

Why Do I believe?

The study of Historiography –4 Factors/ Three factors

1. Do we have an accurate copy of the story?

- Some say –the bible has been written and re written many times
- Some say the story developed later

Other books by comparison

Author	When written	first copy	Time span	Copies
Sophocles	496-406 B.C.	1000 A.D.	1400 yrs.	193
Lucretius	Died 55 or 53 B.C.		1100 yrs.	2
Catullus	54 B.C.	1550 A.D.	1600 yrs.	3
Euripides	480-406 B.C.	1100 A.D.	1500 yrs.	9
Demosthenes	383-322 B.C.	1100 A.D.	1300 yrs.	200
Aristotle	384-322 B.C.	1100 A.D.	1400 yrs.	29
Aristophanes	450-385 B.C.	900 A.D.	1200 yrs.	10
Homer (Iliad)	900 B.C.	400 B.C.	500 yrs.	643
NEW TESTAMENT	40-100 A.D.	125 A.D.	25 yrs.	24,71

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

“ 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 after words 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

“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. A.D. 95) uses Scripture as a reliable and authentic source.

Ignatius (A.D. 70-110) 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 (A.D. 70-156) 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 (. A.D. 170) organized the Scriptures in order to put them in the first “harmony of the Gospels,” the Diatessaron.

Scholars say it was written early and has been transmitted accurately:

William F. Albright, YALE

We can already say emphatically that there is no longer any solid basis for dating any book in the New Testament after Circa A.D. 80, two full generations before the date between 130 and 150 given by the more radical New Testament critics of today.

Eight years later after further study, he then said, “I believe the entire New Testament was completed no later than 75 A.D.”

Dr. John T. Robinson, Cambridge University

He said, “owing to scholarly sloth, the tyranny of unexamined assumptions, and almost willful blindness by previous scholars and authors, much of the past reasoning was untenable. He concluded, “The New Testament is the work of the Apostles themselves, or

of contemporaries who worked with them and that all the New Testament books including John were written before 64 A.D.

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.”

John Warwick Montgomery

He said that “to be skeptical of the resultant text of the New Testament books is to allow all of classical antiquity to slip into obscurity, for no documents of the ancient period are as well attested bibliographically as the New Testament.”

2. Do we have good witnesses?

What did the Writer’s claim?

- They say they saw these events written about happen.

1 John 1:1

“That which was from the beginning which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched, this we proclaim concerning the word of life. The life appeared, we have seen it and testify to it...”

2 Peter 1:16

“We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ but we were eye witnesses of his majesty.”

Those who were not eyewitnesses, but lived when they could investigate, Say these things really happened.

Luke 1:1

“Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eye witnesses and servants of the word. Therefore since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good to me to write an orderly account for you most excellent Theophilus so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.”

There are three possibilities when someone claims to have been a witness

- ~ They are telling the truth.
- ~ They are telling a lie.
- ~ They're crazy.

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-

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

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

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; if they still persevered, I ordered them to be executed

Jews were killing Christians-Stephen- etc. (See Paul's account in Acts)

Romans were killing Christians.

Other Leaders – other cultures and economies were destroyed by the Christian faith

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.”

2 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

The Enemies of Christianity tell us why they died

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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.

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These accusations spread (as is usually the case) from the mere fact of the matter being investigated, and several forms of the mischief came to light. A placard was put up, without any signature, accusing a large number of persons by name. Those who denied they were, or had ever been, Christians, and who repeated after me and invocation to the gods, and offered formal worship with libation and frankincense, before your statue, which I had ordered to be brought into Court for that purpose, together with those of the gods, and who finally cursed Christ – none of which acts, it is said, those who are really Christians can be forced into performing – these I thought it proper to discharge.

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.

3rd Do we have supporting non Christian witnesses (alibi witnesses)

Acts 26:25-26 (NLT)

But Paul replied, “I am not insane, Most Excellent Festus. I am speaking the sober truth. And King Agrippa knows about these things. I speak frankly, **for I am sure these events are all familiar to him, for they were not done in a corner!**

1 Corinthians 15:3-9 (NLT)

I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me—that Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. He was buried, and he was raised

from the dead on the third day, as the Scriptures said. He was seen by Peter and then by the twelve apostles. After that, he was seen by more than five hundred of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died by now. Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles. Last of all, I saw him, too, long after the others, as though I had been born at the wrong time. For I am the least of all the apostles, and I am not worthy to be called an apostle after the way I persecuted the church of God.

Justin Martyr

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 from the Acts, which were recorded under Pontius Pilate.

Part verified. - Where do we find it?

Jesus was crucified. - Luke 23

Executioners cast lots for his garments. - Luke 23:32

Tacitus 60 AD

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

Part verified. - Where do we find it?

Pontius Pilate as a governor. - Luke 22:66

Mara Bar-Serapion 70 AD

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.

Part verified. - Where do we find it?

The Jews played a part in the death of Christ. - Matthew 26

Jerusalem destroyed. - Matthew 24

Josephus 52 AD

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,

Part verified. - Where do we find it?

The story of John the Baptist - Matthew 11 and 14

Josephus

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.

Part verified. - Where do we find it?

The death of James the brother of Jesus. - Acts 12:2

The Talmud's

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.

Part verified. - Where do we find it?

They claimed Jesus' power came from the devil. - Luke 11:15

They hanged Him on the Passover –

Origin

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.

Part verified. - Where do we find it?

Miracles/ Prophecy- Matthew 24- everywhere

Justin Martyr

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

Part verified. - Where do we find it?

Miracles & Prophecy - Matthew 24

Jesus did miracles. - Entire New Testament.

They accused Jesus of being a sorcerer (of the devil). - Luke 11:15

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 Olympiad (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.”

Part verified. - Where do we find it?

Darkness & earth quakes - Matthew 27:45-51

Thallus- A Samaritan born Historian (52 AD)

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.”

Part verified. - Where do we find it?

Darkness - Matthew 27:45-51

Tertullian

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.

Part verified-/where do we find it

The whole gospel story

Summing up-

F.F. Bruce-Professor of Biblical Criticism at the University of Manchester

“Some writers may toy with the fancy of a “Christ Myth” but they do not do so on the grounds of historical evidence. The historicity of Christ is as axiomatic for an unbiased historian as the historicity of Julius Caesar. It is not historians who propagate the Christ myth stories.

Conclusion so far-

1. The Bible has the best text in ancient literature. (We know who wrote it and we have an accurate text of the scriptures)
2. The **writer's** of the Bible gave up their lives for their story. (Their motivation could not have been gain.)
3. The Bible is verifiable in history.

4th The Archeology proves the bible is true—physical evidence

What do the most famous Archaeologists say about the Bible?

Dr. John T. Robinson, Cambridge University

He said, “**owing to scholarly sloth, the tyranny of unexamined assumptions, and almost willful blindness by previous scholars and authors**, much of the past reasoning was untenable. He concluded, “The New Testament is the work of the Apostles themselves, or of contemporaries who worked with them and that all the New Testament books including John were written before 64 A.D.

Miller Burroughs, Yale

“Archaeology has in many cases refuted the views of modern critics. It has shown in a number of instances that these views rest on false assumptions and unreal artificial schemes of historical development. The excessive skepticism from many liberal theologians stems not from a careful evaluation of the available data, **but from an enormous predisposition against the supernatural.**”

William Ramsey (The most famous archaeologist in American History)

“I may fairly claim to have entered on this investigation without prejudice in favor of the conclusion, which I shall now seek to justify to the reader. On the contrary, **I began with a mind unfavorable to it for the ingenuity and apparent completeness of the Tübingen theory had at one time quite convinced me. It did not then lie in my line of life to investigate the subject minutely:** but more recently I found myself brought into contact with the book of Acts as an authority for the topography antiquities and society of Asia Minor. It was gradually borne upon me that in the various details the narrative showed marvelous truth, in fact beginning with a fixed idea that the work was essentially a second century composition and never relying on its evidence as trustworthy for first century conditions. I gradually came to find it a useful ally in some obscure and difficult investigations. Luke is a historian of the first rank; history is unsurpassed in respect of its trustworthiness.”

Dr. Merrill Unger (Biblical archaeologist)

Old Testament Archaeology has rediscovered whole nations, resurrected important peoples, and in a most astonishing manner, filled in historical gaps.

Dr. Fredrick Kenyon

Archaeology had not yet had its final word; but the results already achieved confirm what faith would suggest, that the Bible can do nothing but gain from an increase of knowledge.

Dr. Sherwin White (Roman Historian)

For Acts the confirmation of Historicity is overwhelming. Any attempt to reject its basic historicity must now appear absurd. Roman historians have long taken it for granted.

Dr. Clifford Wilson (Middle East Historian)

“Archaeology is highly relevant for Bible studies, consistently demonstrating that the Bible is the world’s most accurate history text book. It is remarkable that where confirmation is possible and has come to light, the Bible stands investigation in ways that are unique in all literature. Its superiority to attack, its capacity to withstand criticism, its amazing facility to be proved right after all, are all staggering by any standard of scholarship. Seemingly assured results disproving the Bible have a habit of backfiring. Over and over again the Bible has been vindicated.”

Nelson Glueck (The most famous Jewish Archaeologist in history)

“It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a Biblical reference. Scores of archaeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or exact detail historical statements in the Bible.”

William F. Albright, Yale

The excessive skepticism shown toward the Bible by important historical schools of the eighteenth centuries, certain phases of which still appear periodically, has been progressively discredited. Discovery after discovery has established the accuracy of

innumerable details, and has brought increased recognition to the value of the Bible as a source of history.

The Bible is different than all other religions in this regard

Example – Mormonism

The Journal of Mormon thought (1969 pp. 77-78)

“...When we turn to the Book of Mormon, however, we are unable to find any evidence at all that the Nephites ever existed. We must agree with the Mormon archaeologist Dee F. Green when he states:” The first myth we need to eliminate is that the Book of Mormon archaeology exists. Biblical archaeology can be studied because we do know where Jerusalem and Jericho were and are, but we do not know where Zarahemla and Bountiful , or any other location is for that matter, were or are.”

Fletcher B. Hammond- (Address to BYU Archaeology Conference)

“It is practically impossible to point to any Book of Mormon land and say unequivocally, here is that land. The gentiles have not received the Book of Mormon by faith for any other reason and until they do accept that book as scripture, it appears that empirical facts will not be allowed to come forth as evidence of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon.”

Zoroaster lived in 1000 BC

Most of his writings were not put into writing until after the third century AD—most popular Parsi biography written in AD 1278

Budha 6th Century BC

His story –scriptures not written until 1st century AD

1st The Bible has a historically reliable text

2nd The Bible has credible witnesses

3rd The Bible has credible alibi witnesses- the story is confirmed in history

4th The Bible has reliable physical evidence

Other books you can read

- More than a Carpenter—Josh McDowell
- The case for Christ –Lee Strobel
- The case for a Creator—Lee Strobel
- Answers for Atheists and Agnostics--

