31b)



According to Jesus, people are held accountable to God's written word as if He had spoken it directly to them.





HEART CHECK: Do you read the Bible as if you will be held accountable to what it says? Is your attitude to the Bible serious or casual, passionate or indifferent?



B. GOD'S WORD IS *SUFFICIENT* **TO FULLY EQUIP US FOR EVERY GOOD WORK**

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:16-17)



Scripture's purpose is to equip the believer for every good work in such a way that they lack nothing.

So, we must test every claim by the scriptures and look to the scriptures to equip us.





HEART CHECK: Do you look to scripture as the sole and ultimate authority for your life? Or are you running after other things to prepare you for life's challenges? Have you been taught, reproved, corrected and trained by scripture?



What would others say was your ultimate authority?



Have you hid God's word so much in your heart that it is what naturally comes out?



C. WE MUST APPLY OURSELVES TO RIGHTLY UNDERSTAND HIS WORD

"...knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." (2 Peter 1:20-21)



God meant to say something specific to us, and He didn't mis-speak. It is our responsibility to properly interpret what He meant to say.

This is why 2 Timothy 2: 15 commands us to study to show yourself an approved workman, rightly handling the word of truth.

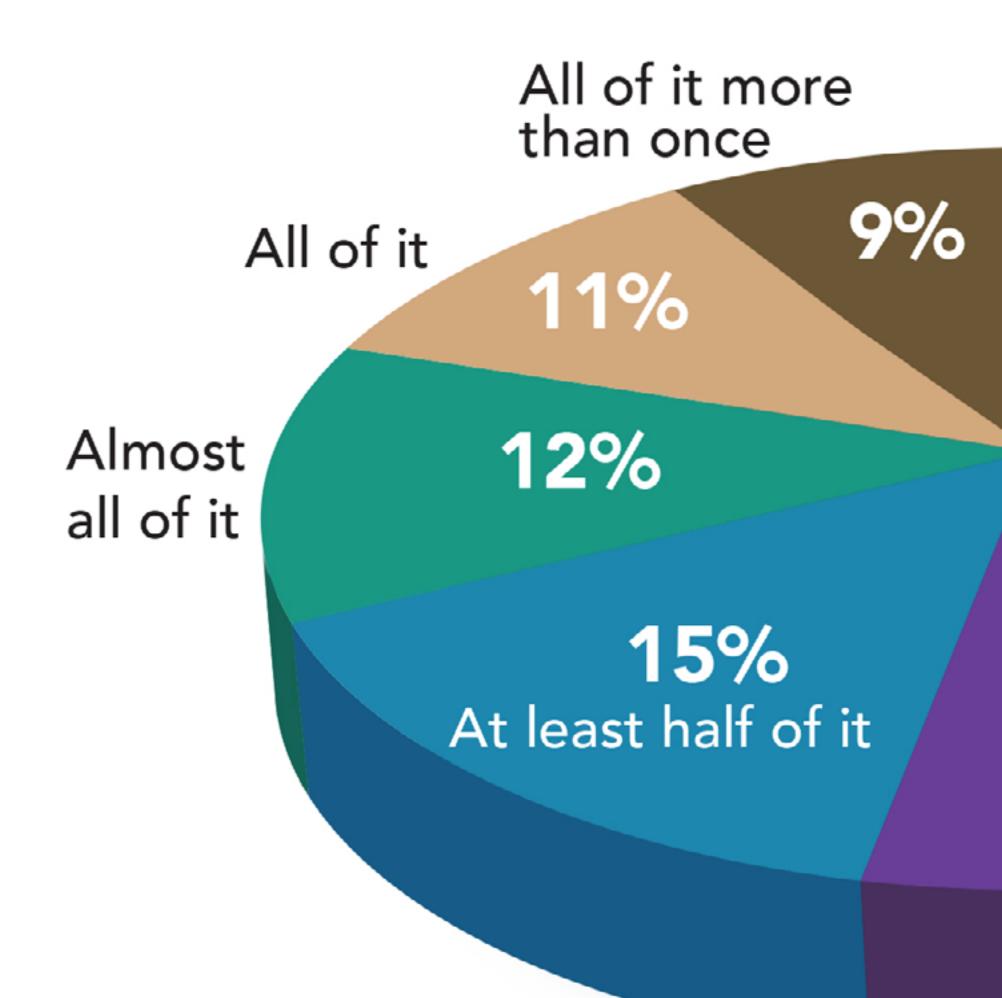




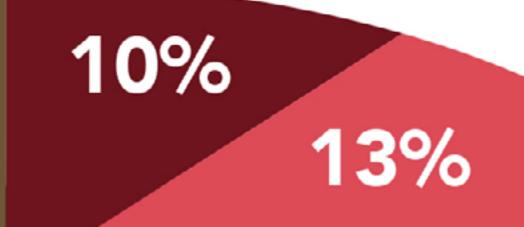
HEART CHECK: How hard do you work at trying to understand God's Word? Is it something that you hold as a high priority? Or do you settle for just listening to what the TV preacher says, or what you imagine it to say?



Among Americans: How much of the Bible have you personally read?







Only a few sentences

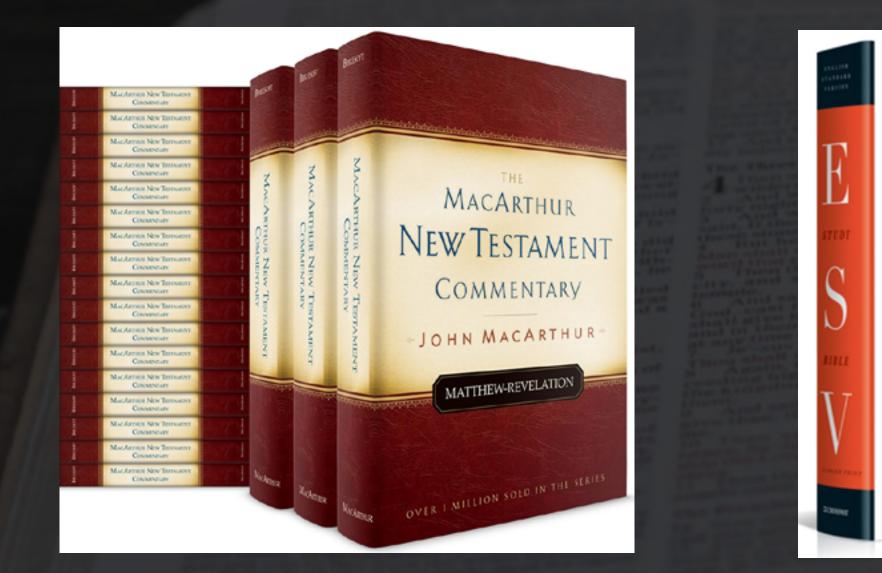
30% Several passages or stories



How much time/money do you invest in studying God's word?

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STUDY BIBLE







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A wasted life is a life that succeeds at things that don't ultimately matter.

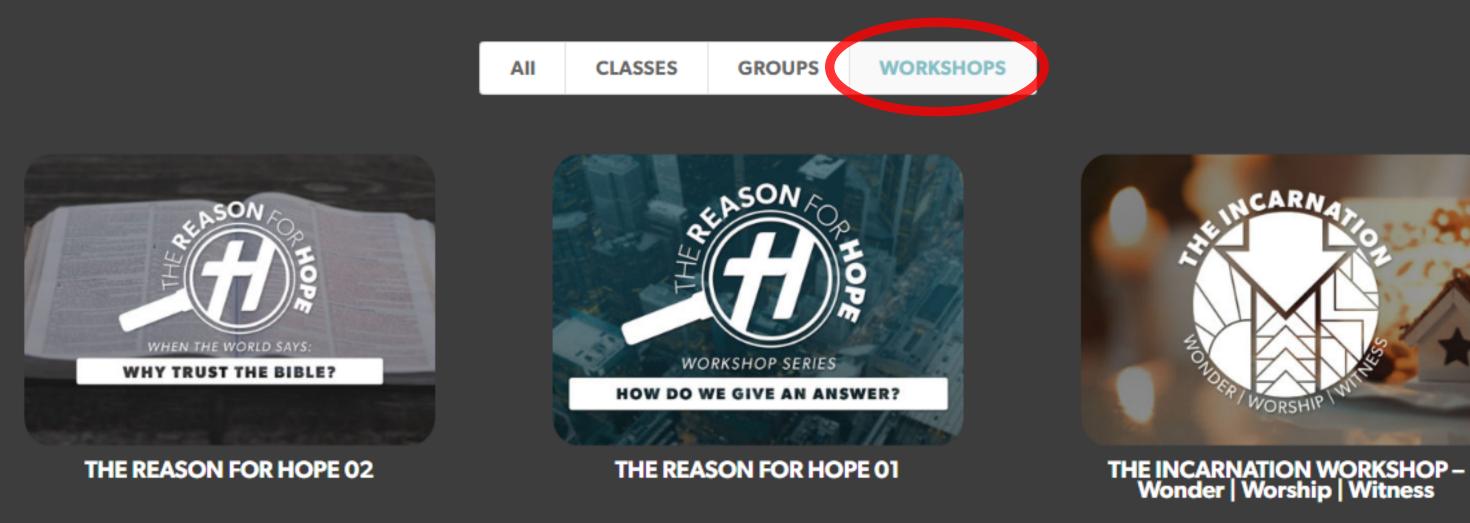
Young people today want their lives to matter. They also don't want a blind and shallow faith. They want a faith that is robust and able to tackle the tough questions.



← → C (i) https://hopechurchtw.ca/learn/

LEARNING ARCHIVE

Below are the recordings and online materials for some of the past groups, classes and workshops we have done. We'll be continuing to add to this archive as we do more groups, classes and workshops, to be sure to check back for more updates!





READ SCRIPTURE WORKSHOP: How to

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WHY TRUST THE BIBLE?

