Top 10 Reasons We Know the New Testament Writers Told the Truth

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FRANK:
Ladies and gentlemen, what is the purpose of your life? Why do you exist? Why do you get up every day and do what you do? What's the future going to be like for you? What's going to happen when you inevitably leave this earth? You realize everyone you love will die, everything you build will crumble, everything you say will be forgotten.

Everything that you do will come to nothing. Do you realize that you and your identity will die and vanish unless the resurrection is true? If there is no resurrection, if there is no afterlife, if there is no God, if there is no judgment, this life ultimately doesn't matter at all.

Ultimately. It's like asking if the people on the Titanic an hour before the ship went down were comfortable. Today, who cares if they were comfortable? Where are they now, the ones that perished? What's their current state?

Are they gone? Are they absent from the body present with the Lord? Are they in Allah's hellfire? Have they been reincarnated? Have they merged with the One? What happened to them? Where are they right now? Well, unless the resurrection is true, they're nowhere.

Oh, maybe they're reincarnated. Nah, reincarnation isn't true. Hinduism isn't true. Islam isn't true. Doesn't mean everything in Islam is false, but there's no evidence that the Islamic worldview is true. Not good evidence, anyway. Only if Jesus really predicted and accomplished his own resurrection from the dead, and there is an afterlife, does this life make any ultimate objective sense.

Because if we're just going to go out of existence, does it ultimately matter if you live like a missionary or a murderer? Ultimately? Does it ultimately matter if you live like Charlie Kirk or Tyler Robinson, the alleged killer? No, ultimately doesn't matter. Not ultimately. Now, the good news is, I think it's really good news, the resurrection is true.

That Jesus really did predict and accomplish His own resurrection from the dead, and therefore Christianity is indeed true. And as we know, in order for a resurrection to occur, God must exist and miracles must be possible. And as I've stated so many times, the greatest miracle in the

Bible is not the resurrection. The greatest miracle in the Bible is the first verse. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. And today, being the 27th of October, that this podcast is being released, that is the day that the new edition of *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* is actually being released.

And we cover all this in great detail. That yes, God does exist. Yes, resurrections are possible. What I want to concentrate on today, however is the evidence that the New Testament writers are really telling the truth about what happened to Jesus. Because if Jesus really did predict and accomplish his own resurrection from the dead, then there is hope for the future.

If he didn't, there isn't, and this life is ultimately meaningless. So, the chapter that I want to sort of summarize here today from the new edition of *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* is the top 10 reasons we know the New Testament writers told the truth. There are more than ten, but we're going to try and concentrate on these ten, and I'm going to summarize them from the book. Let me start at number one.

Not, this isn't necessarily in order of significance, but you got to start somewhere, and this one is significant for me. I actually think this is very good evidence that the New Testament writers are telling the truth. Number one is the New Testament writers in include embarrassing details about themselves and even about Jesus. I talk about this a lot on college campuses.

If I just have a couple of points I want to make with regard to the historicity of the New Testament, this is one of them. Because historians know that if there's something embarrassing to the author or authors, it's probably true. Not just about the New Testament documents, but anything that you write or that you read from history. If you see something it's embarrassing to the author or authors, you know they're not making it up.

Why would they, why would they make something up that makes them look bad? They may make things up that make them look good, but they won't make things up that make them look bad. And you know this just from your own experience. I mean, have you ever lied to make yourself look good? Of course you have. But have you ever lied to make yourself look bad? No, you don't do that.

You might lie to make yourself look good, but you won't lie to embarrass yourself. And the New Testament writers have filled the New Testament documents with embarrassing details they never would have invented. This is true of the Old Testament as well, but let's just take a look at the New. Like, for example, Jesus calls their leader Peter Satan. Now, do you think Mark, who

wrote this down, said to Peter at one point, "Hey, Pete, I'm gonna make this a real interesting story.

I'm gonna have the Lord call you Satan." I mean, what would Peter have said? Have him call you Satan, right? This is not an invented story. Peter then denies Christ three times after saying, "Lord, I'll never deny you." All the disciples, with the exception of one, run away for fear of the Jews while the women are the brave ones. What man is going to invent this? No man is going to invent this.

This is not an invented story, and they would never say the women were the first witnesses anyway, because their testimony was not considered on par with that of a man. So, if you're trying to make the New Testament story up, and you want it to be persuasive to people, you want the witnesses to have credibility, You would never say the women were the first witnesses. You wouldn't even mention the women. Yet all four gospels say the women were the first witnesses, which is telling us what?

They really were. In fact, one of the women was a formerly demon-possessed woman, Mary Magdalene. Do you think they invented this? No. I actually had a woman come up to me once and she said, "Frank, I know why Jesus appeared to the women first." And 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." Okay, so they're not inventing this.

And then there's embarrassing details, not only about themselves. I mean, I mean, how many times do they fail to get what Jesus is saying, right? We didn't know what he was saying. We didn't know what he was talking about. They don't really get his whole mission until he's ascended to heaven, and then they go, "Wow, I could have had a V8. You know, up to that point, they really did not understand what Jesus was doing. Totally embarrassing.

In fact, I think Wes Huff has called the disciples the Duh- ciples because they just don't get it. This is not a flattering way to depict themselves, especially if they're inventing this, which is my point. They're not. Even, there's even embarrassing details about Jesus. Jesus is considered out of his mind by his own family who want to seize him and take him home. That's Mark chapter 3.

His family thinks he's nuts, essentially. His own brothers don't believe in him. That's embarrassing. That's Mark chapter 7. No, sorry, John chapter 7 verse 5. His disciples, oh, here here's another embarrassing thing about the disciples. As Jesus is giving them the Great

Commission in Matthew 28, it says as they're watching him give the Great Commission, it says that some believed but some doubted.

What? Some of the disciples are doubting Jesus as he's standing resurrected right in front of them. This is Matthew 28:17. Why would they say this if it if it didn't happen? I mean, if they're inventing this, they certainly wouldn't have said it. They would say we never doubted at all. We were there with Christ right to the end. We were courageous. No, they're cowards.

They're doubters. They're skeptical. This is not an invented story. Jesus is called a madman. He's called a drunkard. He's called demon-possessed. You think they invented this? He has his feet wiped with the hair of a prostitute. Which easily could have been seen as a sexual advance. And notice there are two prostitutes in his bloodline. Yes, yeah, Tamar and Rahab.

Now, do you think Matthew, when he was writing the genealogies down in his biography that we now call the Gospel of Matthew, he said, "I think I need to spice up the Messiah's bloodline a little bit. Let me put a couple of prostitutes in here." No. They would never do that, and there's a lot of shady people in the bloodline. Judah, from where we get the term Jew, not a good guy. He sold his brother Joseph to slave traders, and then he slept with, or he also slept with Tamar, who he didn't know at the time was his daughter.

She was posing as a prostitute, his daughter-in-law. And so this guy's not a good guy, and yet he's in the bloodline of the Messiah. This is where we get the term Jew from. You've got David in there, David, a man after God's own heart. Yeah, but he's a liar, adulterer, and a murderer. Ja, I guess there's hope for the rest of us then. Bathsheba's in the bloodline. In fact, when Matthew gets to her, he doesn't mention her name, but he still refers to her as Uriah's wife.

Oh, he's telling the truth, but it's a slam. Who's Uriah, husband of Bathsheba, Bathsheba whom David had killed, so he could have Bathsheba and cover up the crime. This is not invented, ladies and gentlemen. And then the Messiah of the Jews is hung as a criminal on a tree. According to Deuteronomy 21:23, you'd never hang your Messiah on a tree because according to that passage, anyone who's hung on a tree is under God's curse.

And of course, he was under God's curse, the curse of sin that we put him under. But again, if you're inventing this, you would never say this. So there's so much more about embarrassing details that we have in the book *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*. But I think that's a pretty persuasive one for me anyway to say, yeah, they're not inventing this. In fact, Dennis Prager, who, as you know, is not a Christian but a Jewish man, and believes the Old Testament's

true, he says about the Old Testament, he says, "One reason I know, the primary reason I know the Old Testament is true is because no people group would ever invent such an embarrassing history of themselves." I mean, look, look how many times the Jews in the Old Testament are judged, and God keeps telling them, "Stop sinning, stop sinning." They're judged.

In fact, most of the kings in the Old Testament are evil. They're not good. This is not an invented storyline. By contrast, you go over to Egypt, where we've been a couple of times in recent years, and you see all these great monuments to the pharaohs. You know what they are? They're propaganda monuments. The Pharaoh always does everything good. The Pharaoh's great, and this current Pharaoh's better than the previous Pharaoh. Let's etch out the previous Pharaoh's name and put our name in there, my name in there.

The current Pharaoh says, in other words, it's propaganda. You don't get propaganda in the Bible. You get warts and all the evil that the supposed heroes of the faith have engaged in, the embarrassing things they did. That they were scared, scattered, skeptical cowards, not an invented story. All right, that's the number one reason we know the New Testament writers told the truth.

Number two, the New Testament writers leave in difficult and demanding sayings of Jesus. Why would they do this if they're inventing a new religion? You might see why people might invent or Muhammad might invent, Islam, because, wow, it's a really good deal if you become a Muslim. You get to share in the booty from the trips, from the raiding of Meccan caravans, with Muhammad.

You get to marry at least four wives. You get to pummel people. You know, it's kind of appealing to a man. But you don't get these difficult and embarrassing statements. Or at least difficult to live by, you don't see them making this up if they're making up a new religion.

For example, Jesus says, "I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart." Matthew 5:28. Muhammad says you can have four wives. Jesus says if you just look at another woman with lustful intent, you're guilty. Man, that's a hard teaching. Who's going to invent that?

Or Jesus says, "I tell you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery." What, this is hard, Jesus. In fact, Jesus later says that Moses granted you a certificate

of divorce, but it was because of the hardness of your heart, not because God wanted it that way.

Your hearts were hard. That's Matthew 19 verse 8, by the way. But Jesus is actually making the Old Testament law more difficult, not less. Jesus also said, "I say to you, do not resist anyone who is evil. If someone slaps you on the right cheek, turn the other. And if anyone would sue you to take your tunic, give him your cloak as well.

If anyone forces you to go one mile, go two." It goes on. These are difficult things to live up to. Or how about love your enemies? Pray for those who persecute you. How about be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect? Don't judge, or you're going to be judged. For with the judgment you pronounce, you'll be judged, and with the measure you use, it'll be measured to you. Now, again, as I've said many times before, he's not saying don't judge at all.

He's just saying keep in mind you're going to be judged too. Don't judge hypocritically. These are difficult, if not impossible, things to live up to. Yeah, exactly. Only Jesus can. But He's not making it easy on these people. He's putting out this high ethic, and if they were inventing this, why would they say this kind of thing?

Why would they make it harder for themselves rather than easier for themselves, the New Testament writers there is. And then Jesus says things that can be hard to explain. You know. In addition to the embarrassing details, there are difficult sayings attributed to Jesus that the New Testament writers would not have included if they were making up a story about Jesus. Like, for example, he declares, "The Father is greater than I." Wait a minute, I thought he was supposed to be God.

Or he seems to predict incorrectly that he's coming back to earth within a generation. This is Matthew 24:34. Now he doesn't, but it appears that way. He says that no one knows the time of his second coming, not even the angels of heaven nor the sun. Wait, you're God, you know everything. How come? Or he seems to deny his deity by asking the rich young ruler, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone." Now, actually, he's affirming his deity because he is the only one who is good.

But on the surface of it, you may take, you may walk away with the wrong impression. Or he's seen cursing a fig tree for not having figs when it isn't even the season for figs. Or he seems unable to do miracles in his hometown, except heal a few sick people. Mark chapter 6 verse 5. If

the New Testament writers wanted to prove to everyone that Jesus was God, why did they leave these difficult sayings that seem to argue against his deity?

Now there are reasonable explanations for these difficult sayings, but it doesn't make sense that the New Testament writers would have left them in or invented them if they're trying to pass off a lie as the truth. This is not an invented story, ladies and gentlemen. They're just telling you what Jesus said and did, as difficult as those sayings are, whether they're ethical sayings or sayings about his deity.

So, that's the second reason the New Testament writers, we know the New Testament writers are telling the truth. They live in, they live in difficult and demanding sayings. How about number three? Number three is, the New Testament writers carefully distinguishes Jesus' words from their own, Jesus's words. Now, as you know, in the early church, if it, there were difficulties, and if you were making up the Christianity story and trying to pass off, pass it off as the truth, you would probably be apt to just make up quotes from Jesus to convince stubborn people that on these difficult issues Jesus has weighed in, and so you should just go with what Jesus said.

Let's just invent quotes from Jesus. I mean, how convenient would it have been for these New Testament writers to end all debate on controversial issues such as circumcision, obeying the law of Moses, speaking in tongues, women in the church, and so forth by just making up quotes of Jesus? Well, they never did that. Despite all these controversies, the New Testament writers don't do that.

Instead of pulling rank this way, they seem to be very careful to only quote what Jesus actually did say. I mean, Paul, the man who wrote nearly half of the New Testament books, at least 13 of the 27, and dealt with most of these controversial problems in the church, he never pulls rank. He quotes Jesus just a couple of times, and on one of those occasions, he goes out of his way to explicitly distinguish his own words from those of Jesus, which is 1 Corinthians 7 verses 10 to 12.

Would have been easy just to say, "Oh, here's what Jesus said about this. Here's what Jesus said about that." Here's," doesn't do that, because he's being true to Jesus. He's not inventing things. All right, number four. The fourth major reason we know the New Testament writers told the truth is because they include events related to the resurrection they never would have invented.

Like, for example, the burial of Jesus. And this is also kind of an embarrassing detail. The burial of Jesus. It's not the disciples that actually go find or get Jesus's body and bury him. They have a guy from the Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling council that sentenced Jesus to die.

He becomes the good guy. Joseph of Arimathea, and he is the one that buries Jesus. Not them, they're hiding. Why would they make a guy from the Sanhedrin look like a good guy if they're inventing this? They wouldn't. Why would they put him in a favorable light? They wouldn't. Why would they say they were hiding for fear of the Jews if they're inventing this?

They wouldn't. Also, if Joseph didn't really bury Jesus the story would have been easily exposed as fraudulent by the Jewish enemies of Christianity, but the Jews never denied the story, and no alternative burial story has ever been found. So that's one reason that or one thing they included that they could not have invented if they invented this.

First of all, they wouldn't invent it, and if they did invent it, it would have been discovered as fraudulent by Jews who we're looking for ways to discount or discredit Christianity. Also, the first witnesses, I just mentioned that a minute ago. You would never have the women be the first witnesses in that culture. It was not considered on par with that of a man for a woman to give testimony, because she wasn't considered as credible as a man.

So, if you're making up the New Testament story, you'd only have the men be the first witnesses. Yet all four gospels say the women were the first witnesses, which is telling us it really happened. By the way, it's interesting when you look at this, that when you go to the famous creed in 1 Corinthians 15 verses 3 to 8, what's a creed? It was something that was memorized orally early on and later put into writing.

Dr. Gary Habermas has found at least 40 of these creeds in the New Testament, and even atheistic scholars agree that these creeds predate the writing of the New Testament and some of them go all the way back to the event itself, like 1 Corinthians 15 verses 3 to 8, which states who Jesus appeared to after he rose from the dead. Do you know that 14 people are named in that creed, but the people who are not named, the women.

Why are they not named? Probably because in that culture, adding their names wouldn't have added any credibility to the story in that culture. So they, the names are not in the creed, but they are in the narrative of what actually happened because that's what actually happened in the Gospels. They're just the New Testament writers are just recording what happened. The

creed is something that they put together so everyone would remember what happened and who Jesus appeared to, but they don't include the women.

How about this is this next one kind of blew me away when I discovered it. It's the conversion of the priests. You got, this is in Acts chapter 6, and a lot of times you get a question like people will say, "Well, why didn't Jesus appear to the Pharisees after he rose from the dead?" Well, the answer might be that it wasn't necessary. Well, another answer might be he may have, but nobody recorded it.

But it wasn't necessary. Why? This is often overlooked, but many priests in Jerusalem became believers. Here's what Luke writes. This is Acts chapter 6 verse 7 quote, "The number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith." Unquote.

Now these priests eventually initiated a controversy that took place later in the Jerusalem church, during a council meeting between Peter, Paul, James, and other elders. It quotes, it says, this is Acts 15. Some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, "The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses." Now the council resolved that issue, but the main point here is that Luke would not have included these details if they were fiction.

Why not? Because everyone would have known that Luke was a fraud if there were no significant converts from the ranks of the Pharisees. Theophilus and other first-century readers, that's to whom the book of Acts and the gospel of the gospel of Luke were written to and no extra charge for this but Theophilus was what, this Theophilus was probably the high priest in 41 A.D.

That's who Paul is writing to. I'm sorry Luke is writing to. We have the details in the new update, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*, but I digress. Anyway, it would have been easily found out that Luke was lying if he said that all these Pharisee priests had become believers, if they hadn't, and the Pharisees would have known that too. So why would Luke give them an easy way of exposing his lies?

After all, if you're trying to pass off a lie as the truth, you don't make it easy for your enemies to expose your story. So the conversion of priests and the Pharisees being believers. Acts 6, Acts 15. That's telling me that really happened. Otherwise, the Jews would have exposed Luke as a liar.

Also, another fact related to the resurrection that they never would have included would be the Jewish explanation for the empty tomb, because Matthew says that the disciples came and stole the body while the guards were asleep. Why would he say that? Matthew's writing his gospel, it's the most Jewish of gospels to Jews to try and get to convince them that Jesus is the Messiah and they ought to trust in him.

Why would he say that your story for the empty tomb is that the disciples came and stole the body while the guards were asleep and then the guards were paid off to keep quiet about it. Why would Matthew say that if that's not what happened? There's even an early Jewish source which says that's exactly what the Jews were saying. And writers in the second century were saying the Jews keep saying the disciples came and stole the body.

If that wasn't their story, in other words, if that wasn't the story the Jews were putting forth, that the disciples came and stole the body while the guards were asleep. Why would Matthew say it was? He would have been exposed as a liar too by the very people he's trying to reach. So this is not invented either. Now, why is this important? Well, because if you're coming up with a story to explain the empty tomb, the tomb must have been empty.

It's presupposing the tomb is empty, right? If it wasn't empty, no Jew would be saying, "Hey." Disciples came and stole the body while the guards were asleep," they'd say, "Here's his body," and they could have squashed Christianity by simply producing Jesus's body. They couldn't do it because he was still using his body. It had been resurrected. And by the way, when you think about it, the disciples came and stole the body while the guard, while the guards were asleep is a bad explanation for at least a couple of reasons.

Well, there's no motive to do this by the disciples. That's one reason. But another is, if you're asleep, how would you even know what happened, right? I mean, how would you know the disciples came and stole the body if you were asleep? So it doesn't make any sense to even think this way.

But this is actually what Matthew says. An early Jewish source says the same thing. Christian writers in the second century say, "Yep, that's what the Jews are saying." And Matthew would never invent this, and the Jews would never say that here's the explanation for the empty tomb if the tomb wasn't empty. Conclusion: tomb must have been empty. And where was Jesus's body?

Everyone knew where it was. Well, I think he had resurrected. The fifth reason, oh, by the way, oh, but we can't believe in a resurrection again let me go back to the beginning. If Genesis 1:1 is true resurrections are possible because if God can create the universe out of nothing He can resurrect Jesus from the dead, it's easy. All right number five, the fifth reason why the New Testament writers told the truth this is a new addition in the new edition, a new addition in the new edition of *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*, number five is the New Testament writers get the names of people in the first-century Israel correct.

What do we mean by that? Well, in a couple ways. There are at least 37 people named in the New Testament that have been found in the dirt (archaeology) or found in other writings like Josephus of the time. Thirty-seven of them. We all have them listed in the new edition of *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*. And some of these people are very prominent people in the New Testament and others are not prominent people.

Jesus is mentioned in by Josephus and found in archaeology. So is Peter. So is Herod. So is Pilate. But then, and so is Caiaphas. We have Caiaphas' ossuary, his burial box. And then very obscure people are named in there too. All those are listed here. But what's even more interesting to me, anyway, other than that is the research that Dr. Richard Bauckham did since the first edition of *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* was written, that shows that the popularity of the names used in the first century by the, or as cited by, the Gospels and in Acts, are correct given the names that were used in that culture, in Israel at that time, and what do I mean by this?

What I mean by this is that the popularity of names changes with time. Like, for example, if you go say back to the 1920s in our country, go back a hundred years ago, what were the most popular names for men and women? Like, what would you name your kid if your kid was born? In the 1920s, the number one name for men was Robert, and the number one name for women was Mary.

What is it today? It's changed dramatically. It's not Robert or Mary. You know, you've got names like Noah and Liam and for women, it's like Ava and Emma. Mary is like number, it's down several hundred now. Robert is still relatively popular, but not like Noah and Liam and these other names, right? I say, oh, here it is.

I have it. I actually have it in the text of *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*, a century later, today, Robert is number 89 and Mary is 135th. In the 1920s, my name Frank was the number 12th most popular name for a male. You know what it is now? 468th. Do you know anybody that names their kid their baby Frank anymore?

No. In the 1920s, Mildred for women was number nine. Do you know any babies today named Mildred? Hey, we just had a daughter. Yeah, what's her name? Millie. Mildred. It's Mildred. No, nobody names their kid Mildred anymore. Why? Because name usage changes. And what Bauckham found was that the New Testament writers get the names right for people living in first-century Israel.

Jews living in first century Israel. I don't have time to go through all the stats here. It's hard to cover in a in audio without visuals, but I'll just give you a couple of quick ones. 15.6% of the men in that area at that time were either named Simon or Joseph. In the New Testament, in Gospel and Acts, it was 18.2% of the men were named Simon or Joseph.

All right, next stat, check this out: 41.5% of the men had one of the nine most popular names in Israel in the first century. In Gospel or Acts, it was 40.3% of the men had one of those nine most popular names. I mean, it mirrors it almost perfectly. Now here's the interesting thing: in Egypt at the time, the Jews were using different names than they were using in the first century in Israel.

So it's not like somebody in Egypt could write this story and get the names right. It's like today trying to, if we were trying to write a novel, and we didn't have internet, we didn't have the research tools. If we wanted to write a novel right now about what happened a hundred years ago, and we wanted to use names, we probably wouldn't pick the right names, right?

It, you, you'd have to be there or have some research done in order to know what names were used at the time. So the point here is the New Testament writers couldn't have faked the names if they're inventing all this. And by the way, just so you know, there was no such thing as an historical novel 2,000 years ago. In fact, that genre really came into existence about 200 years ago.

So it's anachronistic to say the New Testament's an historical novel. Nope, nobody did that back then. All right. All right. Those are the top five. And before we go to number six through ten, let me mention we've got a couple of things coming up. I want to tell you about one is we've got a great online course with Dr. Brady Blevins called Conversations with the Faiths.

In fact, if you want to get better at witnessing to Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, and Muslims, that's the course you want to be a part of. Check it out at crossexamined.org. Click on online courses. You'll see it there. Now, let me mention what else is coming up in the ensuing weeks. Next week, I'm going to be Lord willing out in Phoenix at Freedom Night.

At Dream City Church in Phoenix, myself and the great Lucas Miles, the head of TPUSA Faith, will be there. That's going to be, I think, 6:30 p.m. local time in Phoenix. Then a couple of days later, I'll be at the Maven Conference with my friend Brett Kunkle. That's his ministry, Brett and Erin Kunkle. That's going to be in San Antonio, Texas, on the 7th of November.

Then on Monday we're going to be doing the third edition, Monday, November 9th, the third edition of the War on Reality. Phoenix Hayes and myself will be there. That'll be live-streamed at 7:30 p.m. Then on the 13th of November, Make Heaven Crowded. That's going to be in Woodland Park, Colorado. Then the Monday, sorry, the Sunday after that, that's the 15th.

Down near Miami, Florida, Miramar, Florida, at Calvary Fellowship Church for the three services that morning. Keep an eye on all that. We'll have more announcements as we get further into November. Gonna be out in Denver for William Lane Craig's event. That's gonna be the 20th. That's out in Denver. Lot more coming up. Check all that out and don't forget the brand new book, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*.

comes out today. A lot of new material in here. A new chapter. A lot of new evidence. The argumentation is the same. The 12 points are the same, but the evidence that supports those 12 points, we've gotten a lot more of it, and that's what *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* covers. It also, the updated edition covers all sorts of objections that have come up since the first edition came out in 2004, along with new evidence.

So check all that out. All right, let's go back to the top 10 reasons we know the New Testament writers told the truth. Here's number six: the New Testament writers include divergent details. And why do I say this? Because critics are quick to cite apparently contradictory gospel accounts as evidence that the gospels can't be trusted for accurate information. You know, one gospel will say there was one angel at the tomb, another will say there are two.

That's a contradiction. And gee, we just can't trust the New Testament documents. Well. This isn't true that divergent details make a text untrustworthy. They actually make it more trustworthy that they're eyewitness accounts. That they certainly didn't get together and iron out all these details. In fact, two independent eyewitnesses rarely see all the same details, and they never describe an event in the same words.

They'll record the same major event. For example, hey, we all, you know, Jesus rose from the dead. They may differ on details like how many angels were there at the tomb or who got to the tomb first, that kind of thing. In fact, when you think about this, if a judge hears two witnesses

giving the same word-for-word testimony about a particular event, what does that judge rightly suspect? Collusion. You got together to iron out the details beforehand to make sure your stories agree.

And of course, our friend J. Warner Wallace, the cold case homicide detective, says this is always the case with eyewitness details. They agree on the major event. Look, I saw that guy shoot him. Was he wearing an orange jacket or a red jacket or that kind? Was it four shots or three? You know, I mean, people disagree on the details. They agree on the major event. Now, if they were inventing this, they would get together and iron out all the details.

They didn't do that. They leave these incongruities in, and every difference is not a contradiction. For example, for Matthew to say that there was one angel at the tomb and John mentioning two is not a contradiction. Why? Because if there was two, there certainly was one. Matthew doesn't say there was only one angel at the tomb. He simply mentions one. Maybe at a different time there were two and there was one to begin with and then two, or he just mentions one, or maybe one was more prominent.

You don't know. You just can't say that because one says there was one and another says there were two, that's a contradiction. That may be a difference, but not necessarily a contradiction. And the point here is, is that this happens all the time in real life. I mean, it happened with the Charlie Kirk murder. Brian Harpole and I disagree over certain things on details, not on essential issues.

And on details that have nothing to do really to do with the shooting, and I've covered this before, so I'm not going to go into the details here. But we all agree Charlie was shot in the neck. People may disagree. Was there a drone up there or not? How much CPR did we do? What, what, you know? We all saw what happened. We all agree on that. The same thing is true with the Titanic. When the Titanic went down, do you realize that different eyewitnesses disagreed over how it sank?

Some said it broke in two. Others said it went down whole. Now, why might they disagree? Well, there's several reasons. Number one, they were in shock. Number two, it was dark. Number three, they may have had different angles on the ship. You know, if you're a beam of the ship and the ship did break in two, you could see it. If you're on the stern or the bow, you probably couldn't see it, right? Based on their vantage point. Now we learned later through underwater archaeology, the Titanic did sink because it's found in two different locations, the bow and the stern, and they're several hundred yards apart.

So it did break in two, but you can explain why different eyewitnesses may have disagreed with, on that point. But what do they all agree on? The Titanic sank. Are you going to say that you can't say the Titanic sank because eyewitnesses disagree over how it sank? No. Are you going to say that Jesus didn't rise from the dead because different accounts of it say that different people got to the tomb at different times, or there were two angels versus one.

No, that's not going to affect the main point, which is Jesus really rose from the dead. And here's another issue that we unpack a little bit in *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*. There's a difference between discovering or establishing historicity and establishing inerrancy. I, of course, believe the Bible's inerrant because Jesus did.

But you don't have to believe the Bible's inerrant to know that God exists and Jesus rose from the dead and the essentials of Christianity are true. I think you're disagreeing with Jesus when you, when you say it's not inerrant and that's never a good place to be because if Jesus is God and He's risen from the dead to prove it, you should agree with Him. But for skeptics to come along and say, "Well, I found this so-called contradiction," even if they were correct about it, it wouldn't defeat what we call mere Christianity.

Christianity would still be true, even if you find a error in a detail or two. Now it wouldn't be true if Jesus hadn't risen from the dead, but peripheral details that have no impact on theology, no impact on the events that occurred, are not going to defeat Christianity. So, what, when you're talking to somebody about this, you don't have to establish that every word in the Bible is inerrant for them to become a Christian, once they become a Christian, and they realize that Jesus thought the Bible was inerrant, then you can convince them it is inerrant, and you can deal with these issues on a case-by-case basis.

Most of them you can answer, most of them you can harmonize, and the ones you might not be able to, you go, "Well, I haven't figured it out yet, but I'll keep looking." And we cover some of that in the book, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* as well. Friends, if you go to voteyourfaith.net, you will also see a 21-day prayer guide there for free. I contributed to it, but so did many of the guests that I've had on this program, like Eric Metaxas and Josh Howerton and Tim Barton and Nick Freitas.

They're all part of this prayer guide that you can download for free. It's just a couple of pages a day. You can pray for our country. You can pray that God's will would be done and that people would vote biblically and that prayer guide will help you do so. It'll also show you some history about our nation and some biblical passages that pertain to voting and good government.

So check it out. Pray for our nation. The 21-day prayer guide right there at voteyourfaith.net. It's also if you go to crossexamined.org, there'll be a little screen that'll pop up. You can get it there for free. You don't have to give anyone's email address. You can just download it as a PDF. All right, let's go back to the program. All right, number seven. The New Testament accounts, the number seven in why we believe the New Testament writers are telling the truth.

The New Testament accounts inadvertently confirm independent eyewitness testimony. This again was not in the original edition. I didn't know about it. This is something called undesigned coincidences. Where one text inadvertently confirms another text when they couldn't have colluded together. In other words, showing that both of the writers have written down eyewitness details.

This is called undesigned coincidences, and maybe the definition would be to say, there are several places in the Bible where details in one writer's account inadvertently fill in the gaps of another writer's account revealing that they saw the same event. Let me just give you a few of these, just very quickly. They're very minor details that you know aren't essential to the story here, but they confirm that both writers must have had eyewitness access to the story.

Like, for example, the feeding of the 5,000. John records that Jesus asks Philip in John chapter 6, "Where are we going to buy bread so that these people may eat?" Now you might ask yourself the question, "Why is Jesus asking Philip? He's not even one of the leaders. Why is he asking him where to get money and food," in John? Well, you know where you get the solution from.

You get the solution from reading Luke, because Luke and only Luke writes that Bethsaida was where the location of the feeding of the 5,000 took place, and John mentions in another place in his gospel that Philip was from Bethsaida of Galilee. So why is Jesus asking Philip? You don't know by just reading John, but you go over to Luke and you see that the feeding of the 5,000 was in Bethsaida, and you go back over to John and you see that Philip is from Bethsaida.

Jesus is asking Philip because this is Philip's hometown, but you don't get that just from John. You got to look at Luke. How about Pilate and Jesus? This is another interesting undesigned coincidence, because Luke records that the Jews were bringing accusations against Jesus to Pilate, and Luke says that the Jews said we found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar.

And saying that he himself is Christ the King, and Pilate asked Jesus, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' And Jesus answered them, 'You have said so.' Then Pilate said to the chief priests in the

crowd, 'I find no guilt in this man.'" And you're thinking, "Wait a minute, Luke, it seems like Jesus just, just admitted the charge that he's the King of the Jews. Why does Pilate say "you're innocent?" Well, you gotta now go over to John because John records more of the conversation.

And this is where Jesus says, "My kingdom is not of this world." And that's when Pilate said, "Well, I find no guilt in him," because in John's account, he adds that phrase, "that my kingdom is not of this world." So Pilate must have said, "Okay, well, he's no threat to me. He's not trying to overthrow me here. So I find no fault in this man.

This is more of a theological issue, Jews. You got to take care of this." So, you don't get this from one gospel. You get them by combining the gospels, which is showing us that they're dealing with the same event. They just have different details in their event, or in their accounts, I should say. And so you have several of these in the Bible.

There's like 60 or so of these. We don't have them all in the book, but we list, there's about 60 of these undesigned coincidences. There's even some between the Bible and sources outside the Bible, like Josephus. Cause Matthew records going to Matthew, I think it's Matthew chapter 2. Yeah, Matthew chapter 2.

Matthew records that after Jesus was taken as a boy to Egypt, that Herod had died, and Joseph has a dream that he can bring the boy now back into the promised land, because the guy that suicidally, or the guy that the homo- easy for me to say, the homicidal maniac that Herod the Great was and killing all the babies.

That guy has now died, so Joseph figures, "Well, it's safe now. I can go back home." But here is what Matthew says: quote, "But when Joseph heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, and he went on and lived in a city called Nazareth." That's Matthew chapter 2 verse 22 to 23.

Now, it doesn't explain. Matthew doesn't explain why Archelaus is to be feared. You know who does explain? Josephus. When you read Josephus, you discover that Archelaus put down a disturbance at the temple in 4 B.C., I guess in order to show people who was boss since his dad had just died.

Now he's in charge of a certain area of the Promised Land, including Jerusalem. And what Archelaus did is he sent troops in and slaughtered 3,000 Jews in and around the temple. The

event was so horrific that Passover was canceled that year. And so you might see why now Joseph was afraid to go to that area.

So he goes way up north to Galilee where Archelaus doesn't rule. So here's a situation where something in the Bible is corroborated by something outside the Bible, Josephus. It's an undesigned coincidence. Obviously, Matthew couldn't control what Josephus said, and Josephus couldn't control what Matthew said. They probably didn't know one another, but they're just recording history.

And when you read both of those together, you get a clearer picture of actually what went on. And so, undesigned coincidences are another reason to believe. That the New Testament writers told the truth. The eighth reason we know the New Testament writers told the truth is because the New Testament writers challenge their readers to check out verifiable facts, even facts about miracles.

Let me just give you one of these. There's more in the book, but Paul makes a claim in Corinthians that he wouldn't have made unless he was really telling the truth. In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul declares that he previously performed miracles for them. When he says this, this is 2 Corinthians 12:12.

He says, "I persevered in demonstrating among you the marks of a true apostle, including signs, wonders, and miracles." Now here's the question: Why would Paul write this to the Corinthian church unless he had really done miracles for them? I mean, it would have destroyed his credibility completely by asking them to remember miracles that he never did for them. The only plausible conclusion is that number one, Paul really was an apostle of God.

Two, he therefore really had the ability to confirm his apostleship by performing miracles. And three, he had displayed this ability quite openly to the Corinthians. That's why he could write them and say that when I was there, I demonstrated I was an apostle by doing miracles. And there are several other examples of this. In fact, when Paul says that there are 500 people that saw the resurrected Christ, this is in the creed, 1 Corinthians 15, verses 3 to 8.

He's essentially saying, "If you don't believe me, you can check, you can you can check with them." If he's going to say there were 500 witnesses, some of them he says "are still alive," And that did not happen, Paul's going to lose all credibility. So when he writes to the church at Corinth, those people could check with the witnesses of the resurrection to verify what Paul said is true.

If none of those people were in Corinth or that event never happened, Paul would have lost all credibility. So this is not an invented storyline. In other words, you could test these people at that time about whether or not they're telling the truth about miracles. All right, number nine, the ninth reason we know the New Testament writers are telling the truth, is that the New Testament writers describe miracles like other historical events with simple, unembellished accounts.

I mean, when you read the New Testament documents, they kind of read like newspaper stories, you know, like we got there, the tomb was empty, right And we were scared and we didn't know what to do, and one person saw Jesus and Jesus said don't cling to me. It was Mary who clung to him and I mean if you read an account like the Gospel of Peter, which is a embellished account a forgery that wasn't written by Peter was written by somebody else 100 years later, after Peter was dead When you read that account, which we have in the book, it's like a cross actually talks, and a cross reaches up to the heaven.

I mean, it's obviously embellished. It's not a sort of simple, unadulterated account of what happened. And the resurrection, as we all know, is the central event in Christianity, because Paul wrote. If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile. You're still in your sins. If the resurrection were a made-up story designed to convince skeptics, then the New Testament writers certainly would have made their accounts longer with more detail, and they probably would have said they witnessed Jesus rising from the dead physically.

They don't even say that. They don't say we were there and we saw him rise from the dead. They're hiding. Okay, and nobody sees him rise from the dead. They just see him risen. So they write to the disciples going to the tomb after he's risen. They don't have all these verbose descriptions or cartoonish talking crosses reaching up to heaven. Matthew, Mark, and Luke don't even say anything about the dramatic theological implications of the resurrection.

They don't say because Jesus has risen from the dead, you can have life too. They don't say that. And John reports that in just one sentence, John 20:31. None of them, other, John makes it in one sentence. Matthew, Mark, and Luke don't say anything about the theological aspects. They're very theologically restrained. And here's what we write in the new edition of *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*.

"This point about the theological restraint of the gospel writers deserves amplification. It indicates that the gospel writers were convinced," or sorry, "the gospel writers were concerned about getting the history correct, not inventing a new kind of theology. N.T. Wright makes the

astute observation that quote, 'Neither going to heaven when you die, life after death, eternal life, nor even the resurrection of all Christ's people is so much as mentioned in the four resurrection stories.' If Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John wanted to tell stories whose import was 'Jesus has risen, therefore you will be too,' they have done a remarkably bad job of it." Now this is almost shocking when you think about it.

I mean, if you go to most evangelical church services, the constant emphasis is "Come to Jesus to get saved," which is important, right? And that is certainly taught in the whole of the New Testament, but it's hardly mentioned in the Gospels. Why? Because the gospel writers' main goal was to record what Jesus said and did. Their work was more about history than theology. Now, of course, the New Testament history has dramatic implications for theology, but those implications are drawn out in other New Testament writings, namely the epistles or the letters.

It would have been easy for the gospel writers to interject theological implications of every historical event, but they didn't. They were eyewitnesses who were writing history, not fiction writers or proselytizing theologians. Unquote. That's from *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*, the New Edition. That's kind of shocking when you think about it. Now, obviously, in the Gospels, Jesus does say, "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many." And of course, John does say that, you know, he gives the gospel, but he doesn't.

It's not amplified like it is in the epistles. The gospels are historical accounts of what happened. They don't spend hardly any time developing the theological implications of those happenings. And you would think if this was a if this was a bunch of propaganda documents, they would do all that. They don't do it. Finally, number 10.

The tenth reason we know the New Testament writers told the truth is they abandoned their long-held sacred beliefs and practices. They adopted new beliefs and practices, and they did not deny their testimony under persecution or the threat of death. Now it's really important to remember something because so many people think, "Well, I can't trust the New Testament documents because they were written by Christians." All right, let me let me point out that none of the New Testament documents were written by Christians.

At least they didn't start as Christians. They were all Jews. They became Christians because they witnessed an event, or knew people that had, the resurrection. Now, if they're Jews, why would they invent the resurrected Jesus? First of all, they didn't think someone could claim to be God.

That was blasphemy. And they didn't think one guy would rise from the dead in the middle of time.

They knew we'd all rise from the dead at the end of time because Isaiah and Daniel talk about this, but they didn't think one guy would rise from the dead at the at the in the middle of time and be the Messiah for everyone like this. But what do they wind up doing? They wind up saying a man did claim to be God and did rise from the dead and is the Messiah, and he's not overthrowing the Jews.

He's going to be hung on a tree and he's going to come back later. And you go, why would they do this? Because he rose from the dead. And these Jews get rid of so many of their pre-resurrection beliefs. Animal sacrifice, Jesus fulfills that. Binding law of Moses, no, Jesus fulfilled that. Strict monotheism, no.

The Trinity, three persons in one divine essence. The Sabbath, no, we're going to worship on Sunday and you don't have to obey any Sabbath or festival day, says Paul. Conquering Messiah, no, no, no. Sacrificial Messiah, he'll come and conquer later. Circumcision, no, no, no, no baptism and communion. Why would they do this? Why would they just abandon these practices that they had held for hundreds, if not over a thousand years?

Why would they do this unless Jesus really rose from the dead? By the way, one other thing, let's go back to embarrassing testimony for just a second. Do you think anyone inventing a religion, like Judaism. Like if somebody was inventing Judaism, do you think that person would say that circumcision is the price of admission?

Hey, what do I got to do to join your group? What? No, no, count me out. Who's going to invent this? Anyway, the point here is, is that these Jews had no motive to invent a resurrected Jesus. They didn't think anyone could claim to be God. They didn't think one guy would rise from the dead. They had no motive to abandon all the practices which made them God's chosen people for these new practices, especially under the threat of persecution and death.

There's no reason to invent this, and yet they said it happened anyway. Why would they do this? And why would they go then to their deaths? Now, I think it's been overstated by some. They say, you know, 11 out of the 12 died martyrs' deaths. That might be true, but you can't prove all that. Doctor Sean McDowell did his doctoral dissertation on this, and we updated *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* to reflect this.

And Sean points out that we have really good evidence for certainly four martyrs: Peter, Paul, James, the half-brother of Jesus, and James the apostle. And then we have lesser evidence, but pretty good evidence for I think Andrew and Thomas, and then lesser evidence for other people. What we do have, however, is no one is ever recorded as having recanted their beliefs.

So I think it might be overstated to say that we know that 11 out of 12 died martyrs' deaths. In fact, Sean looked into 14 people, the 12 plus James, the half-brother Jesus, and Paul, and he his conclusion was, I think three of them died natural deaths. Now, is he wrong about that? Don't know. But that's his conclusion. We'll take that, we'll take that more conservative conclusion rather than saying, "Well, they all died." No, no, we can't prove that.

We can show that many of them did, and none of them recanted when they could have easily saved themselves by saying, "Look, it never happened." So. It really seems like they are indeed telling the truth. Now, what would cause them to do this? Only something like 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 turn you around immediately, just like that. Some impact events are so dramatic that although you might not remember what you had for breakfast this morning, you'll remember an impact event that happened 5, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60 years ago if you're old enough. You got to be pretty old to answer this question. If you can remember where you were and what you were doing, November 22nd, 1963, think about that.

I can remember it. I was two years old and two days. I saw my mother crying in front of a black and white TV. She's sitting on an ottoman, crying uncontrollably. President Kennedy had been assassinated that day. I can still see my mother right now in my mind when she was, she was 26 years old. She's 88 today, but I can see her in my mind crying on that ottoman.

Impact event. Emotional impact event. I don't remember anything before that. That's my earliest memory, and very little after that. Where were you when the second plane hit the tower? If you're old enough, you can remember. Where were you when Trump was shot? Regardless of what you think about Trump, it was an impact event. I was outside in my backyard.

My mother called me. Trump's been shot. I said, "Is he okay?" She said, "Well, he's standing up." Okay, I guess that's a good sign, right? Where were you when Charlie Kirk was murdered? When

you heard that? As you know, I was 25 feet from him. Do you think I'm ever going to forget that? I couldn't forget it if I wanted to forget it.

Still, to this day, the first person I think of when I wake up in the morning is Charlie. The last person I think of when I fall asleep is Charlie. Why? Impact event. Emotional. People call it PTSD. It's not a disorder. It's normal. It's what you should experience when you see someone you love murdered in front of you.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, do you think a resurrection would have been an impact event? Do you think if he really did walk out of that tomb, 1,993 years ago, that they would have remembered that? Not only would they have remembered it, they couldn't forget it. I don't care how much later they wrote this down. It turns out not very much longer, but even if decades passed.

There's no way they could have forgotten it. Impact event. That's why you can explain, or how you could explain, all these Jewish writers and Jewish apostles or Jews who became apostles sacrificing everything because they witnessed an impact event.

And what does this mean, ladies and gentlemen? It means that your life has meaning. When you go through these 10 reasons we know the New Testament writers told the truth, you can conclude that Christianity is indeed true, and your life actually does have meaning. And although everyone you love will die, and everything you build will crumble, and everything you say will be forgotten, and everything you do will come to nothing, and you and your identity will die and vanish.

In an atheistic world, none of those things are true. In a resurrection world, yeah, we'll die, but we'll be resurrected. Yeah, things we build will crumble, but they still will have ultimate meaning because what we do here matters, and everything we say won't be forgotten. Everything will be remembered for good or for bad.

And everything you do will matter to some degree. It's going to impact people in some regard. And your identity is not going to die and vanish. You're going to be absent from the body, present with the Lord, and at the final resurrection, when we all get our resurrection bodies, if we've trusted in Christ, we will then live forever. You're also going to live forever if you don't believe any of this.

You're just going to be separated from God in the place called Hell. God's not going to force you into heaven against your will. So the evidence is there, ladies and gentlemen. And if you're not a Christian and considering it, ask yourself this question: If Christianity really were true, would you become a Christian? If you hesitate or the answer is no, none of this evidence really matters to you.

It's not evidence you need. You don't want it to be true. Why wouldn't you want it to be true? It's the greatest news ever. Well, it's up to you whether you're going to accept that. The Holy Spirit's asking you, coming to you. Scriptures say that His Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, but you can grieve the Holy Spirit.

Don't grieve the Holy Spirit forever, because one day you're going to draw your last breath. Then what? See you next time.