

# APOLOGETICS



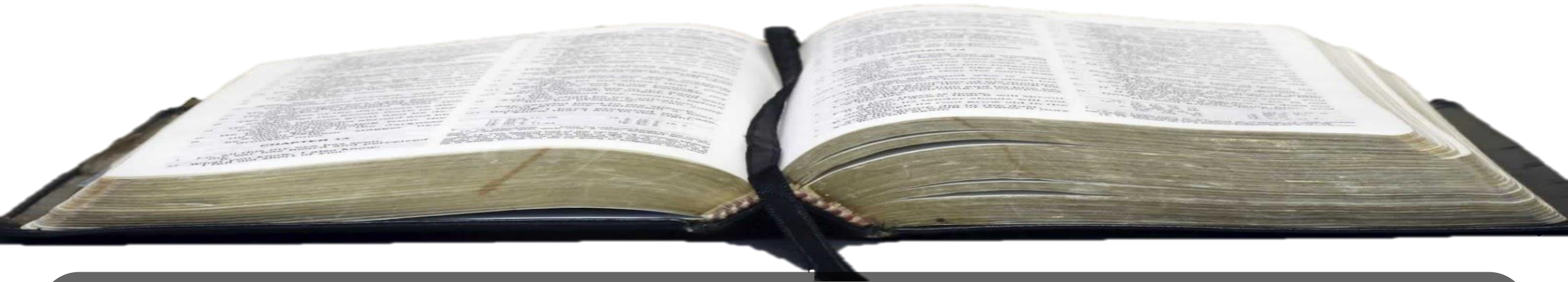
The  
Mind's  
Journey  
to  
Heaven





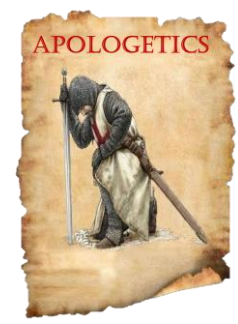
# Can you trust the Bible as accurate or truthful?

## *What is* TRUTH?



***John 18:37-38***

Therefore Pilate said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?"



# If our journey starts in darkness...

**CAN AN UNBELIEVER SEE THE TRUTH?**

# Can an unbeliever see the truth!

## *1 Corinthians 2:14*

4 But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised

## *John 8:47*

47 Whoever belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God.

## *1 Corinthians 1:18-25*

18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written:

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise;  
the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.”

20 Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. 22 Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, 24 but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.



# God is truth...truth is a person...and He is alive!

## John 14:6, 16

6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me

16 "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

## *John 1*

Jesus is Logos (or word)...Light...Grace...Truth...He is God.

Human race was in darkness...but we did not receive the light.

As a whole, the Jews and the human race did not Know Him nor Receive Him...but some did...how?

# God calls us out of the darkness...



# Let him listen to Moses and the Prophets



Luke 16:31

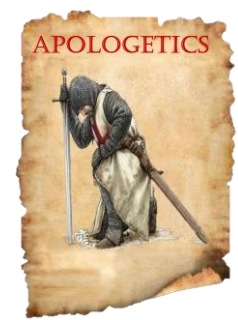
“But he said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.’”



# The moment you start to read the Bible...







# Arguments for the Bible as truth...

- Uniqueness Evidence – Character
- Uniqueness Evidence – Impact
- Manuscript Evidence – NT Bibliography Test
- Manuscript Evidence – OT Transmission Test
- Accuracy Evidence – 8 Different Tests
- Corroborating Evidence
- Archeological Evidence
- Eye Witness Accounts
- Literary Consistency
- Prophetic Consistency
- Global Influence
- Personal Testimonies
- Congruency with Life's Issues
- Incredulous Stories Argument against the Bible
- Supposed Contradictions in the Bible

# Uniqueness Evidence - Character

- Time Span – written over approx. 1500 years
- Geographic Diversity – from Rome...to Egypt...to Babylon...to Mesopotamia
- Diverse Human Authorship – Kings, slaves, exiled prince, exiled princess, fisherman, military leaders, philosophers, scientist, farmers, illegal aliens, destitute widows, tax collectors, zealous pharisee, doctor, historians, prophets, exiled prisoners, adulterers, murderers, drunkards, and college professors.
- Literary Genres – long and short narratives, poetry, song, genealogies, historical accounts, biographies, letters, rhetorical arguments, prophetic and apocalyptic writings.
- Original Languages – Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek
- Teachings are one of a kind – Trinity, Incarnation, Atonement, Faith vs Works, Resurrection, Servant leadership

# Uniqueness Evidence - Impact



- Circulation and Translation
  - 10's of Billions distributed
  - 700 languages for whole Bible and 3,312 languages for portions
  - equals 80% of communication vehicles for 7.7B people on earth.
- Survival and Resiliency – Many attempts to destroy every copy of the Bible throughout history...yet it remains.
  - 284 AD Diocletian...communist (Lenin, Stalin, Mao, etc)
- Criticism
  - from all aspects and disciplines for thousands of years...yet it stands up time and again.
- Western Civilization
  - Bible is the very foundation for government & law, science, education, art, music, and societal norms.



# Manuscript Evidence – OT Transmition Test

## • Oral Tradition

- While western cultural tradition struggles with this concept, oral traditions have proven to hold more accuracy when it is a rehearsed cultural event...Examples:
  - Amazing Grace, How sweet the taste that saved a witch like her... would you catch the change?
  - Or if we said twinkle twinkle little car?
  - Our Mother which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy image.
- Those who can orally teach a story actually retain and know it at a deeper level...i.e. preaching or teaching!

## • Written Tradition

- Jews have always had a strong emphasis on reading and memorizing scripture...commanded in Deuteronomy.
- Jews had a profession called Scribes who continuously copied the texts.
- We have evidence of ....
  - their writing instruments
  - inks where applicable
  - material used (papyrus, parchment/leather, stone, metal, clay, etc)
  - Procedures they used which included # of letters on a page, lines, margins etc., washing of hands, what to do when there is an error, destroying erroneous copies, etc...etc...etc...
- Multiple sources to corroborate the text
  - Hebrew sources = Masoretic Tex (MT), Dead Seas Scrolls (DSS), Samaritan Pentateuch, Nash Papyrus, Silver Amulets.
  - Non Hebrew Sources = Greek translation called Septuagint (LXX)
  - Non Biblical Manuscripts = Aramaic Targums, Mishnah & Gemara, and the Midrash



# Manuscript Evidence – NT Bibliography Test

- Gospels written within a few decades of the events...eyewitnesses were still alive...and noted in the text themselves.
- 66,286 total Biblical Manuscripts Discovered Thus far
  - AD 130 or later ...Greek = 5,838 copies
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Century to 10<sup>th</sup> Century...non Greek translations = 18,130 copies
  - 400BC to 1050AD...OT scrolls = 42,300 copies
  - Staggering # compared to other early documents from antiquity
- 36,389 quotations from early church fathers dating from 70AD to 258AD confirming the documents in the Bible.



# Accuracy Evidence – 8 different tests

- Intention Test – Were they intended to be treated as true or allegorical?
  - Numerous examples that they were intended to be taken as true.
- Ability Test – Can they make an accurate recollection of the truth?
  - They were eye witnesses writing things which were public and open to criticism from other multiple eye witnesses.
- The Character Test – Is there evidence that the authors had malicious motivation to distort the truth?
  - What they wrote made them look pretty bad in most cases!
  - It included people who would never have been used if it weren't true...demon possessed women, prostitutes, haters of Christianity, etc...etc...etc.
- The Consistency Test – Do different authors tell the same stories or are there contradictions?
  - There are multiple “apparent” contradictions which with further analysis show they are in fact not contradictions at all.
  - Example: Lineage of Christ in Matthew vs Luke. One is through Joseph and one is through Mary.





# Accuracy Evidence – 8 different tests

- The Subjective Bias Test – Did their love for their beliefs cause them to skew the truth unknowingly?
  - Impossible to be unbiased completely but their version of the truth was made public to those who were absolute enemies.
  - In many cases the truth was even put to public government officials.
- The Cover Up Test – Do the authors skip over things which are embarrassing or hard to explain?
  - Repeatedly they provide things which are personally embarrassing...difficult truths to espouse...and even life threatening to espouse them.
- The Corroboration Test – Is there evidence outside of the authored piece which corroborates the story?
  - As shown elsewhere, we have non Christian historians, archeology and numerous other outside sources which do corroborate the various details of the NT and OT.
- The Adverse Witness Test – Do the critics or non believers of the NT substantiate the NT in some way?
  - Example. We have Jewish critics who claim Jesus was a sorcerer who led Israel astray. Why not claim he never existed...or that the stories were made up...or ??? Yet, they had to account for the miracles that so many people saw.

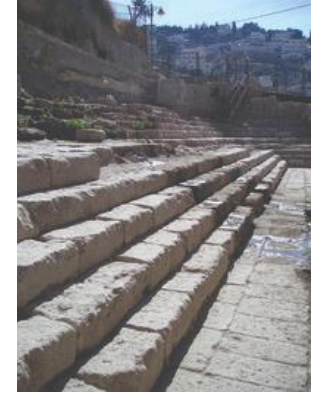
# Corroborating Evidence

- There are numerous non Christian writings which corroborate the NT stories. Examples...
  - Tacitus (1<sup>st</sup> century Roman historian)...the crucifixion of Jesus...Christianity called a mischievous superstition which kept breaking out first in Judea and then in Rome!
  - Suetonius, chief secretary to Emperor Hadrian (AD117-138)...confirms Acts 18:2...existence of Christians who were addicted to a novel and mischievous superstition.
  - Josephus (AD37-AD100 Pharisee and Jewish historian)...made numerous confirmations of various aspects of the NT...including Jesus.

# Archeological Evidence



- Crucifixion victims were buried.
- Pool of Siloam John 9 ...was missing and thought to be fictitious...but now discovered with coins from before and after Christ confirming it existed during the Time of Christ.
- Pontius Pilate existed ...name found on stone
- The 'James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus' ossuary





# Archeological Evidence

- Skeptics said there was no Davidic kingdom...but then they found a stone with the inscription on a stone tablet recorded by the Aramean King Hazael of Damascus as follows:
  - “house of David”.
- A section of the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III. Beneath the bowing Israelite figure are the words “Jehu of the House of Omri.”<sup>130</sup>
  - i.e. 2 Kings 14
- A dolomite stele of Tiglath-Pileser III from the Zagros mountains of western Iran. It contains an inscription stating that he received tribute from Menahem of Israel and allowed him to remain as king in Samaria. <sup>134</sup>
  - 2 Kings 15:19-20



*The Tel Dan Stele, Fragments A and B.<sup>131</sup>*  
The inscription appears to have been recorded by the Aramean King Hazael of Damascus to commemorate his victory in battle over Jehoram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah (both of whom are also mentioned on the stele) of the “house of David.” Scholars recognize that the Tel Dan Stele powerfully affirms the historicity of the Bible.<sup>138</sup>

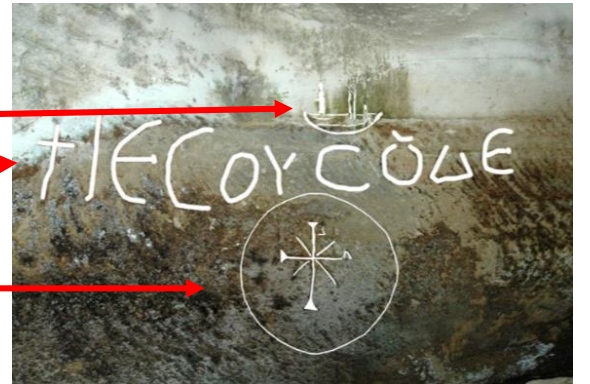


*A section of the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III. Beneath the bowing Israelite figure are the words “Jehu of the House of Omri.”<sup>130</sup>*



# Archeological Evidence – Recent Discoveries

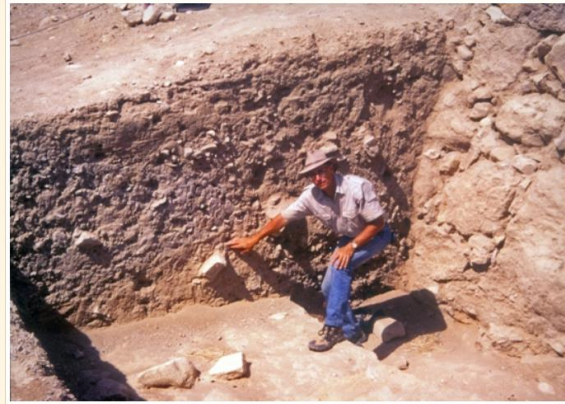
- Columbarium at Beit Lehi (dwelling place of lehi)
- Jesus is here cave
  - created in 300BC but used up to 500AD.
  - Boat with person preaching
  - Yasoos Hodus (Jesus is here)
  - Greek letters chi and rho for Cristos – Christ
- Joseph tomb in Egypt
  - See patterns of evidence DVD





# Archeological Evidence – Reversing Skeptics

- Walls of Jericho did fall down!



Dr. Wood points to collapsed mud bricks from the city wall that fell to the base of the retaining wall at Jericho. His left foot rests on part of the fallen wall. (Italian-Palestinian excavation, 1997, location 8.)

- The exodus did happen!
  - Egyptian scribe Ipuwer's eyewitness account of the plagues and their aftermath is incredibly similar to the Biblical account! Ipuwer Among many examples include the numerous times Ipuwer laments of how the rich suddenly became poor, and the poor suddenly became rich. Amazingly, in one specific passage Ipuwer names the person behind the calamity as "he who poured water on the ground... the river is blood". Recall from Exodus 4:9: "But if they do not believe these two signs or listen to you, take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground. The water you take from the river will become blood on the ground."



# Eye Witness Accounts – Verified unto death

- Eye Witness Accounts

- One minute they abandon their belief.
- Next minute they are bold enough to be flogged...beaten...threatened.
- The same people who said crucify Jesus converted in droves to the point of death.
- The number one enemy of the faith, Saul, converted and preached it all the way to the emperor of Rome...and to death.
- Not to mention the truths espoused went 180 degree against all the beliefs they were raised in...and against the most powerful country on the planet.
- They were also the most politically incorrect people to be eye witnesses...demon possessed women, tax collectors and people of low stature...as well as high profile enemies Pharisees.



# Literary Consistency

- The Bible is consistent in its message and meta narrative from cover to cover.
  - God is
  - God is just...demands holiness...judges.
  - God is merciful...gracious...and saves His people.
  - etc...etc...
- Try to get even 4 or 5 people to write a religion in 66 books and make them aligned perfectly.
- Some religions are aligned on one authors testimony and they have been changed 1000's of times in order to "perfect" their message.

# Prophetic Consistency

- There are many prophecies which have come true from the OT...after hundreds of years...but if we just focus on Christ alone we are overwhelmed.
- Take these 8
  - Born in Bethlehem, preceded by a messenger, enter Jerusalem on a donkey, betrayed by a friend, hands and feet pierced, betrayer would be given 30 pcs of silver, the money would be thrown into the house of God and used to buy a potters field, he would be silent before his accusers and he would die accounted among criminals.
  - Odds are 1 in  $10^{17}$  that this could have happened to anyone
- Now what about the greater than 300 prophecy's?
  - Odds are impossible unless Jesus was the messiah



# Global Influence

Can anyone question the influence of the Bible on societies from the last 2000 yrs?

- 2.4 billion Christians worldwide...1/3<sup>rd</sup> of world's population...give \$700B to church each year.
- Today, there were more Christians attending church in China than in all of Christian Europe.
- China/Korea/Japan
  - 1970 = 11.4M 1.2% of pop
  - 2020 = 171.1M 10.5% of pop
- Africa ...one out of four Christians live in Africa today!
  - 1910 = 12M 9%
  - 2020 = 630M 49.3%
  - 33,000 people either becoming Christians or being born into Christian families each day in Africa alone.



# Global Influence

Can anyone question the influence of the Bible on societies from the last 2000 yrs?

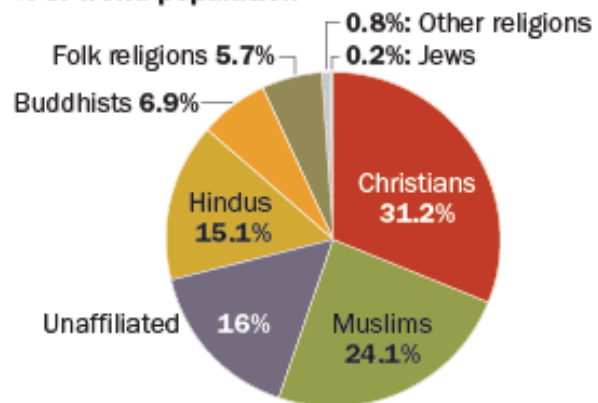
- While secular (non Bible believing societies) are dying off.
  - Birth rates in secular society are declining rapidly.
  - Conservative more religious societies are more reproductive.
  - Secular countries are having to immigrate people to sustain societies...and these are more religious people groups.
  - Conservative religions tend to retain and convert more than they lose.
  - NOTE: From University of London professor Eric Kaufmann, "Shall the Religious Inherit the Earth?...the crisis of secularism".
- All of the fastest growing religions hold the Bible as a spiritual book to study...Christianity, Islam, Mormonism...Even Ghandi studied the Bible and held it in honor.
- 136.4 million atheists in the world...about 1.2%...down about .2% a year.



# Bibles influence by the numbers

## Christians are the largest religious group in 2015

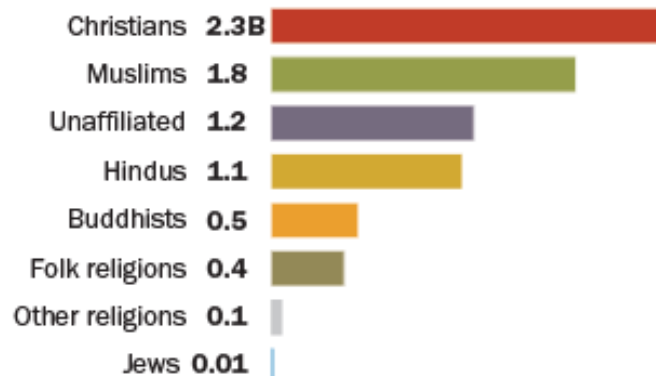
% of world population



Source: Pew Research Center demographic projections. See Methodology for details.  
"The Changing Global Religious Landscape"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Number of people in 2015, in billions



## Christians in Europe dying faster than they are being born

*Among Europe's aging Christian population, estimated deaths outnumbered births between 2010 and 2015. Among all other groups, births outnumbered deaths.*

Estimated natural increase (births minus deaths) 2010-2015, in millions

|              | Europe | Middle East-N. Africa | North America | Asia-Pacific | Latin America | Sub-Saharan Africa |
|--------------|--------|-----------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Christians   | -5.6M  | +0.9M                 | +5.8M         | +17.7M       | +32.6M        | +64.5M             |
| Muslims      | +2.3   | +32.1                 | +0.3          | +79.5        | *             | +38.2              |
| Unaffiliated | +1.4   | +0.2                  | +2.4          | +16.8        | +3.1          | +2.2               |
| Hindus       | *      | +0.1                  | +0.2          | +66.5        | *             | *                  |
| Buddhists    | *      | *                     | +0.2          | +11.7        | *             | *                  |
| Folk         | *      | +0.1                  | *             | +9.6         | +0.3          | +3.3               |
| Other        | *      | *                     | +0.1          | +1.0         | *             | +0.2               |
| Jews         | *      | +0.4                  | *             | *            | *             | *                  |

\*Indicates absolute value of natural increase during period was less than 100,000 people

Source: Pew Research Center demographic projections.  
See Methodology for details.

"The Changing Global Religious Landscape"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



# Personal Testimonies about the Bible

- How many personal testimonies from all walks of life will testify the Bible changed their life?
- Are they all liars?
- Some of them could be...but isn't it worth considering it's message for yourself?

- People who claimed to be a Christian...or have had a Christian Experience

## *Alive*

- Chuck Norris, George W Bush, Mr T, Alice Cooper, Jane Fonda, Bono, Jeff Gordon, Niki Taylor, Kirk Cameron, Justine Bateman, George Foreman, MC Hammer, Stephen Baldwin, Reggie White, Darryl Strawberry, Linda Lovelace, Donna Summer, Tom Hanks, Chris Pratt, Faith Hill, Tyler Perry, Kathy Lee Gifford, Carrie Underwood, Patricia Heaton, Olivia Newton John, Garth Brooks, Denzel Washington, Jeff Foxworthy, Tim Tebow, Robert Duvall, Alan Jackson, Emmitt Smith, Deion Sanders, Kurt Warner, Dikembe Mutombo, Evander Holyfield, Charlie Daniels, Pat Boone, Mel Gibson, etc etc etc.

## *Dead*

- Numbers are so staggering it is impossible to even list...Paul of Tarsus, Constantine The Great, Justinian I, Johannes Gutenberg, Christopher Columbus, Leonardo Da Vinci, Niccolo Machiavelli, Nicholas Copernicus, Martin Luther, Francis Drake, Sir Francis Bacon, Galileo Galilei, William Shakespear, Rene Descartes, Oliver Cromwell, Blaise Pascal, Robert Boyle, John Locke, Sir Isaac Newton, Adam Smith, George Washington, Mozart, Napoleon Bonaparte, Louis Pasteur, Orville and Wilbur Wright, Michael Faraday, Samuel Morse, etc etc etc

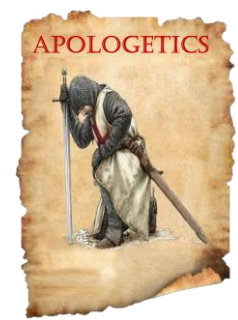
# Napoleon Bonaparte



"I know men; and I tell you that Jesus Christ is not a man. Superficial minds see a resemblance between Christ and the founders of empires, and the gods of other religions. That resemblance does not exist. There is between Christianity and whatever other religions the distance of infinity..." So says Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821), emperor of France.

Napoleon expressed the following thoughts while he was exiled on the rock of St. Helena. There, the conqueror of civilized Europe had time to reflect on the measure of his accomplishments. He called Count Montholon to his side and asked him, "Can you tell me who Jesus Christ was?" The count declined to respond. Napoleon countered:

- Well then, I will tell you. Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne and I myself have founded great empires; but upon what did these creations of our genius depend? Upon force. Jesus alone founded His empire upon love, and to this very day millions will die for Him. . . . I think I understand something of human nature; and I tell you, all these were men, and I am a man; none else is like Him: Jesus Christ was more than a man. . . . I have inspired multitudes with such an enthusiastic devotion that they would have died for me . . . but to do this it was necessary that I should be visibly present with the electric influence of my looks, my words, of my voice. When I saw men and spoke to them, I lightened up the flame of self-devotion in their hearts. . . . Christ alone has succeeded in so raising the mind of man toward the unseen, that it becomes insensible to the barriers of time and space. Across a chasm of eighteen hundred years, Jesus Christ makes a demand which is beyond all others difficult to satisfy; He asks for that which a philosopher may often seek in vain at the hands of his friends, or a father of his children, or a bride of her spouse, or a man of his brother. He asks for the human heart; He will have it entirely to Himself. He demands it unconditionally; and forthwith His demand is granted. Wonderful! In defiance of time and space, the soul of man, with all its powers and faculties, becomes an annexation to the empire of Christ. All who sincerely believe in Him, experience that remarkable, supernatural love toward Him. This phenomenon is unaccountable; it is altogether beyond the scope of man's creative powers. Time, the great destroyer, is powerless to extinguish this sacred flame; time can neither exhaust its strength nor put a limit to its range. This is it, which strikes me most; I have often thought of it. This it is which proves to me quite convincingly the Divinity of Jesus Christ.



# Congruency with Life's issues

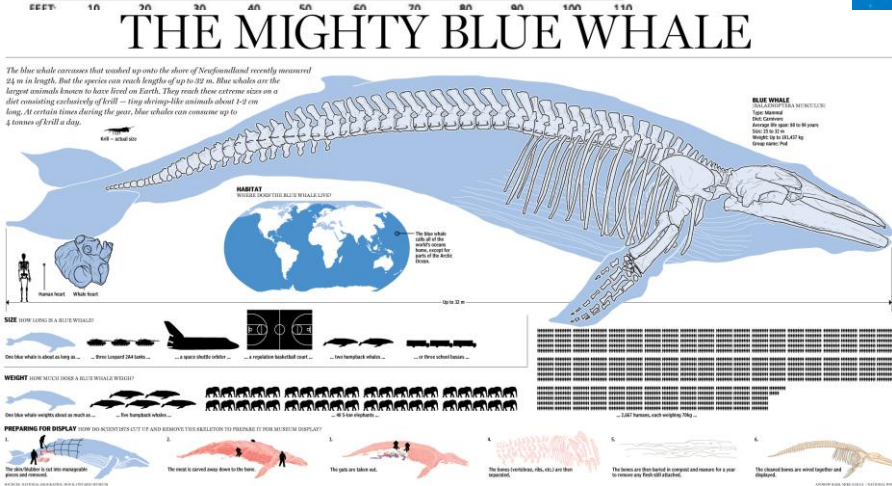
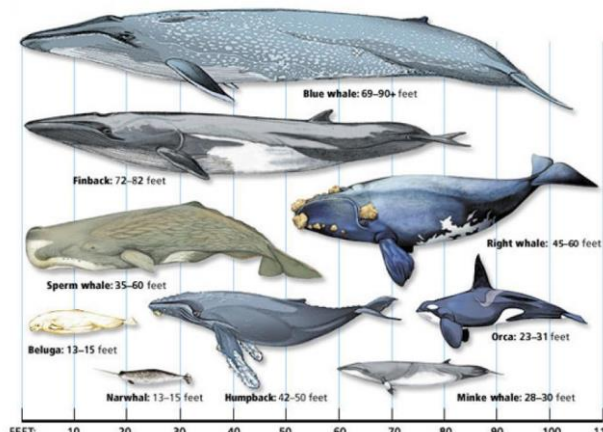
- Right/Wrong
- Life/Death
- Racism
- Justice
- Marriage
- Civil Law
- Leadership
- Work/Leisure
- Suffering
- Life after death
- Glory
- Joy
- Power and Politics
- Forgiveness
- Love
- Immigration
- Agriculture
- Generosity



# Incredulous Stories Argument Against the Bible

- Some mock stories such as the story of Jericho, Jonah, Noah, Tower of Babel, Miracles of Jesus, Walking through walls, Angels appearing, Parting of the Red Sea.
- Eliminating the supernatural or miracles is simply a form of presupposing God doesn't exist.
- It creates a small world directly under our control.
- Difficult to believe doesn't mean they aren't true.
- CASE IN POINT
  - If you can't believe that God can control a large fish and keep someone alive inside its belly, then how could you ever believe God could become a man...go into the grave...and be resurrected on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day?
  - Your God is too small.

# Johah's "great sea creature" ...what was it?





# Contradictions/Errors Arguments Against the Bible

- Matthew 12:40, Jesus referred to Jonah being “three days and three nights in the whale’s belly” (emp. added). Since fish and whales are different creatures, skeptics accuse Jesus and the Bible writers of making a mistake (cf. Wells, 2012). Longtime Bible critic Dennis McKinsey alleged that Matthew 12:40 is “[p]robably the most famous scientific error by Jesus” (1995, p. 142). “Apparently Jesus hadn’t read the Old Testament very closely... Anyone with even a minimum of biological knowledge knows that a whale is not a fish and a fish is not a whale” (pp. 142-143).
- What was the underlying Greek word that is translated “whale” in the KJV (as well as a few other versions)? A brief look in various respected Greek dictionaries quickly reveals that the word is *ketos* and is defined broadly as a “large sea creature” (Newman, 1971, p. 100), “sea monster” (Danker, et al., 2000, p. 544), or “huge fish” (Vine, 1952, p. 209). Jesus indicated that Jonah was swallowed by a “large sea creature,” which was not necessarily a whale, but may have been.

# Suggested ways to engage this topic

- Provide some evidence chosen from above.
- Ask them if they have ever read it. Offer to read it with them.
- Find out what their specific road block is and seek to address it.
- You need to try to expand their capacity to imagine and have an open mind about the world they can't see!
- Keep bringing them back to the fundamental messages of the Bible.



# Where are we going to go?

- Major Secular Questions Asked of Christians

- How do we know God exists?
- Doesn't science prove Christianity is false? Can any rational person believe in the Christian Faith?
  - Science is the only discipline which is objective and can therefore be trusted.
  - Evolution has proven that we were not created.
- Can you trust the Bible as accurate or truth?
- **How can a good God exist if He allows suffering and evil?**
- Is it fair for God to condemn someone to hell? What about those who have never heard the Gospel?
- Isn't Christianity arrogant to say it is the only way to heaven? Aren't all religions just different ways to the same God?
- Aren't all people basically good?
- Isn't Christianity just a "white man's" religion used to oppress women and people of color?
- Isn't Christianity just a bunch of Do's and Don'ts?
- Isn't the institutional Christian Church just about getting your money? Do you really have to go to church to be a Christian?
- Optional – Crowd generated questions...open Q&A

- Major World Religion's Arguments against true Christian Faith

- Islamic Arguments
- Roman Catholic Arguments
- Hinduism Arguments
- Mormonism Arguments
- Buddhism Arguments