

## Can You Believe Something You've Never Seen?

(March 13, 2021)

September 29, 2006, Petty Officer Michael Monsoor, a United States Navy SEAL operating in Ramadi, Iraq. Monsoor is on a roof in Ramadi and he's standing in front of a doorway to the roof. He has two Navy SEAL teammates lying in the sniper prone position next to him. They've already taken AK-47 fire and a rocket propelled grenade, but they're not exactly sure where the enemy is. There's a bit of a lull in the fighting. Insurgents have blocked off the streets in Ramadi and there's someone in the town the town mosque on the loudspeaker yelling, kill the Americans.

As Monsoor and his team are looking for the next attack an insurgent from an unknown location throws a grenade up on the roof. It hits Monsoor in the chest and it falls to his feet. Due to the length of the throw, there is no opportunity to pick it up and throw it back, he has only a split second to make a decision. He can leap through the doorway behind him and save himself, but if he does, his two teammates lying on the roof will surely die. Monsoor yells, "grenade!", but instead of jumping backward to save himself, he jumps forward chest first onto the grenade. It detonates. Thirty minutes later, 25 year old Michael Monsoor is dead. His two teammates lying on the roof receiving only minor injuries because Monsoor's body muffled the blast.

One of them said at Monsoor's funeral, Mikey looked death in the face that day and said, you will not take my friends, I will go in their stead. I've never seen a United States President cry until April of 2008. That's when President George W. Bush invited Monsoor's parents into the East Room of the White House to give them their son's Medal of Honor posthumously. The President couldn't even get through the citation without breaking down. There were tears streaming down his face.

Not long ago, Monsoor's High School in Garden Grove, California built a new stadium. They named it Michael A. Monsoor Memorial Stadium. The Golden Trident insignia that the SEALs wear dominates the 50 yard line. January 2019, just outside of San Diego, North Island,



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California, the United States Navy commissioned the USS Michael Monsoor, the newest guided missile destroyer in the fleet, Zumwalt class. They escorted Monsoor's mother, Sally, onto the ship named in honor of her son that day they commissioned the ship a couple of years ago.

Now, why did they do this? Because Michael Monsoor literally sacrificed himself to save his friends. There's no greater love than to sacrifice yourself to save your friends, said Jesus of Nazareth just before he went to the cross. Michael Monsoor sacrificed himself to save his friends. The question is, would anyone sacrifice himself to save you? And the answer is, someone already has. His name is Jesus of Nazareth. But in today's culture, a lot of people don't think this story is true. They think it's invented, after all, religious people wrote this down in what we now call, the New Testament, and we know religious people tend to embellish things. Maybe they just made this up. Also, it's got miracles in it this account, especially a resurrection. Everyone I know who is dead, is still dead. We don't believe in miracles anymore. Have you ever seen a miracle? You ever seen someone rise from the dead? How about that one? I never have, yet the entire Christian faith is built on believing something none of us have ever seen. How rational is that?

Well, actually, I think it's quite easy to show that Christianity is true. You only need to answer four questions in the affirmative to show that it's true. And the four questions are: Does truth exist? Does God Exist? Are miracles possible? And is the New Testament reliable enough to show us that Jesus really did rise from the dead? Because if Jesus really did rise from the dead, then game over, Christianity is true. Because if he rose from the dead, he's God, and whatever God teaches is true. Jesus taught the entire Old Testament is the word of God and he promised the New Testament. That's kind of the big picture argument for Christianity.

And what we've been doing here in recent podcast is going through some of the evidence for this. A couple of podcasts ago, or probably three podcasts ago, we talked about this concept that atheists often bring up that, extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence. And if you go back a few weeks ago to hear that, you'll realize that that actually needs a lot of unpacking to understand. And the real truth of the matter is, if anyone's making an extraordinary claim and has no evidence for it, it would be the atheist, not the Christian. And so, we've been going through some of the evidence we covered in the previous show; the cosmological argument, we covered the teleological argument from the fine tuning of the

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universe, and also the biological code and other intelligent aspects built into life itself. We talked a little bit about the moral argument. I want to revisit that a little bit here. And then we talked a little bit more about miracles. And we'll cover that a little bit more here on this program. And then I want to get into the New Testament and the resurrection. Because again, if truth exists, God exists, miracles are possible, and Jesus rose from the dead, everything else is academic, everything else falls into place, Christianity is true.

Now, we talked a little bit about the moral argument. We've done several programs on the moral argument on this podcast. If you don't have our app, get the CrossExamined App in the App Store (Cross Examined), and just look for any podcasts in the past couple of years related to the moral argument. You'll see them. So, I'm not going to spend a ton of time on it on it. But I want to point out that everybody I see on YouTube, in particular, who claims to be once a Christian and is now an atheist, or just people who have been atheist their whole lives, they will actually express truths about the moral argument inadvertently.

For example, some of these people come out of very strict, fundamentalist, legalistic homes. And it appears that they are rebelling against that. And look, if I was brought up in such a home, maybe I would, too, because Christianity is not about all just following rules and no, no, no, no. It's not just a religion of no, no, no, no. It's not about working your way to God. It's not about trying to get God to owe you something because God can never owe us something. Christianity is all about grace, that God does all the work and you simply accept what he's done. And after that point, when you accept what he's done, and you love him, then you'll want to do good works in order to bring more people into the kingdom and to enhance your own capacity to enjoy God out of gratitude for what he's done for us. So, it's not a legalistic fundamentalists, kind of works based religion. Unfortunately, many people are taught that, and I understand why they rebel against it.

But let me point this out, that any grounds of rebellion imply that you have some kind of moral right to do your own thing. It implies that you do have a moral right to, say, rebel against what the Bible says, or rebel against what your parents say, or rebel against what society says. Well, here's my question: Where does that moral rights come from? Why is it immoral, in your view, for your parents, the government, or God to put restrictions on you, at least certain restrictions? Because if there is no God, if there is no standard beyond humanity, that wouldn't

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be really wrong if they put those moral standards on you. Nor do you really have a moral right to rebel against those standards because there is no moral or immoral behavior. If God doesn't exist, everything is merely a matter of opinion. And if it's merely a matter of opinion, then you will have no grounds by which to object to anything that Christianity says you ought to live by. And I'll get to that right after the break.

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Welcome back to, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, with Frank Turek here on the American Family Radio Network. We're also on iTunes, we have an app that I mentioned earlier, Cross Examined, two words in the App Store. By the way, for those of you that go to our website to listen to the podcast, we for many months now have been putting, you know, a few days after the podcast is over, we're putting up the transcript. So, if you'd just rather scan through the transcript and see if it's something you want to listen to, or if you heard something on the podcast and just want to have it in written form, you can check the transcript right there on our website, [CrossExamined.org](http://CrossExamined.org). As I say, it's a few days after you probably hear it on the radio, or hear it on iTunes, or wherever you listen to it. But check that out if you want to have the transcript.

Now, we're talking about the evidence for Christianity and we're just talking a little bit about the moral argument for a second. And in my book, *Stealing from God*, I talk about this, that atheists are stealing morality from God, as well as many other things, at the same time saying that God doesn't exist. Look, if there is no God, why can you say that the God of the Old Testament is immoral, because you don't have a standard, not an objective standard anyway, by which to say that. Now, here's a fair angle you can take on this. If you're an atheist, the way to say that the God of the Bible isn't the true God would be to say, okay, I'm not I'm no longer an atheist, I believe there's some kind of moral being out there. But the God of the Bible is not that moral being. Okay, that's a fair tack to take. Because at least now you have a moral standard, that you can say, well, the God of the Bible doesn't meet that standard. The problem you run into is all the evidence that points to the fact that the God of the Bible is the true God. And really, that's tied up in Jesus, whether he rose from the dead or not, and what he said

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about God, the God of the Old Testament and the Old Testament, in particular. We're going to get there, hopefully today.

So, if Jesus really rose from the dead, then unfortunately for you, you're kind of stuck with the God of the Bible, because he is the true God. If Jesus did rise from the dead and he's just another person, okay, maybe there's just a generic theistic God out there, who does set the grounds for morality. And thereby, you could judge the God of the Old Testament, or the God of the Bible, immoral. But if there is no God, you can't judge anything as objectively moral or immoral. It's just your opinion.

Now, one thing I've also noticed about these former Christians who are now skeptics, and they're YouTubers, or just people who...well, it's mostly the people who claimed to be Christians at one point. This is even true of the progressive Christianity people. And don't get me started on that, because I'll get annoyed. Progressive Christianity is not progressive, and it's not Christian. But that's a whole other story. Go back and listen to Alisa Childer's podcast that she filled in for me a couple of weeks ago on that. But the people who are brought up in legalistic homes, or evangelical homes, who are now saying they're no longer evangelicals, I have not seen a case, ladies and gentlemen...maybe there's some out there...but I have not seen a case, someone who has deconstructed their faith and is no longer a Christian, I have not seen a case that did not cite biblical sexual ethics as a reason to leave Christianity or even to disbelieve in God.

I mean, they always cite the LGBTQ issue. They always say, oh, you know, the God of the Bible doesn't agree with same-sex behavior, so, so much for the God of the Bible. That's just wrong. What do you mean, it's just wrong? Timeout. Where are you coming up with the standard that says it's wrong to be against certain sexual behaviors? What is the moral standard from which you're arguing? Again, if there's no God, there's no right or wrong. There is no right to natural marriage much less same-sex marriage, there's no right. Why? Because there's no right to anything. There's no right to abortion, much less a right to life, because there's no rights to anything if there's no God. But they always cite LGBTQ issues.

I imagine they also personally don't like what Jesus and the apostles have to say about premarital sex either. Right? So, I've never seen a deconstruction that didn't somehow cite sex

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as, somehow the restrictions that God puts on us regarding sex are somehow immoral. Again, you need an objective standard by which to say they're immoral. If you don't like them it's just your preference. Okay, fine. I get that. But those standards are there for our own good, for our own human flourishing. You cannot, for example, build a society on anything other than heterosexuality. Children are procreated and best brought up with a mom and a dad in a biological home. That's what all the data show. So, you can't build a society on anything other than heterosexuality. You can't build it on homosexuality, lesbianism, transgenderism. You can only build a society on heterosexuality. I'm sorry, that's just the biological facts. Okay?

Now, unfortunately, sometimes when you state biological facts, people try and cancel you. Oh, well. But I'm just telling you the truth. I'll leave that to you to whether to accept or not. In any event, I've just noticed that when it comes to morality, morality is the key. And I've said this before, that about 70% of the questions that I get on a college campus are somehow related to morality, because people don't want to be told what they can and can't do, even if the restrictions in place are there for their own good. They don't want to hear it. That's why when I ask them: If Christianity were true, would you become a Christian?, a lot of times they'll say no. And at the end of the day, most of the time it's a moral issue. It's not an intellectual issue. How could it be an intellectual issue? If you ask them: If Christianity were true would you become a Christian?, how could it be an intellectual issue if they say no? Because I'm saying, if it were true, intellectually. I mean, if we had evidence that showed it were true, and we do, would you become a Christian? If they say no, it can't be intellectual, it's got to be volitional. It's got to be moral. They won't believe something because they don't want to believe it. Something is in their way. Something they don't like about Christianity is causing them to give up the very thing that can lead to life. So, it's just interesting about the moral argument and the reason people decide to, either leave the Christian faith, or decide they don't want to have anything to do with the Christian faith; most of the time it has to do with morality.

All right, let's move on to miracles. Remember, the four questions are: Does truth exist? Does God exist? Are miracles possible? Is the New Testament reliable? Last week, I talked a little bit about David Hume's argument against miracles and how CS Lewis refuted that quite easily by showing Hume was arguing in a circle. We get that. But let me point out that a lot of people don't believe in miracles because they've never seen one, right. Well, first of all, there's a lot of things you believe in that you've never seen, right. You've never seen your mind, yet you

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believe in it, right You've never seen the laws of logic, yet you believe in those. In fact, you're using the laws of logic to even think. Or the laws of mathematics. You've never seen them, they're not physical things, but you know they exist. You've never seen justice. Oh, you may have seen justice done, or injustice done, but you've never seen justice because it's not a physical thing. You've never seen love, yet everyone listening to my voice right now believes in love, but you've never seen it. Why? It's not a physical thing. It's an immaterial virtue grounded in the nature of God. That's something that exists, but it's not something you see.

In fact, it was interesting in the second debate years ago that I had with Christopher Hitchens...and again, you can see these debates on our YouTube channel. Someone from the audience, a student, asked Christopher Hitchens, this question: Christopher, what is love? Now Christopher, being a materialist, had to come up with some sort of materialistic answer, and he kind of hemmed and hawed through an answer. And he finally just said, "love is a chemical". And I said, "Christopher, don't say that to your wife. Honey, do you love me? Yeah. Why? Because I got the chemical. You know, tomorrow, I might not have the chemical but today I might have the chemical." No, love is not a chemical. I mean, there may be chemicals associated with your feelings of love, but the very act of love is not a chemical. The act of love is a freewill choice to seek what's best for the other person, to seek what's good for the other person.

Now in our culture, love means, approve of me, approve of everything I do. Now, a moment's reflection on that should reveal that that's not the right definition of love. Just think of a parent. Every parent knows that if you approve of everything your kid wants to do, you're not loving. In fact, you're unloving. You need to stand in the way of evil in order to be loving. Paul says, love always protects, in First Corinthians 13. The passage everyone reads at their wedding, but nobody obeys. He also says, love rejoices in the truth. The way that you love people is you protect them, and you rejoice in the truth, not error. Even if they hate you for it. Even if they call you names. You're a bigot. No, I'm sorry, I'm just trying to love you. I'm trying to tell you what the truth is about love.

Thomas Sowell, the famous economist...economist...why can't I say economist anymore? Economist. Maybe it's because I'm from New Jersey. I don't know. I can hardly speak English. Somebody the other day said, what languages do you speak? I said, I hardly speak English. What

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are you talking about? Little bit of Deutsch. Anyway, Thomas Sowell said, if you want to help someone, you'll tell them the truth. If you want to help yourself, you'll tell them what they need to hear. In our culture, you'll tell them what they want to hear. If you want to help yourself, you'll tell them what they want to hear. Because that's what people want you to tell. Tell me what I want to hear. Tell me how good I am. Tell me this relationship I'm in here is a good thing. And you better tell me because if you don't I'm going to cancel you in the name of inclusion, tolerance and diversity. No, love is standing in the gap against evil, against things, that are going to hurt the loved one or others for their own good, even if they hate you for it.

So, you've never seen love. You've never seen gravity. You might say, Frank, I see gravity all the time. I see stuff being pulled to the ground all the time. Nope, you're not seeing gravity. What are you seeing? You're seeing the effects of gravity. You know, we really don't even know what gravity is, but we see its effects. And by the way, that's how we see God exists. Let me let me just do one more, then I'll get to the God situation. You've never seen George Washington, but you know he exists. Why? Because he's left effects behind that are best explained by the person, George Washington.

Same thing is true with Jesus. You've never seen Jesus directly, personally. In fact, John even says that. If you don't love your brother, how can you ever love God who you don't see? You see your brother and you don't love him. How can you love God whom you don't see? You don't see God directly, not now anyway. We will when we get to the other side, the beatific vision, which happens to be 1 John 3:2. But right now we don't see him, we just see his effects. That's how we know God exists, we see a creation. That's the effect. We know there must be a cause, the Creator. We reason from effect to cause. We see design in the universe and design in life, that's the effect, we reason back to a cause, a designer. We have a moral law pressing on us, that's the effect, we reason back to a cause and moral law giver. That's how we know that God exists. So, you believe in a lot of things you've never seen so why not believe in miracles? Well, because they don't occur. We're going to get to that right after the break. In fact, we're going to show that the greatest miracle has already occurred and even atheists are admitting the data for it. You're listening to, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, with Frank Turek. Back in two.

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So, you don't believe in miracles because you've never seen one? Well, as I just mentioned before the break...and you're listening to, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, with Frank Turek and the American Family Radio Network. You believe in a lot of things you've never seen. But the greatest miracle in the Bible has already occurred and even atheists are admitting the data for it. What's the greatest miracle in the Bible? The greatest miracle in the Bible is the first verse, in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. If that verse is true, every other verse is at least possible, right. I mean, if it's true that God created the whole universe out of nothing, can he do whatever he wants that's not logically impossible inside the universe? Of course, he can.

I mean, can he walk on water if he can create the whole universe out of nothing? Can he part the Red Sea if he can create the whole universe out of nothing? Can he raise Jesus from the dead if he can create the whole universe out of nothing? Of course, he can. And the interesting thing is, even atheists are admitting the data for the first miracle. We talked about this a couple of podcasts ago. Even Stephen Hawking, the famous atheist, who was a top physicist in the world until he died about three or four years ago said, almost everyone now believes that the universe and time itself had a beginning at the Big Bang. That once there was nothing and then space, time and matter have literally had a beginning out of nothing. Now, Hawking tried to come up with another explanation other than God. He failed, but he's admitting the data, that there was a literal beginning to space, time and matter. If that's the case, if that miracle has occurred, every other miracle in the Bible is at least possible. You can't rule it out because, if God exists, and he did the greatest miracle of all, the creation of the universe out of nothing, then he can do lesser miracles inside the universe.

Now, sometimes people will say, well, you've never seen a resurrection, why would you believe a resurrection has occurred with regard to Jesus? Well, remember: What's the purpose of miracles? The purpose of miracles, in the Bible anyway, is to get our attention that this person speaks for God. Why should people follow Moses? Because Moses can do miracles. Why should people follow Elijah and Elisha? Because they can do miracles. Why should people follow Jesus and the apostles? Because they can do miracles. In other words, God is authenticating them through the use of miracles. The sign confirms the sermon, the miracle confirms the message. That's the main reason miracles are done in the Bible. And you know, we're looking at the Bible, we think, oh, you know, there are miracles happening all the time. Actually, they're not. The

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number of miracles throughout the whole Bible, the total number of miracles are about 250, give or take a few. Depends on how you count them, because some of them are bunched up.

Now, let's just go from Abraham to Jesus. That's 2000 years. I know, there's miracles outside of that timeframe, but let's just, for the sake of math, let's just go 2000 years. If you have 250 miracles over 2000 years, how often you get a miracle? Once every eight years. Once every eight years. Does that sound like miracles are happening all the time in the Bible? No. Now do they occur that way? Do they occur, you know, here's a miracle, eight years later another one, eight years later...? No, they don't occur that way. How do they occur? Where do they occur? When do they occur? Miracles are bunched up around three periods; around the periods I just mentioned, Moses, Elijah and Elisha, and Jesus and the apostles. Why? Because these are people that have new information that needs new confirmation. They have new revelation that needs to be confirmed by a miracle. There are periods in the Bible where there's hundreds of years and there are no miracles. And miracles are very rare events that get our attention and go, hey, this stuff doesn't happen all the time, God must be at work here. That's the purpose of miracles.

So, today when we say, well, I've never seen a miracle, therefore they couldn't have occurred. First of all, that's not good logic. Just because you haven't seen something doesn't mean that it doesn't exist, or it hasn't occurred. But secondly, miracles, if they do occur, have to be rare if they're going to get our attention, because if they happened all the time, they wouldn't get our attention. I mean, imagine if resurrections occurred routinely. You go up to somebody, you go, Jesus rose from the dead to prove he was God, and the guy goes, so what, Uncle Leroy just rose from the dead two weeks ago. Now I got to give the inheritance back. No, it's got to be a rare event if it's going to get our attention. If people were resurrecting routinely, the resurrection of Christ would mean very little and be just another event. So, it's got to be a rare event.

And the problem is, atheists punish miracles for being a rare event. They say, because they don't occur all the time you ought not believe in them. The very reason, or the very efficacy, the very purpose of miracles is for them to occur rarely, so they do get our attention as special acts of God. If they were happening all the time they would lose their apologetic value. All right. So, miracles do occur. And let me point this out. You don't need miracles to occur today for

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Christianity to be true. There could have been zero miracles after Jesus and the apostles and Christianity would still be true. Christianity does not require modern day miracles to occur.

Now, I think there are modern day miracles. In fact, Craig Keener from Asbury Seminary there in Kentucky, who is a meticulous researcher, wrote a hernia inducing two volume set about 10 years ago about modern day miracles, and he has documented some of these events through actual x-rays. And some of these have been written up in medical journals; healings, before and after x-rays, that kind of thing. Some of them are based, obviously, on eyewitness testimony. If just one of those miracles is true, and he has hundreds in his book, then miracles still occur. But again, they don't have to for Christianity to be true.

The other side of this is much harder to believe, in my view. And here's the other side of this for atheism to be true. Every single miracle claim and spiritual experience in the history of the world has to be mistaken, has to be false. Is that possible? It's possible. Is it reasonable? I don't think so. In fact, the greatest miracle, the creation of the universe out of nothing, has already occurred. So, when people say, I don't believe in miracles, sometimes you might want to say to them, look around, you're living in one. This universe is a miracle. Now, miracles certainly are possible. We have a lot more in both the books well, particularly, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*, on this issue of miracles.

But let's get into The New Testament a little bit. Now from the moral argument, we should know that there's a being out there that is the ground of love. Also, the being out there who is the ground of justice. Well, if objective love exists, grounded in the nature of God, then we might expect that God would intervene to save us from, obviously, a bad situation, which is what we're in here on this earth. We have four things that harm us: sin, sickness, nature, and death. Sin, which is when one person does a bad thing to another person, nature, sickness and death. Notice Jesus's miracles are around those four things. He lives a sinless life, he calms the storm...power over nature, he heals the sick, and he raises the dead. Why? Because those are the four things that hurt us: sin, nature, sickness, and death.

So, by doing miracles, in those four categories, Jesus is claiming he's the Messiah, he's the Savior, he can save us from our predicament. And the very fact that love exists objectively...we know it intuitively...we would expect the being that grounds love to come into some way to

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rescue us from this broken world. And he does. In that sense, the phrase, Love Wins, is true. It's just the love of God. Whether you choose to accept God's love, or reject God's love, love still wins because, if you accept it, you'll be with God for all eternity. If you reject it, God loves you enough so he won't force you into His presence, and he will separate from you and that's what we call hell. So, we should expect somebody to come save us.

And for those of you that have the book, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*, we go through a number of reasons to believe that the New Testament writers are telling the truth. We already know truth exists, God exists, and miracles are possible. We're now just trying to discover if Jesus really rose from the dead. And we can't go through all the evidence here. I just want to point out a couple of lines of evidence. Let me just list the lines of evidence first and then you can read up on them if you want to go further. First of all, we have early testimony. The documents are written very early. We have eyewitness testimony. There's eyewitness testimony throughout the New Testament documents, particularly the gospel of John, the book of Acts. In fact, in our book, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*, we list nearly 150 details between those two books that are probable eyewitness details, that only an eyewitness would know these things. There's embarrassing testimony in there. By the way, these are all alliterated with "E" to help you remember them; early, eye-witness, embarrassing. These are stories that occur in the New Testament that they never would have invented.

For example, just a quick one. If you were writing the New Testament story, the resurrection story, and trying to pass off a lie as the truth, would you say that you were hiding for fear of the Jews while the women went down discovered the empty tomb? No, you would never say that. Right? You would never say you were hiding, that you were scared. You'd probably say something like this. You'd probably say, well, Jesus came to save the world and he needed our help. That's why we were there for him every step of the way. When he was in need, we prayed for him. When we wept we wept with him and we told him to toughen up. When he fell we carried his cross. The gates of hell could not prevent us from seeing his mission through.

So, when that turncoat, Judas, brought the Romans by...we always suspected Judas, by the way...and they began to nail Jesus to the cross, we laughed at them. He's got you idiots. The grave will never keep him. You think you're going to solve your problem here by nailing them to the cross? No, you're really creating a much bigger one. While we assured the woman that

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everything would turn out all right, they couldn't handle the crucifixion, squeamish and afraid, they ran to their homes screaming and hid behind locked doors. But we men stood fast at the foot of the cross praying for hours until the very end.

When Jesus finally took his last breath and the Roman centurion confessed that Jesus was God, Peter blasted him. That's what we told you before you nailed him up there. Through this whole thing, the Romans and the Jews, they just wouldn't listen. Never doubting that Jesus would rise on the third day, Peter announced the centurion, we're burying him, and we'll be back on Sunday. Now, go tell Pilot to put some of your elite Roman guards at the tomb to see if you can prevent him from rising from the dead. We all laughed and began to dream about Sunday. That Sunday morning, we marched right down to the tomb and tossed those elite Roman guards aside, then the stone, that took 11 of us to roll into place, rolled away by itself. A glowing Jesus emerged from the tomb and he said, I knew you'd come, my mission is accomplished. He praised Peter for his brave leadership and congratulated us on our great faith, then we went home and comforted the trembling women.

That's how you would have said it, right, if you were a man trying to make this up. You would never say that you were Mr. Sissy Pants, hiding for fear of Jews while the women went down discovered the empty tomb. No, you would say it something like that. There are so many embarrassing details in the text that they never would have invented. This is just one line of evidence. It doesn't prove everything in the New Testament's true, it's just a piece of evidence that suggests they're not making it up. And we'll cover more of this right after the break. You're listening to, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, with Frank Turek.

Welcome back to, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, with Frank Turek on the American Family Radio Network. Want to mention to you that, coming up here on March 30, I'll be teaching the great book of Romans course. We're filling this course up quickly. By the way, if you take the premium version, you will be with me on about 10 occasions doing live zoom Q&A. It's my favorite book. I think in the entire Bible, there's so much taught, and so much from the book of Romans that is just so relevant today, to our current culture, to how we should live today, of course, how we should live at all times. It's just a theological masterpiece. And so, I hope you can join us for the great book of Romans. Go to [CrossExamined.org](http://CrossExamined.org), click on online

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courses, you'll see it there. We got some other courses coming up as well. Check them all out there.

By the way, for those listening to this this weekend, which is the weekend of March 13, tomorrow, March 14, I'll be out at Influencers Church, down there near Atlanta. All the details are on our website, [CrossExamined.org](http://CrossExamined.org). Check it out the events there, you'll see them. By the way, we were talking just before the break about embarrassing testimony. I just mentioned one, that the New Testament writers would never invent that they were hiding for fear of the Jews while the women went down and discovered the empty tomb. You know what other thing they wouldn't do? They would never say the women were the first witnesses. Why? Because a woman's testimony in that culture was not considered on par with that of a man. So, if you're making up the New Testament story, you only have the men be the first witnesses. Yet all four gospels tell us that the women were the first witnesses, which is telling us what? They really were the first witnesses. Otherwise, it makes no apologetic sense to say they were, yet all four gospels say they really were. They were the first witnesses. And it's embarrassing, of course, to admit that, while the men hid for fear of the Jews, it's also embarrassing, because women, as I said, we're not considered on par with that of a man in terms of their testimony.

And actually, I was doing this seminar once, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, and a lady came up to me afterwards and she said, I know why Jesus appeared to the women first. I said, why? And she said, because he wanted to get the story out. I said, that is an excellent point. I had not thought of that before. Because ladies, when your man comes home from work, does he say much? No. There could have been a nuclear explosion down at the plant. He's not going to tell you. You'll see it on the news before you hear it from him. You'll be watching the news going, hey, hon, what happened? Oh, yeah, I forgot to tell you, the nuke blew up. I tell you I've been hot for three days. What's for dinner? No, he's not gonna tell you.

Also, I just can't believe this verse is in the New Testament. Well, first of all, this is one of the most famous passages of Scripture. It's Matthew 28:19. Why? Because Matthew 28:19 is the Great Commission. Jesus has all his disciples around and he's about to ascend to heaven. This is, like, the last couple of verses of the Gospel of Matthew. And as he has his disciples there, and he's about to give them the Great Commission, you know, therefore go and make disciples of all nations, that whole passage. It says right in the text, in verse 17 it says, when they saw him,

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they worshipped him, but some doubted. Some doubted. Jesus is standing resurrected in front of the disciples and Matthew is saying that some of them doubted it was Jesus. Does that sound like they're making this up? No, this just seems to be authentic. It's embarrassing but it's authentic.

Hey, if I was there, I'd probably be doubting too. Are you sure this is the guy that was crucified by the Romans, had a spear go in his side, blood and water? I mean that guy was dead? How can he be resurrected? It would make sense that some would doubt even though he's standing right in front of them. But it's an embarrassing detail they never would have invented.

There's also excruciating death. So, you got early testimony, eyewitness testimony, embarrassing details in there, you've got excruciating deaths. What does that mean? Well, these men who were in a position to know whether Jesus had risen from the dead or not died excruciating deaths, when they could have saved themselves by simply saying, look, it never happened. Now look, many people will die for a lie they think is the truth. I mean, many Muslims will die as martyrs in jihad, right? But they really think Islam is true. They're sincere about their belief, quite obviously. But they're not certain that Islam is true. They just have faith that Islam is true.

The New Testament writers, on the other hand, the apostles, they knew Jesus had risen from the dead. Why? Because they verified with their own senses that he'd risen from the dead. They saw Jesus, they touched Jesus, they ate with Jesus, they verified with their own senses he had risen from the dead. As I said, many people will die for a lie they think is the truth, but nobody will die for a lie they know is a lie. And the New Testament writers were in a position to know whether it was a lie or not and they went to their deaths anyway.

Now, did all of them go to their deaths? Well, the apostles are recorded as all going to their deaths, except John, but that doesn't mean that the data for every one of the apostles is as good as the others. Sean McDowell did his doctoral dissertation on this very question. In fact, we had him on the podcast probably three or four years ago on that topic. If you get the CrossExamined App, you can go in back into the archive and listen to it. And Sean will say that we have really good strong evidence for about four of the apostles, not all 11. But four. Certainly Peter, certainly Paul, certainly James, the half-brother of Jesus, who was killed at the

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hands of the Sanhedrin in 62 AD...and it's Hegesippus and Josephus that tell us that. They're not Christian historians. They tell us that this happens...and James, son of Zebedee, I think, is the other one. And there may be Thomas in there, too.

So, when you really look at it, you get maybe four or five to six apostles you've got some really good evidence for. The strongest are Peter and Paul and James, they're the strongest, and then you get a little bit less evidence for the others. And then we're not so certain about the rest of them. But there's no record from the ancient world that says any of them ever recanted. And even secular scholars agree. It's one of the minimal facts of the case that Gary Habermas makes for the resurrection. Minimal facts, meaning these are the minimal facts that even atheistic scholars who study the New Testament agree on. One of the facts is, the disciples believed Jesus had risen from the dead, and they were willing to die for their belief. So, they believed it and they were in a position to know whether it was true, unlike, say, Muslims today. So, that's pretty strong evidence; excruciating deaths.

The other angle on this that you want to keep in mind is that sometimes people will say, well, these were Christian documents. I mean, these were written down by Christians. Now, if you think about that for more than 10 seconds, you realize what a silly objection that is. Why? Because what motive did these people have to make up the resurrection story? You know, I said at the top of the program that some people will say that religious people embellish this kind of thing, therefore, why would you believe it? Well, they might embellish it, they might not. I mean, did the survivors of the Holocaust embellish what happened to them in the concentration camps? No, not necessarily. Should we throw out what the survivors of the Holocaust said because they were too close to the events that they might have an agenda? No, not necessarily.

Same thing is true here with the New Testament writers. The New Testament writers, were not inclined to invent this. Why would they invent it? By inventing a resurrected Jesus, they got beaten, tortured and killed. Last time I checked, that was not a list of perks. The other thing you need to know, or you need to consider, is that all of the New Testament writers, with the exception of Luke, were all Jews. They were all believers in Yahweh. Luke was the only Gentile. These are people that already thought they were God's chosen people. They didn't believe that a man could claim to be God. That would be blasphemy. They also didn't believe in a

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resurrection in the middle of time. They thought there'd be a resurrection the end of time, but not in the middle of time. So, why would these people who thought they were God's chosen people, leave Judaism, or at least break away from much of Judaism, to start to believe that a man who claimed to be God really was God, and to believe that he rose from the dead in the middle of time? Why would they do that if they were just inventing it? They wouldn't. This is not an invented story. They had every motive to say it didn't happen, not every motive to say it did.

I mean, that's really what you're left with, ladies and gentlemen. If you're going to doubt the New Testament documents, what you need to say is that, either they were mistaken about Jesus rising from the dead, or they invented it. Those are your only two options other than they're telling the truth. How could they be mistaken? They were there. All of them. They were all mistaken? Doesn't make sense. Why would they invent it? They didn't get anything out of it. They didn't get out of any of the big three items that our friend, J. Warner Wallace, talks about...the cold case homicide detective. He says every crime he's ever seen has one of these three motivators, or a combination of the three: there's either a sex issue, a money issue, or a power issue.

Did the disciples get sex, money, or power by saying Jesus had risen from the dead? No, they got exactly the opposite. They weren't real popular with the ladies. They didn't get rich by it. In fact, Paul probably got poor by it because he was funded before he became a Christian, by the Jews, to go around and kill Christians, to hunt them down. No. And certainly, they didn't get power, they got persecuted. So, I think we could sum it up this way, that the New Testament writers did not create the resurrection, the resurrection created the New Testament writers. You wouldn't have a New Testament, or a series of documents that we now pull together and call the New Testament, we wouldn't have these documents written in the first century, mostly by Jews, if Jesus hadn't risen from the dead. This is not an invented story. It's not made up. There's no motive to make it up. There's every motive to say that Jesus was just another teacher, he wasn't God, and he didn't rise from the dead, but that's what they went to their desks saying. Why? Because it really did happen.

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Alright, I'm Frank Turek. Great being with you. Lord willing, I'll be with you next week. And if you want more on this, get the book, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*. God bless. See you next time.

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