**The Evidence for the Resurrection**

**My story**

* A young person in college (far from God and vulnerable to the enemy)
* My first college class and fake news

1. **What I was told about God –intelligent people (scientists )don’t believe there is a God.**

**Robert Jastrow** --After leaving Columbia, Jastrow became an assistant professor at [Yale](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yale), and then joined the [Naval Research Laboratory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Research_Laboratory). In 1958 he joined the newly formed [National Aeronautics and Space Administration](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Aeronautics_and_Space_Administration) as head of its theoretical division.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Jastrow#cite_note-obit-1) In 1961 he became the founding director of NASA's [Goddard Institute for Space Studies](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goddard_Institute_for_Space_Studies) and served as its director until his retirement from NASA in 1981. Concurrently he was a professor of Geophysics at Columbia University.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Jastrow#cite_note-obit-1)

“At this moment it seems as though science will never be able to raise the curtain on the mystery of creation. For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries.”

“Astronomers now find they have painted themselves into a corner because they have proven, by their own methods, that the world began abruptly in an act of creation to which you can trace the seeds of every star, every planet, every living thing in this cosmos and on the earth. And they have found that all this happened as a product of forces they cannot hope to discover. That there are what I or anyone would call supernatural forces at work is now, I think, a scientifically proven fact.”

1. **What I was told about the New Testament by non-believers**
2. **The story wasn’t written by the eye witnesses**

**The truth: Those who lived at or near the time of the Writers tell us….**

* Who wrote it and
* They gave their lives and the lives of their families for it

# Papias (60-135 ce)

“ The elder used to say this also: Mark, having been the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately all that he mentioned, whether sayings of doings of Christ, not however, in order. For he was neither a hearer nor a companion of the Lord; but afterwords, as I said, he accompanied Peter, who adapted his teaching as a necessity required, not as though he were making a compilation of the sayings of the Lord. So them Mark make no mistake, writing down in this way some things as Peter mentioned them; for he paid attention to this one thing, not to omit anything that he had heard, not to include any false statement among them.”

“Matthew recorded the oracles in the Hebrew tongue.”

# Irenaeus (130-202 ce)

* A disciple of Polycarp (martyred for the faith)- who was a disciple of John

“So firm is the ground upon which these gospels rest that the heretics themselves bear witness to them and starting from these each one of them endeavors to establish his own particular doctrine.”

***Clement of Rome*** (c.e. 95) uses Scripture as a reliable and authentic source.

**Ignatius** (A.D. 70-110 ce) This Bishop of Antioch was martyred for his faith in Christ. He knew all the apostles and was a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of the apostle John. Ignatius gave credence to the Scripture by the way he based his faith on the accuracy of the Bible. He had ample material and witnesses to support the trustworthiness of the Scriptures.

***Polycarp*** (70-156 ce) was a disciple of John who succumbed to martyrdom at eighty-six years of age for his relentless devotion to Christ and the Scriptures. Polycarp’s death demonstrated his trust in the accuracy of the Scripture. “About 155, in the reign of Antoninus Pius, when a local persecution was taking place in Smyrna and several of his members had been martyred, he was singled out as the leader of the Church, and marked for martyrdom. When he was asked to recant and live, he is reputed to have said, ‘Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He hath done me no wrong. How can I speak evil of my King who saved me?’ He was burned at the stake, dying a heroic martyr for his faith. (Moyer, CH, 337) Polycarp certainly had ample contacts to verify the truth.

***Tatian*** (ce 170) organized the Scriptures in order to put them in the first “harmony of the Gospels,” the Diatessaron.

1. **The story changed over time –copied and recopied**

* Over 25,000 copies found early – consistent
* A mythology developed over time
* We have the scriptures written by early believers

**The scholar’s conclusions**

# Sir Fredrick G. Kenyon, Chief Librarian British Museum

“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.”

**He also wrote,** “The net result of this discovery-by far the most important since the discovery of the Sinaiticus is, in fact, to reduce the gap between the earlier manuscripts and the traditional dates of the New Testament books so far that it becomes negligible in any discussion of their authenticity. No other ancient book has anything like such early and plentiful to it’s text, and no unbiased scholar would deny that the text that has come to us is substantially sound.” (Kenyon, BMS, 20)

# Millar Burrows, Yale

“Another result of comparing New Testament Greek with the language of the papyri is an increase of confidence in the accurate transmission of the text of the New Testament itself.”

Burrows also says that the texts “have been transmitted with remarkable fidelity, so that there need be no doubt whatever regarding the teaching conveyed by them.”“I believe one can logically conclude from the perspective of literary evidence that the New Testament’s reliability is far greater than any other record of antiquity.”

**J Harold Greenlee** –**Harvard**

“The quotations are so numerous and widespread that if no manuscripts of the New Testament were extant, the New Testament could be reproduced from the writings of the early Fathers alone”. (Geisler, GIB, 430)

**Bruce Metzger –Princeton**

“Besides textual evidence derived from the New Testament Greek manuscripts and from early versions, the textual critic has available the numerous scriptural quotations include in the commentaries, sermons, and other treatises written by early church Fathers. Indeed, so extensive are these citations that if all other sources for our knowledge of the text of the New Testament were destroyed, they would be sufficient alone for the reconstruction of practically the entire New Testament.”(Metzger TNT, 86)

1. **I was told the witnesses were not credible – liars.**

* Motivation and character matter, so we must ask:

1) What could their motivation be?

2) What is their character like, can I believe them?

## **What motivates a liar to lie? The Possibilities-**

**Acclaim/fame –**

However, the writers did not make themselves out to be the hero’s – the embarrassment principle:

* They didn’t have faith many times
* They fled when Jesus was arrested
* Women were the hero’s – went to the tomb when the men were afraid

**Mark 9:33–34 (NIV) — 33** They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, “What were you arguing about on the road?” **34** But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest.

**Power – But….**

**Mark 9:36**

If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all.”

**Matthew 20:24-28 (NLT)**

When the ten other disciples heard what James and John had asked, they were indignant. But Jesus called them together and said, “You know that in this world kings are tyrants, and officials lord it over the people beneath them. But among you it should be quite different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must become your slave. For even I, the Son of Man, came here not to be served but to serve others, and to give my life as a ransom for many.”

**Money – But….**

### **Matthew 16:26**

“What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?”

**Matthew 19:23-24 (NLT)**

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “I tell you the truth, it is very hard for a rich person to get into the Kingdom of Heaven. I say it again—it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God!”

**Sex - But….**

**1 Corinthians 6:9-11 (NLT)**

Don’t you know that those who do wrong will have no share in the Kingdom of God? Don’t fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin, who are idol worshipers, adulterers, male prostitutes, homosexuals, thieves, greedy people, drunkards, abusers, and swindlers—none of these will have a share in the Kingdom of God. There was a time when some of you were just like that, but now your sins have been washed away, and you have been set apart for God.

#### **Some think they had a more noble reason for lying –They wanted social change-But…**

* In the first century alone huge numbers of Christians were killed for their faith
* If those who wrote and told the story were lying and knew they were lying they were not good men.

# What did these witnesses risk?

# Tacitus (56ce)

Nero substituted as culprits, and punished with the utmost refinements of cruelty, a class of men, loathed for their vices, whom the crowd styled Christians. Christus, the founder of the name, had undergone the death penalty in the reign of Tiberius, by sentence of the procurator Pontius Pilate, and pernicious superstition was checked for a moment, only to break out once more, not merely in Judea, the home of the disease, but in the capital itself, where all things horrible or shameful in the world collect and find a vogue.

**First, then, the confessed members of the sect were arrested; next, on their disclosures, vast numbers were convicted**, not so much on the count of arson as for hatred of the human race. And derision accompanied their end: **they were covered with wild beasts skins and torn to death by dogs; or they were fastened on crosses, and, when daylight failed were burned to serve as lamps by night. Nero had offered his Gardens for the spectacle, and gave an exhibition in his Circus, mixing with the crowd in the habit of a charioteer, or mounted on his car.** Hence, in spite of a guilt, which had earned the most exemplary punishment, there arose a sentiment of pity, due to the impression that they were being sacrificed not for the welfare of the state but to ferocity of a single man.

# Pliny the Younger (61-112ce)

In the meantime, the method I have observed towards those who have been denounced to me as Christians is this: I interrogated them whether they were in fact Christians; if they confessed it, I repeated the question twice, adding the threat of capital punishment; it they still persevered, I ordered them to be executed

**What did the writers get in life?**

# I Corinthians 4: 9-13

“For it seems to me that God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession, like men condemned to die in the arena. We have been made a spectacle to the whole universe, to angels as well as to men. You are honored, we are dishonored! To this very hour we go hungry and thirsty, we are in rags, we are brutally treated, we are homeless. We work hard with our own hands, When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it; when we are slandered we answer kindly. Up to this moment we have become the scum of the earth, the refuse of the world.”

# II Corinthians 11:23-28

“Are they servants of Christ? I am more, I have worked much harder, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches.”

# What was the final cost?

**Luke** – hung on an olive tree by the priest of a pagan religion in Greece.

**James** the Great **-** sons of thunder, brother of John – beheaded in 44 A.D.

**Philip** – scourged, thrown into prison, then crucified in 54 A.D.

**Matthew** – run through with a sword in 60 A.D.

**James** the Less – brother of Jesus; he was beaten with a club, then stoned, then finished off by having his brains beat in with a fullers club.

**Mathias** – stoned and then beheaded.

**Andrew** – brother of Peter; crucified.

**Mark** – dragged to pieces by horse under the Alexandrian idol.

**Peter** – crucified upside down-some history reports his wife was killed as well.

**Jude** – crucified in Edessa in 72 A.D.

**Bartholomew** – beaten, then crucified.

**Thomas** – run through with a spear.

**Simon** – crucified in 74 A.D.

**Barnabas** – killed in 73 A.D., hung.

**John** – banished

**Top Ten Reasons we know the New Testament writers told the truth (Frank Turek)**

1. They told embarrassing details about themselves—Oh you of little faith – betrayed Jesus
2. The writers told embarrassing details about Jesus –Wept –take this cup from me
3. The New Testament writers left in the difficult sayings of Jesus –hard sayings
4. The New Testament writers carefully distinguished between their own words and Jesus
5. They shared details in the resurrection that would have been contrary to culture at their time – women as witnesses –men hiding
6. Include more than 30 real historical people in their story (at a time when it would have been easy to check on the facts)
7. They include divergent details (didn’t bring their story together so it was unified)
8. The writers tell the hearers and readers in their time to check the facts – about the miracles (Acts 2)
9. They describe miracles as historical events –unembellished
10. They abandoned their historical/faith beliefs at the expense of their own lives to do so

**Skeptical scholar’s perspective**

**Paula Fredriksen, Department of Religion –Boston University**

Commenting on the post-Resurrection appearances of Jesus, Fredriksen [said](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iIG007Zxqy8&list=PLD6FE5E6AE7F5266B&index=7https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iIG007Zxqy8&list=PLD6FE5E6AE7F5266B&index=7): I know in their own terms what they saw was the raised Jesus. That’s what they say, and then all the historic evidence we have afterwards attest to their conviction that that’s what they saw. I’m not saying that they really did see the raised Jesus. I wasn’t there. I don’t know what they saw. But I do know that as a historian that they must have seen something.

**Gerd Ludemann (Vanderbilt)**

“It may be taken as historically certain that Peter and the disciples had experiences after Jesus’ death in which Jesus appeared to them as the risen Christ.”6R”

1. **I was told that we don’t have corroborating evidence for Jesus outside scripture**

**The truth:**

**Tacitus (56-120ce) Roman historian and politician**

They affirmed, however, that the whole of their guilt, or their error, was that they were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang in alternate verses a hymn to Christ, as to a god, and bound themselves by a solemn oath, not to perform any wicked deed, never to commit any fraud, theft of adultery, never to falsify their word, nor deny a trust when they should be called upon to make it good; after which it was their custom to separate, and then reassemble to partake of food – but food of an ordinary and innocent kind. Even this practice, however, they had abandoned after the publication of my edict, by which, according to your orders, I had forbidden political associations. I therefore judged it so much the more necessary to extract the real truth, with the assistance of torture, from two female slaves, who were styled deaconesses: but I could discover nothing more than depraved and excessive superstition.

## **Justin Martyr (100-165ce)**

*Justin was burned at the stake and this is taken from his final defense. He quotes from Pilates’ report, which was written at the time of the crucifixion, which we did not have for years and we believe that we may have now. But since it is not confirmed it will not be used*.

**But the words**, “They pierced my hands and feet,” refer to the nails which were fixed in Jesus’ hands and feet on the cross; and after He was crucified his executioners cast lots for his garments, and divided them among themselves. That these things happened you may learn form the Acts, which were recorded under Pontius Pilate.

**Tacitus (56-120 ce)**

Christus, the founder of the name had undergone the death penalty in the reign of Tiberius by sentence of the procurator Pontius Pilate.

**Mara Bar-Serapion (70 ce)**

What advantage did the Athenians gain from putting Socrates to death? Famine and Plague came upon them as a judgment for their crime. What advantage did the men of Sambas gain from burning Pythagorean? In a moment their land was covered with sand. What advantage did the Jews gain from executing their wise king? It was just after that, that their kingdom was abolished. God justly avenged these three wise men. ………Nor did the wise king die for no good: He lives on in the teaching, which he had given.

**Josephus (52 ce)**

But to some of the Jews the destruction of Herod’s army seemed to be divine vengeance and certainly a just vengeance for his treatment of John surnamed the Baptist. For Herod had put him to death though he was a good man and had exhorted the Jews to lead righteous lives, to practice justice towards their fellows, and piety towards God and so doing to join in baptism. In his view this was a necessary preliminary if baptism was to be acceptable to God. They must not employ it to gain pardon for whatever sins they committed but as a consecration of the body implying that the soul was already thoroughly cleansed by right behavior. When others too joined the crowds about him because they were aroused to the highest degree by his sermons, Herod became alarmed. Eloquence that had so great an effect on mankind might lead to some form of sedition for it looked as if they would be guided by John in everything that they did. Herod decided therefore that it would be much better to strike first and be rid of him before his work led to an uprising than to wait for an upheaval,

**Josephus (52ce)**

Ananius convened the judges of the Sanhedrin and brought before them a man named James, the brother of Jesus, who was called the Christ and certain others. He accused them of having transgressed the law and delivered them up to be stoned.

**The Talmud’s (second century ce)**

*Written by the Pharisees.*

On the eve of the Passover they hanged Yeshu. And an announcer went out, in front of him for forty days saying He is going to be stoned because he practiced sorcery and enticed and led Israel astray. Anyone who knows anything in his favor come and plead in his behalf. But not having found anything in his favor, they hanged him on the eve of the Passover…

…(Ulla) They went on to say, “Would you believe that any defense would have been so zealously sought for him? He was a deceiver and the All merciful says, you shall not spare him neither shall you conceal him. It was different with Jesus, for he was near to the kingship.

# Origin (185-253ce)

*Writing from exerts from Thallus and Phlegon who lived at the time of Christ. The documents sighted have been lost in history but we do have Origins quotes from them.*

**He says,** “Now Phelegon in that thirteenth or fourteenth book, I think, of his Chronicles, not only ascribed to Jesus a knowledge of future events, but also testified that the result corresponded to his predictions. So that he also, by these very admissions regarding foreknowledge, as if against his will, expressed his opinion that the doctrines taught by the fathers of our system were not devoid of divine power.

**Justin Martyr**

“That he performed these miracles you may easily satisfy yourself,” from the Acts of Pontius Pilate.

# Origin

Regarding the earthquakes and darkness, these we have in the preceding pages made our defense, according to our ability, adducing the testimony of Phelegon who relates that these events took place at the time when our Savior suffered.

**He quotes Phelegon**

“In the fourth year of the 202nd Olypiad (33 AD) there was the greatest eclipse of the sun” and that it became night at the sixth hour of the day so that the stars even appeared in the heavens. There was a great earthquake in Bithynia and many things were overturned in Nicea.”

**Thallus- A Samaritan born Historian (52 ce)**

One of the first Gentile writers who mention Christ is Thallus who wrote in 52 AD. However, his writings have disappeared and we only know of them in fragments sighted by other writers. One such writer is Julius Africanus, a Christian writer about 221 AD.

“Thallus in the third book of his histories, explains away this darkness as an eclipse of the sun - unreasonably, as it seems to me - unreasonably of course because a solar eclipse could not take place at the time of the full moon, and it was at the season at the paschal full moon that Christ died.”

**Tertullian (155-220 ce)**

*Jurist theologian of Carthage quotes documents from exchange between Tiberius and Pontius Pilate (Documents no longer exist).*

”Tiberius accordingly, in those days the Christian name made its entry into the world, having himself received intelligence from the truth of Christ’s divinity, brought the matter before the senate, with his own decision in favor of Christ. The senate, because it had not given the approval itself, rejected the proposal Caesar held to his opinion, threatening wrath against all the accusers of the Christians (Apology v.2).

**Josephus**

About this time there lived Jesus a wise man if indeed one ought to call him a man. For he was one who wrought surprising feats and was a teacher of such people as accept the truth gladly. He won over many Jews and many of the Greeks. He was the Messiah. When Pilate upon hearing him accused by men of the highest standings among us, had condemned him to be crucified, those who had in the first place come to love him did not give up their affection for him. On the third day he appeared to them restored to life for the prophets of God had prophesied these and countless other marvelous things about him. And the tribe of the Christians so called after him, has still to this day, not disappeared.

1. **The truth – the real God changed my life –**

* Morally
* Spiritually
* Relationally

**Taking responsibility for your faith –being ready**

* Learning there are answers
* Building relationships for when you have doubts and questions
* Guarding your heart –
* Fake news

**1 Peter 3:15 (NIV) — 15** But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,