

I don't have enough **FAITH**
to be an **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek PODCAST

You Can't Make This Stuff Up

(March 20, 2021)

Ladies and gentlemen, you cannot make this stuff up. What stuff? You can't make up the testimony in the New Testament. In recent weeks, we've been going through the evidence that Christianity is true. We've been going through the four questions: Does truth exist? Does God exist? Are miracles possible? And is the New Testament telling us the truth about the resurrection of Jesus? And when we say the New Testament, we're talking about the New Testament documents, and we're not assuming they're inerrant in order to come to this conclusion. That would obviously beg the question to say, well, these documents are inerrant, so they must be telling the truth. No, we just want to see if they contain historically reliable testimony. That's all we're trying to discover.

Inerrancy is a conclusion for Christians. It is not a premise. And it is an in house debate among Christians. It's not necessary for salvation that you believe the Bible is inerrant. I think you'd be disagreeing with Jesus if you thought it wasn't inerrant and that's a problem but you're not assuming it's inerrant in order to show that it's true. Again, that would be begging the question, that would be arguing in a circle. We just want to see if what the New Testament documents talk about from a historical perspective really did happen. And I think when you look at the evidence, you can't make this stuff up.

Now, when we go through this evidence in the book, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*, and also in, *Stealing from God*, we illustrate the evidence that the New Testament documents are telling the truth. We talk about the fact that we have early testimony, that we have eyewitness testimony, that we have embarrassing testimony, that we have excruciating testimony. We'll get to that here today, in a few minutes, that we have embedded confirmation. I want to talk about that today, as well. There's also extra biblical testimony, there's expected testimony, meaning that there's Old Testament prophecy which would cause us to expect some of the events of the New Testament to occur. And we also have the explosive growth of the church at Jerusalem.

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It's really hard to explain how Christianity could begin in the city of Jerusalem, where Jesus's tomb was known by Christianity's enemies, because they could have ended Christianity immediately by simply taking his body out of the tomb and saying, look, this never happened. And the Jews and the Romans were too eager to do that and they couldn't do it. They knew where the tomb was, but they couldn't get his body because Jesus was still, apparently, using his body. The tomb was indeed empty. So, it's really hard to explain the explosive growth of the church if the tomb wasn't empty.

And it's really hard to explain the explosive growth of the church unless something miraculous had occurred, because there's no reason for Jews, who didn't think a man could claim to be God and get away with it...they thought that was blasphemy...and there's no reason for Jews, who thought that a resurrection could not occur in the middle of time, only in the end of time, to make up, to invent a resurrected Jesus. They already thought they were God's chosen people. They had no motive to invent this. They got beaten, tortured and killed for saying it was true. So why would they invent a resurrected Jesus, a man claiming to be God who rose from the dead; two things they didn't think were possible, at least going into this? No, they didn't make this up. These Jews who wrote this down must have actually seen and thought that Jesus had risen from the dead, because this is not something they would event.

And as our friend, J. Warner Wallace says, they didn't get anything. There's no motive to make it up. They didn't get the big three motivators that people do evil to get. They didn't get sex, money or power by inventing a resurrected Jesus. Those are the three great motivators that cause us to do things we ought not do, and those motivators don't exist with the New Testament writers, they don't exist with the first century Jews who became Christians. They had every motive to say it didn't happen. They didn't get sex, they didn't get money, they didn't get power. They got certainly, with regard to power, they got the opposite. They got persecuted for saying Jesus had risen from the dead. They got kicked out of the synagogue and then beaten, tortured and killed.

So, Let me just zero in on three of these reasons that you can't make this stuff up. Embarrassing stories. We touched on this a little bit last week. You don't make up embarrassing stories about yourself and about your hero, Jesus, if you're trying to pass off a lie as the truth. Last week, we talked about the fact that they wouldn't have said that the disciples were hiding for fear of the

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Jews, while the women went down and discovered the empty tomb. You wouldn't say that the women were the first witnesses because, in that culture, a woman's testimony was not considered on par with that of a man. So, if you're making up the New Testament story, you'd only say the men were the witnesses. But of course, all four gospels say the women were the first witnesses, which shows they really must have been because there's no motive to say they were. In fact, there's every motive to say this wasn't true.

By the way, if you look at the creed...you know what the creed is? We've talked about it on this program before. The creed that, even atheistic scholars who are New Testament scholars admit it goes all the way back to the event itself, is in 1 Corinthians 15:3-8. This creed, which Paul writes in First Corinthians, actually originated much earlier. Even people like Bart Ehrman from UNC Chapel Hill, and agnostic/atheist New Testament scholar says this is extremely early. This is back in the 30s, maybe within months of the resurrection, certainly within a year or two of the resurrection, or the alleged resurrection, according to Ehrman. And this creed says who Jesus appeared to. It talks about the 12, it talks about Jesus appeared to James and he appeared to Paul, the guy writing 1 Corinthians 15, and he says Jesus appeared to 500 others.

Do you know, who is left out of the creed as being eyewitnesses of the resurrection? The women. Why? Because the creed is actually more of an apologetic saying, you can ask these people, because all of these people saw the resurrected Jesus, but they don't include the women. Why? Because in that culture, a woman's testimony would not be taken on par with the man. And so, it wouldn't add much apologetic value to their listing of who Jesus appeared to, even though the historical accounts, the gospel say, oh no, the first people Jesus appeared to were the women. But when it gets to the creed, the people aren't mentioned, or the women aren't mentioned, because it adds very little apologetic value to the argument. So, the fact that the women are left out in the creed, but they're through the historical accounts of the Gospels of the actual events of the resurrection, shows you that a woman's testimony was something that didn't count as much as a man. And while they admitted in the historical accounts they were the first witnesses they don't use it in their apologetic, they don't use it in the creed.

In any event, there are other embarrassing things that go on, obviously, in the New Testament, but just take a look at Jesus. Jesus is called the drunkard. He's called demon possessed. You think they invented that, that Jesus is called demon possessed? He has his feet wiped with the

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hair of a prostitute, which easily could have been seen as a sexual advance. And by the way, you notice there are two prostitutes in Jesus' bloodline? Who? Rahab and Tamar. Do you think Matthew and Luke got together when they wrote down the genealogies and said, you know what, I think we ought to spice up the Messiah's bloodline a little bit; let's put a couple of prostitutes in there. No, they wouldn't have done that. It's embarrassing. They're just telling the truth, however.

In fact, there's a lot of shady people in the bloodline. Judah, from where we get the term Jew, and Jesus is from the tribe of Judah, very bad guy. Read about him in Genesis. Also, David. David, a man after God's own heart. Yeah, but he's a liar, adulterer and a murderer. Gee, I guess there's hope for the rest of us. He's in there. Bathsheba is in there. In fact, I think it's Matthew. When Matthew gets to Bathsheba in his genealogy, he won't mention her name. You know what he says instead? Uriah's wife. That's a slam, isn't it? I mean, he's telling the truth, but it's also a slam. Why? Because Uriah was the husband of Bathsheba, whom David had killed, so he could have Bathsheba and he could cover up the crime. This is embarrassing, but they're telling the truth.

I'm Frank Turek. You're listening to, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist. We're back in just two minutes. Don't go anywhere.

Welcome back to, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, with Frank Turek on the American Family Radio Network. Our website is CrosseExamined.org. We're going through three reasons you can't make this stuff up. What's the stuff you can't make up the New Testament testimony? We talked a little bit about embarrassing stories. Let me add a pointer to what we just said that there are embarrassing people in Jesus' bloodline. I mentioned Judah, I mentioned David, I mentioned Bathsheba, You say, well, how is David embarrassing? As I mentioned, he did some really embarrassing things for a guy who's supposed to be after God's own heart, right? You don't make this up. Or you don't put embarrassing details in a made up story if you're trying to pass off a made up story as the truth.

Last week, of course, I mentioned that the disciples act the Great Commission, the end of Matthew 28. They're standing there watching Jesus say, go therefore and make disciples of all nations. They're watching him do it. And it says right there in the text, Matthew 28:17, some

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believed, but some doubted. He's standing right in front of them and they're doubting he had resurrected from the dead. I would probably be doubting too. It's an authentic detail but it's embarrassing detail to say his own disciples doubted that he had resurrected from the dead. Again, if you're making this up, you'd say we never doubted. We were with him the whole way. Right? The New Testament is filled with embarrassing stories they never would have invented. That's one reason we know that you can't make this stuff up.

Now, the second reason we know you can't make this stuff up, it's one of our eight E's I mentioned at the top of the program. It's called embedded confirmation. Now this, I just discovered over, say the past seven or eight years. I never knew about this, what I call, embedded confirmation, but you may have heard of it. If you've heard of it at all, they are called, undesigned coincidences. Undesigned coincidences, okay. So, you can just go Google that, or Duck Duck Go that, if you want to use a search engine that won't track you. Duck Duck Go that and you will see a number of undesigned coincidences, which I think cannot be invented.

And what do I mean by undesigned coincidences? Here's a definition of an undesigned coincidence, and stick with me with the definition, because once I start going through a few of these, you'll understand what I mean by them. But an undesigned coincidence is this. Embedded just below the surface of the New Testament storyline is a series of interlocking puzzle pieces which confirm that the New Testament documents could not have been invented. Instead, they contained independent eyewitness testimony of actual historical events. And what they do, what embedded confirmation does is, one event will leave you with only some of the story. And there's a bit of a puzzle when you're reading the story and you're going I don't quite get why that detail is there. But then you read, say, another gospel and the other gospel adds a clue that helps solve the puzzle from the first gospel. And then you go, oh, I see how it works now. Well, those two gospels had to have some independent testimony, or they had to have been witnessing the same historical event, for them to agree on these interlocking puzzle pieces, which become clear as you read both accounts.

And again, this may seem fuzzy right now, but let me just give you a few examples of what we mean by embedded confirmation. As I say, some people call this undesigned coincidences. Let's go to Matthew 8 for a minute. In Matthew 8, Jesus is healing some people. He's in Capernaum,

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which happens to be my favorite place to go to in Israel. Our Israel trip in 2020 got postponed three times, so we're trying to reschedule it. And I just love going to Israel. Anyway...reading in Matthew 8:14, we read this, "and when Jesus entered Peter's house"...by the way, we know where Peter's house is, at least we think we do. In Capernaum, we discovered what we believe is Peter's house. There's a church built on top of it now. Anyway, it says this. "14 And when Jesus entered Peter's house, he saw his mother-in-law lying sick with a fever. 15 He touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she rose and began to serve him. 16 That evening they brought to him many who were oppressed by demons, and he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick."

Alright, now, here's the puzzle. If you're reading this, you would say, why wait till evening for healing? Right? I mean, if Jesus is literally healing people, he's healing Peter's mother-in-law, and people understand that he just healed Peter's mother-in-law, why would they wait till evening? I mean, Jesus was on the move quite a bit. If I was in Capernaum that day and I had a sickness, I wouldn't wait till evening. If I just saw Jesus, I'd be right at him right then, Jesus, would you please heal me as well too. Matthew doesn't tell us. He leaves a bit of a puzzle.

So, how do you solve the puzzle? Well, if you go over to Mark, here's what we read. "21 ...on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue and was teaching...29 And immediately he left the synagogue and entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. 30 Now Simon's mother-in-law lay ill with a fever...32 That evening at sundown they brought to him all who were sick or oppressed by demons." This is right in the first chapter of Mark. Do you see the clue that Mark gives us that Matthew doesn't? Matthew leaves a puzzle. Why would they wait till evening? Mark tells us it was the Sabbath. So, this embedded confirmation that Mark and Matthew are either eye-witnessing the same event, or at least they're working from a similar source. One includes a detail that the other does not. And the two accounts are complementary. They're helping us understand the event in more detail, because there are two different sources here, and we get more detail from two sources than if we just had one. They're interlocking.

Alright, let's do another one. How about the feeding of the 5000? John chapter six. If you go to the feeding of the 5000 in John chapter six, you see that John records Jesus asking Philip, where are we to buy bread so that these people may eat? This is John 6:5. Now the puzzle is this. Why

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is Jesus asking Philip, a minor character, about where to get a lot of money and food, instead of asking a leader such as Peter or John? I mean, it does seem kind of odd, right? Peter and John were there too. So, John kind of leaves us with a puzzle at the feeding of the 5000.

If you go over to Luke, Luke has the missing puzzle piece that solves John. Here's what Luke tells us. Luke, and only Luke, mentions that Bethsaida was the location of the feeding of the 5000 (Luke 9:10). Elsewhere, John records that Philip was from Bethsaida in Galilee. He says this in an offhanded way in John 1:44 and in John 12:21. What's the import of all this? Jesus is asking Philip about where to get money and food, because Philip is from Bethsaida. That's why he's asking him that. Now, what's interesting is, we learn that Peter's from Bethsaida too. But why is he asking Philip? Because Philip is from Bethsaida. He could ask Peter, but he didn't. He asked Philip. Maybe Philip was more familiar with the town because maybe he had been there more recently. Or, you know, maybe Peter had moved on and Philip was still the resident there.

But this interesting inter-locking between Luke and John shows us that this couldn't have been invented. John couldn't have decided that he would leave out...well, I mean, he could have...but it's too contrived. It would be too contrived. It's undesigned. That's one reason they call it undesigned coincidences. The details are too minute here to have been contrived. Let me put it that way. I mean, you're asking the question, why Philip? And it wouldn't seem like they could have anticipated this, that people would be asking the question, why Philip? And let me let Luke cryptically put this over here. Or he already did cryptically put that Philip is from Bethsaida over here. And I'm going to record about the feeding of the 5000, said John, but I'm not going to tell you where it is. And then later, it'll look like this wasn't contrived, but it...no, that takes too much faith to believe that, okay.

So, not only do we have Mark solving Matthew in our first example. Now we have Luke solving John for us. How about now Luke 23. Let's go to Luke 23. Again, we're talking about embedded conformation. These are also called undesigned coincidences. This is one of three reasons I'm saying today that you can't make this stuff up. You can't make the New Testament documents up. In Luke 23, we read this. Jews accuse Jesus before Pilate. Jesus is before Pilate in Luke 23. "2 And they began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king." 3 And Pilate

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asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" And he answered him, "You have said so." 4 Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no guilt in this man."

Alright. Now, wait a minute. This is a mystery that Luke leaves us, because Jesus appears to have just admitted the charge, right. When Pilate says, you're the king of the Jews, and Jesus says, you have said so. And then Pilate says, I find no fault in this man, if I no guilt in this man. It seems, according to Luke, he just admitted he was the King of the Jews, which is what the Jews were saying. So, why would Pilate then go on and say, I find no guilt in this man? He's admitting the charge. He's admitting he's guilty, according to Luke. Well, Luke leaves a puzzle. If you go over to John, though, John includes more dialogue that went on between Jesus and Pilate. Here's what John says in John 18. "33 So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?...36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world... 38 [Pilate] he went back outside to the Jews and told them, "I find no guilt in him."

Yes, Jesus admitted he's the king, but he said, my kingdom is not of this world. So, Pilate said, okay, he has admitted to being the King of the Jews, but not the King of the Jews here on Earth. You know, this guy...Pilate's probably thinking, this guy's kind of a loony, right. He thinks he has a king in another world. It's not in this world. But that's no threat to you Jews here. He's not claiming to be your king here on Earth, and therefore he's no threat to the Romans, he's no threat to us, he's no threat to our government. So, that's why Pilate says to the Jews, I find no guilt in him. Do you see that Luke leaves a puzzle and John solves? This is an example here of an undesigned coincidence, or I call it, embedded confirmation. They're not making this up.

Alright, I'm Frank Turek. We got a lot more right after the break. Don't go anywhere. We'll be back here in just two minutes.

Frank Turek with you. I almost missed my cue coming into that last segment. I'm looking at the clock going, I got no time. This stuff is so engrossing me, anyway, I just love looking at these undesigned coincidences or embedded confirmation. It's one of the three reasons today we're talking about why you can't make the New Testament documents up, particularly the history going on here, because there's interlocking puzzle pieces that one gospel will solve for another gospel, that when you put all the Gospels together, you get an inner locking story. And it's also with the book of Acts, which I'll get to here in a minute.

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Let's talk about another undesigned coincidence or embedded confirmation. If you go to Matthew 26, this is the beating of Jesus, here is what the high priest says in Matthew 26 after Jesus said, I am the Messiah. "65 Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, 'He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy. 66 What do you think?'" Alright, timeout. Let me call timeout here for just a second. It amazes me there are people out there who are claiming that Jesus never claimed to be God. When the people that stood right before Jesus, or with Jesus, the high priests in particular, claims that Jesus is committing blasphemy. He tears his clothes and he basically says, you must die. Jesus claims to be God in many different ways. He does it in a Jewish way. And he does it in a coy way sometimes, because he has to complete his mission of sacrificial atonement, and he doesn't want to be killed too soon. And he doesn't want to be too overt about it because then they'll try and make him king, so he has to kind of walk a fine line. But he certainly, he certainly admitted that he was God, and he does so right here before Caiaphas."66 What do you think?" "He is worthy of death," they answered. 67 Then they spit in his face and struck him with their fists. Others slapped him 68 and said, 'Prophecy to us, Messiah. Who hit you?'"

Now, here's the puzzle. Why are they asking, who hit you? I mean, Jesus is standing there. They're standing in front of him, they hit him. Why didn't Jesus say, you just hit me? Matthew leaves a puzzle. Who solves the puzzle? Go over to Luke. Go to Luke 22. It says this, "the men who were guarding Jesus"...this is the same account, Luke just adds a detail. "The men who are guarding Jesus"...let me say it another way. It's not the same account. It's the same event, two different accounts. It's Luke's account rather than Matthew's account. "63 The men who were guarding Jesus began mocking and beating him. 64 They blindfolded him and demanded, "Prophecy! Who hit you?" 65 And they said many other insulting things to him." So, Luke solves it for us. Luke tells us they blindfolded Jesus where Matthew doesn't. Matthew leaves us a puzzle. How come Jesus wouldn't know? Jesus can see them. And Luke tells us, no, the reason he didn't know, the reason they're saying, Prophecy! Who hit you?, is because they blindfolded him. So, here we have an instance where Luke solves Matthew.

So far in the examples I've just given, Luke has solved John, John has solved Luke, Luke has solved Matthew, and Mark has solved Matthew, in these examples. Now, there's many examples. We're just going through a few of them here on the program here today. So, there's many more examples that you can get. In fact, we have some of them in the *book, Stealing*

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from God: Why Atheists Need God to Make Their Case. And there's been a book written recently on this. It's called, *Hidden in Plain View*, by Lydia McGrew. Hidden in Plain View. I think we did a program on this with Lydia a few years ago. But if you want to see some of these undesigned coincidences unpacked more, you can get that book as well.

Let's do another one. Matthew chapter two. And here we have an undesigned coincidence, or embedded confirmation, that comes actually from outside the Bible. Because in Matthew 2, Matthew tells us that Joseph and Mary escape to Egypt with Jesus because, of course, Herod wants to kill all the male babies in Bethlehem. And here's the section of Matthew 2. We're looking at verses 22 to 23. First of all, Matthew records that Joseph had a dream in Egypt to return to Israel with Mary and the child, Jesus. So, they're in Egypt in Matthew 2 and he has a dream that we ought to return. Now, here's what Matthew says. We ought to return back to Israel. "22 But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, 23 and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. "

Now, here's the puzzle. Why is Joseph afraid of Archelaus? Herod has died so the edict to kill all the male babies is probably over at this point. And so, Joseph has a dream that he ought to go back to Israel, but when he hears that one of Herod's sons, Archelaus, is ruling in the area of Bethlehem and Jerusalem. he says, I can't go there, I don't want to go there. So, he goes up to the north. He goes up to Galilee. He goes up to a town called Nazareth. Why would he be afraid of Archelaus? That's all it says in the text. He just says he was afraid to go there because he heard Archelaus was ruling there.

Well, if you go to Josephus, the Jewish historian, who lived from about 37AD to about 100AD. If you go there and read Josephus, Josephus actually tells us why Joseph probably feared Archelaus. Matthew doesn't say this, but Josephus tells us that, in putting down a disturbance at the temple in 4BC, that Archelaus sent in troops and slaughtered 3000 Jews and Passover was canceled. So, Archelaus was such a bad guy, that as soon as Joseph heard of this, he said, I'm not going to where he's ruling. How could he have heard of this, by the way? Well, it may have been that Jews who lived in Egypt were going down the road to Egypt, and Joseph and Mary and the baby Jesus are making their way back up from Egypt. And maybe they were even making their way up for the Passover. And these Jews, who are going back home to Egypt

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where they live, see Joseph coming up and Joseph says to them, hey, how come you're not at Passover? That's where I'm heading. And they go, oh, you haven't heard? Archelaus has just killed 3000 Jews. Passover is canceled. He killed them right there in the temple. He slaughtered them. 3000 of our own brethren. So, Joseph says, well, I'm going back to Israel, but I'm not going back to where that guy is. He's crazy. He's a nut.

Now you see, Matthew doesn't tell us anything about why Archelaus is so bad and why Joseph is afraid. But Josephus, an external source to the New Testament, tells us as much. And there are several more these. Let me let me just let me do one more. And this one is going to seem like, well, this is just such a minor detail. Why even bring it up? If you go to Mark, this is Mark chapter six. It says, " 31 And he said to them, 'Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.' For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat...39 Then he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass."

Here's the puzzle. Grass in Galilee is rarely green. You know what Israel is sort of like? It's sort of like, this area and into Galilee, it's got kind of a Southern California kind of climate. It gets a little colder in the winter than Southern California, but if you move inland a little bit in Southern California, like say around where Chino Hills is...where my friend, the great Jack Hibbs has a has a great church I go to quite a bit, Calvary Chapel Chino Hills...that kind of climate. You know, like right now probably in California....I used to live out that way, actually, in Northern California out near San Jose, when I was in the Navy. And right now, about March, everything was really green. By the time you hit May, though, even sometimes in April, everything was brown because they don't get a lot of rain. It's not the rainy season now, okay. Once the rainy season is over...rainy season is more in the winter...once the rainy season is over, things get brown in California, and they do as well in Galilee, in Israel.

So, when Mark mentioned, sit down on the green grass, you're going, well, most of the time, it's not green. Well, you go over to John and John solves Mark, because John tells us now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. In other words, the weeks just before and after Passover are the growing season there in Israel, therefore, you have the green grass. During Passover season, the roads would be thronged with great crowds of pilgrims, and that's why Jesus is saying, get off the street. Come on in and sit down. Come on into this field and sit down on the green grass. So, here's the situation...and it's just a minor detail, right. I mean, this isn't

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earth shattering. It's just a minor kind of confirmation that John gives to Mark. John helped solve a puzzle left by Mark.

And we can go through many of these. J.J. Blunt, who was an Oxford Professor back 170 years ago, wrote a book which you can still get online for free. And that book identified, I think, 68 of these undesigned coincidences in the Old Testament, 40 something plus in the New Testament, and some of them are even from external sources, like the one we mentioned a couple of minutes ago about Josephus confirming the situation with Archelaus and Matthew. So, you're getting imbedded confirmation. You're getting undesigned coincidences that could not have been invented. This is not an invented story. You can't make this stuff up.

Now there are many more as I say. You can get, *Stealing from God*, which has some of these in there. Because this is not invented. Fictions and forgeries aren't like this. Why would you leave loose ends, or raise puzzling questions, if you're trying to pass off a lie as the truth? And how can you control what other people will write to make it interlock with what you have? Actual history, however, is like this. The New Testament writers didn't copy from each other. They may have done in certain sections, but not throughout the Gospels. They may have a similar source, passing details interlocked in authentic detailed records, told by different people who saw the same real events, or knew those that did. This is not an invented story. And there's a lot more after the break. I'm Frank Turek. Don't go away.

Welcome back to, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, with Frank Turek on the American Family Radio Network. We're talking about the evidence for the New Testament documents and three reasons you can't make this stuff up. You can't make up the fact that they have embarrassing stories throughout the New Testament documents, you can't make up the fact that they have embedded confirmation, some of these things we call undesigned coincidences...that's how you may have heard about it...and you also can't make this stuff up because there were excruciating deaths. And before I get into that, let me quote my friend, J. Warner Wallace, who as you know, is an expert on eyewitness testimony, because he's dealt with it so many times in his line of work, which is to basically do murder investigations, cold case homicide investigations. And he has dealt with eyewitnesses his entire career. And so, he knows that eyewitness accounts will have variations in them. And true eyewitness accounts will complement one another. They may raise some puzzling questions as well. But that's the

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nature of eyewitness accounts. They don't get in and iron out all the details. They agree on the essential thing that occurred: I saw a shooting, I saw an accident, I saw resurrection, but they may disagree on the minor aspects of it. It was it was a gray coat. No, it was a black coat. Or it was a gray car. No, it was a black car. Or he was wearing a red shirt. No, it was an orange shirt. Or, you know, so and so got to the tune first. No, somebody else got to the tune first. These are what you ought to expect with eyewitness details.

And here's what Jim says. He says, "the early believers could have destroyed all but one of the accounts, changed the conflicting details, or simply harmonized the Gospels. But these diverse accounts were preserved as they are because they are true. They display all the earmarks we would expect in true eyewitness testimony. If the early church had eliminated the four eyewitness perspectives, and limited us to one tidy version, we would inevitably have missed some significant detail." That's from his book, *Cold Case Christianity*. And he's actually doing a course right now for us, called Cold Case Christianity.

And by the way, I'm about to start a course on the great book of Romans. It's going to start on March 30. If you're listening to this after March 30, you can still sign up for the premium version and the self-paced version whenever you want. For the premium version, maybe you can sign up into the first week of April. We're going to have 10 zoom sessions on there in the premium version, where we're going to talk to one another via zoom video for Q&A and share our insights on the book of Romans. If you take the self-paced course you won't have the zoom sessions, but you'll still get all the video. There's about 19 hours of video. We're going verse by verse through the great book of Romans. And then a new course coming out in April is by Sean McDowell. And it's called, *Biblical Sexuality*. That's the sex ed course you should have taken when you were in school, so Sean's going to teach that. Keep an eye out for those courses at CrossExamined.org then click on online courses.

Okay, let me get to the third reason that you can't make this stuff up. Embarrassing stories aren't made up, imbedded confirmation isn't made up, and excruciating deaths aren't made up. The New Testament writers died excruciating deaths when they could have saved themselves by simply saying it never happened. And Sean McDowell, who has done his PhD dissertation on this, points out that we have really good evidence that four or five of the of the New Testament writers, or the apostles of Jesus, actually died as martyrs: Paul; Peter; James, the half-brother of

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Jesus; I think James, who wasn't a writer of the New Testament, the other James, who we find in, I think it's Acts chapter 12; and probably Thomas as well. Those we have really good evidence for. The others, the evidence isn't quite as strong. But there is no testimony of any apostle, of any writer of the New Testament, of any of the disciples ever recounting their testimony, ever saying, look, it never happened. And even the non-Christian writers agree that these disciples believed Jesus rose from the dead and they were willing to die for this belief.

And think about what they did, by the way. They abandoned their Jewish beliefs almost overnight. You know, the apostles beliefs and practices before and after the resurrection were dramatically different. Before the resurrection, they believed in animal sacrifice, the binding Law of Moses, strict monotheism, they believed in the Sabbath, they believed in a conquering Messiah, they also believed in circumcision. After the resurrection, no more animal sacrifice. They believed in Christ's sacrifice. Here's the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. We don't have to slay these other lambs that we've been doing for centuries here at the temple. They're just a symbol of the true lamb, Jesus. They don't believe in the binding Law of Moses anymore. Read Acts 15. Acts 15, the first church Council, they say no, the New Testament believers don't need to obey the Old Testament law. And the writer of Hebrews says, the old covenant is obsolete. Christ's life has fulfilled the binding Law of Moses.

Strict monotheism? Yeah, I know the Trinity is hinted at in the Old Testament. It's much clearer in the new. But now they're believing a trinity, three persons in one divine essence. The Sabbath. They don't even believe in the Sabbath anymore. They're worshipping on Sunday. And Paul even says, you don't have to obey any Sabbath or festival day. Don't let anyone tell you have to do that anymore. I think he says that in Colossians 2. Why? Because the Sabbath represented rest and the Sabbath has arrived. Jesus. They don't believe in a conquering Messiah. Well, they do. He's coming again. But they thought Jesus would be the conquering Messiah, the first time coming. No, Jesus is the sacrificial Messiah, the first time he comes. When he comes again, he will be the conquering Messiah. And they don't believe in circumcision anymore. It's not necessary.

Now they believe in baptism and communion. What would have caused these pious Jews, who thought they were God's chosen people, to abandon these long held beliefs that they thought they could be stoned for if they abandon them? Why would they adopt all these other beliefs,

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virtually overnight? The only thing I can think of is what psychologists call an impact event. What's an impact event? An impact event is, an event that occurs in your life that is so dramatic, that it can change your perspective 180 degrees overnight. Impact events are also so dramatic, you might not remember what you had for breakfast this morning, but you'll remember an impact event that happened 10, 20, 30, 40, 50 years ago, if you're old enough.

My earliest memory is November 22, 1963. That's when President Kennedy was assassinated. I was two years old. I remember my mother crying. I was two. I'd never seen my mother cry like that before. It's my earliest memory, impact event. I don't remember anything from 1964 or 1965, but I remember 1963, that one event. Why? Impact event. Some of you can remember where you were when the Challenger exploded, if you're old enough. 1986. Some of you are old enough and can remember what you were doing on 9-11. Why can you remember something that happened 20 years ago, 9-11, but not something that happened 20 minutes ago? Actually, let's say 20 days ago. If I were to ask you where you were 20 days ago, you'd go, I don't know, let me look at my iPhone. What was I doing? No. But if I asked you where you were 20 years ago, if you're old enough, you'll go, yeah, I remember what I was doing. I can remember. Impact event.

Do you think a resurrection would have been an impact event? Yeah, absolutely. It would have been a huge impact event. I mean, do you think, if Jesus really rose from the dead, those people would have known that he had risen from the dead after they had witnessed that? And do you think they would have remembered everything Jesus said and did till the day they died. Of course, they would. It's an impact event. They had no trouble remembering. They had no trouble abandoning everything they had come from and adopting these new beliefs because they knew he had risen from the dead. Now they got trouble for doing that. They got beaten, tortured and killed. But that's what motivated them to do it. They went from scared, scattered, skeptical disciples to the most powerful, peaceful, missionary force the world has ever known. They didn't gain anything by saying Jesus had resurrected from the dead. They got beaten, tortured and killed for saying he had risen from the dead and they went ahead with it anyway.

Now you say, wait a minute, Frank. Are you telling me that martyrdom proves Christianity because if martyrdom proves Christianity then martyrdom proves Islam? No, it doesn't. Why? Because Muslims haven't witnessed anything that tells them that Christianity is true or that

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Islam is true. But the disciples witnessed Jesus rise from the dead. They saw Jesus, they touched Jesus, they ate with Jesus, they verified with their own senses that Jesus had risen from the dead. Some people will die for a lie they think is the truth. 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. You can't get better evidence than that unless you were there yourself.

Now let me make one other point on this, which I think is important, because I think we sometimes get this backwards. The New Testament writers did not create the resurrection, the resurrection created the New Testament writers. Let me say that, again. The New Testament writers did not create the resurrection, the resurrection created the New Testament writers. You wouldn't have these New Testament documents, written by Jews in the first century, saying Jesus had resurrected from the dead...which by saying that they would get beaten, tortured and killed...unless Jesus really did rise from the dead. These are Jewish documents. Luke is the only Gentile writer. All the rest of them are Jewish. Even if you're going to contest who wrote the Gospels, it's not even up for debate that, at least Matthew, Mark, and John...Matthew and Mark in particular...are Jewish documents. They're written by Jews, for Jews. Particularly, Matthew is. Jews wrote this down. Why would they write it down if it wasn't true? Again, the New Testament writers did not create the resurrection, the resurrection created the New Testament writers.

Christianity did not originate with a book, Christianity originated with an event, the resurrection, and if the resurrection occurred, Christianity is true. Because if Jesus rose from the dead, then he's God and everything God teaches is true. And Jesus taught the Old Testament is the word of God and he promised the New Testament Look, I just have a personal policy: if somebody rises from the dead, I just trust whatever the guy says. Alright? So, you can't make this stuff up. You wouldn't have embarrassing stories, you wouldn't have embedded confirmation, and you wouldn't have excruciating deaths if Jesus hadn't resurrected from the dead.

Alright, friends, I'm Frank Turek. I hope to see you next week. By the way, one quick thing. You need to call your senators about this Equality Act. It is not an Equality Act. It is an inequality act.

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It's disastrous. Maybe in a future show, we'll look at it, but call them. It needs to stop. I'm Frank Turek. See you next week, Lord willing. God bless.

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