

# Why I Choose to Believe the Bible

by Voddie Baucham

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*Voddie Baucham emphasizes the reliability and divine authority of the Bible through historical evidence and personal testimony.*

**Duration:** 25:00

**Scripture:** Psalm 22:1

**Topics:** "Truth"

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## Description

In this sermon, Vody Bakum emphasizes the importance of being ready to defend the hope within us. He highlights the reliability of the Bible as a collection of historical documents, written by eyewitnesses during the lifetime of other eyewitnesses. Bakum emphasizes the significance of personal testimony and the power of firsthand accounts in sharing the truth of the Gospel. He also shares a personal anecdote about a man who helped him connect the dots of the Gospel by starting with the Bible.

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## Transcript

Hello and welcome Superfaith and Family with Dr. Richard Layne. I'm Harold Harper. And today we want to welcome back to the program, Voti Bakum.

Voti has become one of the most sought-after Bible teachers in America, and his energy and passion always inspires his audiences. So I know you're not going to want to miss today's broadcast. He's going to share with us the importance of evangelism.

Not only that, he's going to help us become more effective at sharing our faith. Voti was led to the Lord by a college friend, and at the time he knew nothing about Jesus or the Bible. So I guess you could say he has some first-hand experience.

Let's listen in as he speaks to the Southern Baptist of Texas Evangelism Conference. You heard earlier that I came to Christ my freshman year in college. That was actually the first time that I'd ever heard the gospel because my mother, who raised me as a single teenage mother in Los Angeles, California, was a practicing Buddhist, and so Buddhism was the only faith that I knew growing up.

And it wasn't until I got to college that I was actually introduced to Christianity. And so because of that, I have a different perspective than most on the Christian faith. I want to share with you tonight what it is that brought me to that place where I was able to see and to hear and to understand and place my faith in the

Lord Jesus Christ.

How it is that he opened my eyes, brought me from darkness into his marvelous light. And it just happened to be very intellectual. That's the way I'm wired, that's the way I was put together, and I'm grateful that God put a man into my life who, when he started his presentation, you know, he had one of these presentations that he had been taught, I believe it was EE, Evangelism Explosion back then.

He started this presentation and came to realize that, you know, he was trying to help me connect the dots as it relates to the gospel, but I didn't really have enough dots for him to help me connect. So he backed up from his planned presentation and he said, This is the Bible. And that's where we started.

And he came back every day for about three and a half weeks. Every day answering questions. Questions that I had that he could answer, he would answer on the spot.

If he couldn't answer them on the spot, he would go get information and come back later. But after about the first week, he had taught me how to go and find answers myself to these questions. Because, folks, it is not a crime to investigate Christianity.

And we've got to stop treating people who want to investigate Christianity like somehow they are less than. God never called us to a blind faith. If that was the case, he would not have gone through the trouble of providing and preserving and protecting for us his self-revelation in the Bible.

And so I just want to answer that question for you. Open your Bibles with me to the book of 2 Peter. 2 Peter chapter 1. And I just want to tell you why I choose to believe the Bible.

Certainly not because I was raised that way and I wasn't. And by the way, would you please promise me that if somebody asks you why you choose to believe the Bible, you will never ever in your life give that as your answer. Why do you believe the Bible? Well, as high as raised.

Don't do that. Please, just please, don't do that. I mean, if you feel like that, just kind of hold it under your breath.

Don't announce it to other people. Amen. Can we at least go that far? Well, there's another one.

Because we live in this age where experience is king. Because we've sort of been kind of inundated with postmodernism. We believe that experience is king.

So the most powerful thing that we can say to people about why it is that we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and why we believe what the Bible says about Jesus, is because we've tried it and it works for us. And so with boldness we stick out our chest and they say, you're telling me about this Jesus and you get that information from your Bible, but why is it that you believe the Bible? And we stick our chest out and we say, because I tried it and it works for me. Hold on.

Is that your final answer? Because if it is, you've got a small problem. Actually, it's a large problem. Because if that's your answer, what you just did was you opened a logical hole big enough to drive a Mack truck through.

Because if you choose to believe the Bible because you tried it and it works for you, then what do you say to the individual who went to a 12-step program? They told him, I believe on his third step, that he had to have a higher power. Couldn't think of anything, so he looks outside his window, there's a squirrel who

visits faithfully every day. He decides that that squirrel outside of his window will be his higher power.

He hasn't had a drink in the last five years. He tried it and it worked for him. Or how about the Mormon that lives better than most of the members of our churches? Can't say amen, you ought to say ouch.

They tried the Book of Mormon and it worked for them. Is that our answer? No, I'm not saying that that's unimportant. It's very important.

But the Bible's not true because it works for us. It works for us because it's true. So we don't start with our experience here.

There is something far beyond that. Experience can lie to you and can deceive you. And so I just want to pose another answer to you.

It's an answer that I derived from this passage of Scripture. And I'll show you how it is that I derived it from this passage of Scripture. But I just want to give it to you first as we get started.

Because it's a reliable collection of historical documents written down by eyewitnesses during the lifetime of other eyewitnesses. They report to us supernatural events that took place in fulfillment of specific prophecies and claim to be divine rather than human in origin. Let's look at the text.

2 Peter chapter 1 beginning at verse 16. For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. But we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to him by the majestic glory. This is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased. And we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with him on the holy mountain.

So we have the prophetic word made more sure to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. But know this first of all. That no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation.

For no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will. But men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. Seems like he's answering a question, doesn't it? Like someone has some kind of objection to what it is they were proclaiming.

And he is responding as to the nature of the authority of their proclamation. That he is defending the accuracy, the authority and the historicity of the teaching of the apostles that we now know as the New Testament. Which has its root and foundation in the Old Testament scriptures.

He is defending a belief in the Bible. So what's his argument? I'm glad you asked. First of all, that it's a reliable collection of historical documents.

Look at what he says. For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. When we told you about Jesus, we did not share with you myths or fairy tales or legends.

This was not the Gilgamesh epic that we were sharing with you. We were sharing factual information with you. Not only that, it's a reliable collection of historical documents written down by eyewitnesses during the lifetime of other eyewitnesses.

Look what he says next. But we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. We saw it.

We were there. By the way, turn with me to the right, if you will. The book of 1 John.

That's close enough. Look what we see in 1 John. Those first few verses, I'm not sure.

I think there's a point of emphasis here. Maybe you can help me figure it out. Verse 1. What was from the beginning what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands concerning the word of life? I don't know.

Maybe he's getting at something. Maybe not. Maybe verse 2 will help us.

And the life was manifested and we have seen and testified and proclaimed to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us. It's building. Maybe verse 3 will shed the ultimate light.

What we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also. We were eyewitnesses. And there's something about eyewitness accounts.

You know, I brought my son with me. And I can remember my son, you know, trying to train my son when he was smaller and trying to teach him to do what he's told and also trying to teach him to tell the truth. Boy, getting little kids to tell the truth.

Woo! Those people who believe, you know, that we're, you know, basically good, they don't have kids. I remember one day with my son. Son, I'm trying to teach him not to touch the outlets, you know.

Don't touch those things. You tell him no. You spank that little hand and all that kind of stuff.

You know, just no. Okay. And he gets that.

He doesn't like that when you spank his hand. He's sitting over there one day. I've told him no.

I spanked his hand. We've gone through this twice now. Sin rose up in the boy.

Looked at me. Looked at the plug. Looked at me.

Looked at the plug. Son, did you touch that plug? No, sir. Okay, son, we're going to try that again.

And you've got a choice. Daddy can get you for touching the plug, or he can get you for touching the plug and lying about it. But before you speak, let me inform you.

I saw what you did. Son, did you touch the plug? True story. I love you.

He couldn't lie anymore because there was a witness. That's what Peter says. A reliable collection of historical documents written down by eyewitnesses and catch it during the lifetime of other eyewitnesses.

I love 1 Corinthians 15. Paul is making his argument for the resurrection of Jesus Christ after he was resurrected. He appeared to Peter, and then he appeared to the disciples, and then he appeared to 500 brethren at once.

And I love this line. Most of whom remain until now, although some have fallen asleep. That means the majority of the 500-plus eyewitnesses of the resurrection were around when 1 Corinthians was written.

Oh, I know. You've been to school. You're edumacated.

And you've heard all this. Well, actually, the Bible's been translated so many times. And what they've done during those translations is they've actually sort of, you know, done a lot of redaction in order to make the things line up.

And so what we have, actually, is not what really happened, but we have what was written by the later community. I love that. The later community.

These nameless, faceless people. There's these overzealous monks that have gone around, and they've changed things so they look like they line up. But it wasn't really written that early.

It was written much later. Really. They messed around and let me go to school, too.

Guess what I know? I know that if some overzealous monks were going to change the Bible, they would have had problems. Three problems in particular. First, they would have had a manuscript problem.

Because when we just talk about the New Testament, they would have had to locate some 6,000 manuscripts or portions of manuscripts and change all of them the exact same way, not allow their ink work to show, and then get them back where they stole them from before anybody saw them. Those 6,000 manuscripts, that's no big deal, right? How about Julius Caesar's Gallic Wars? We've got ten manuscripts. How about Aristotle's Poetics? We've got five.

How about Herodotus? We've got less than ten. New Testament, 6,000. Well, how about when they were written? Because they say these things were written so late.

Well, we've got manuscripts or portions of manuscripts that can take us back as early as A.D. 120 to 150. Oh, that's a long time after the originals. Oh, really? With Julius Caesar, it's about 900 years.

With Gallic Wars. Aristotle's Poetics, we've got about 1,300 to 1,400 years. That's the earliest thing we can put our hands on.

With Homer, about 2,100 years. The earliest thing we can put our hands on. The New Testament, within the lifetime of eyewitnesses.

So far, we've just got a good history book. It gets good now. They report to us supernatural events.

Look at what he says here. He says, Now we've got supernatural stuff happening. Not superhuman stuff.

Supernatural. We're not talking about things that, you know, are just out of the ordinary. We're talking about a withered hand growing back.

We're talking about a man who is blind. He's got nothing in his head to see with. Able to see.

We're talking about a paralytic who's never walked in his life. Being told to raise up and take his cot and walk. We're talking about one of my favorites.

Jesus saying, go to the other side of the lake and I'll meet you. Later on, on the ship, I see something like this. Hey, did Jesus say how he was coming? No, why? Because he's coming.

Or my favorite. Friday, dead. Sunday, risen.

Not just superhuman, but supernatural events. So we got a reliable collection of historical documents written down by eyewitnesses during the lifetime of other eyewitnesses. They report supernatural events.

By the way, these events took place in fulfillment of specific prophecy. Now, I know you know this, but I just want to do it anyway because I just love to do it. Turn with me in your Bibles to the left to Psalm number 22.

Now, realize if I was asking you to turn to Psalm number 22 and we were living, oh, some random time, like the first century. A.D. 30, just to pick something out of the air. And let's say A.D. 30 and we're around Jerusalem, since we're just being random here.

We're around A.D. 30, we're around Jerusalem, and let's say we're a people who like to talk about the Old Testament and I don't know, just pick a language, Aramaic. Okay. If I wanted you to turn to Psalm number 22 and we're living somewhere around A.D. 30 and we're living in Jerusalem and we refer to the Old Testament in Aramaic.

I can't tell you to open to Psalm number 22 because there were no chapters and verses until a few hundred years ago. I would have to tell you to open to the title of Psalm number 22. So, I would have to tell you to open your scroll to Elie, Elie, lada sabachthani.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? That ought to sound familiar. It's precisely what Jesus said when he was being crucified. Why on earth do you make reference to Psalm number 22 when you're being crucified? I know you know the answer, but just bear with me because I like this.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Look at verse 6. I'm a worm and not a man. A reproach of men despised by the people. All who see me sneer at me.

They separate with the lip. They wag their heads saying, commit yourself to the Lord. Let him deliver him.

Let him rescue him because he delights in him. Sound familiar? That's what's being said while Jesus is being crucified. Look at verse 12.

Many bulls are surrounded me. Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me. They open wide their mouths at me as a raving and roaring lion.

I'm poured out like water. All my bones are out of joint. Why? Because you're being crucified.

My heart is like wax. It is melted within me. Interesting.

Pierce him in the side, thrusting upwardly with a spear. Blood and water rush out as you pierce the pericardium. My strength is dried up like potsherd.

My tongue clings to my jaws. I've thirst. Dogs have surrounded me.

Gentiles. Could those be Roman soldiers? A band of evildoers has encompassed me. One on the right and one on the left.

They pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones. Why? Because your legs didn't have to be broken to hasten your death.

They look. They stare at me. They divide my garments among them.

And for my clothing, they cast lots. That was written a thousand years before Jesus was born. By a man who never once saw crucifixion in his life.

Because crucifixion had not yet been invented. And now, the juicy part. They claim their writings are divine rather than human in origin.

Look at what he says. Know this first of all. No prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation.

For no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will. But men, moved by the Holy Spirit, spoke from God. That's where people have problems.

Men wrote the Bible. I just love that. You're saying that's the Word of God.

But men wrote the Bible. But the men who wrote it claimed that they were writing the Word of God. Yeah, but it's written by men.

You can't rely on things that are written by men. Here's what I want you to do then, if you believe that. You know a college student who's studying mathematics.

And they've been taught the Pythagorean Theorem. And they got it wrong on a test. I want you to tell them to look at their professor and say, You can't mark me off on that.

Because that information came out of a book that was written by men. As a matter of fact, if that's your problem with the Bible, I want you to get rid of every book that you have. Because every one you have was penned by men.

If your argument is that information is inherently unreliable because men take pen to paper, you can never trust anything else that you ever read in life. You've got to do better than that. Well, they may try to do better than that.

And they say, well, okay. But I believe that stuff. You can prove it to me scientifically.

At this point, I need to confess something to you. There's a man who lives inside of me. His name is Bad Vody.

I try to only let him out at night, late, once a week, when nobody's around. But sometimes he escapes. And one of the times he tries to escape is when people say this about the Bible.

I believe that you can prove it to me scientifically. When that happens, I clench my fist and try to grab real tight before Bad Vody just goes off and does his thing. However, usually I fail.

I have to confess that. Please pray for me. Because he doesn't do things the way that I would like to do things.

He doesn't do things, Dr., the way you taught me to do them. Bad Vody doesn't operate like that. Bad Vody would have flunked in Dr. Fish's class.

I just have to admit that. Because he hears that and just goes off. He says, wait a minute.

Did you just say to me that you'll believe the Bible if I can prove it to you scientifically? We have serious problems here. The first problem is you stating that indicates to me that you don't even deserve to be in this conversation. However, I'm going to allow you to stay in this conversation because I'm going to enjoy this.

Because you saying that indicates two things to me. Number one, you have no clue about the authority or historicity of the Bible. And number two, you don't even know anything about the scientific method.

If you did, you would realize that in order to perform the scientific method, something has to be observable, measurable, and repeatable. News flash. Historical events are observable, measurable, and repeatable.

You can't use the scientific method to prove that George Washington was our first president. So if you actually have a problem with the Bible because you can't apply the scientific method, you've got a problem with history itself. Now that we've settled the fact that you don't deserve to be in this conversation, let's go back to the real issue at hand, which is this.

If something is written, the only way you can question it is if you don't have corroboration or there's internal inconsistency. We can't find any internal inconsistency. And we've got multiple corroboration.

We've got three languages, Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic. We've got three continents, Asia, Africa, and Europe. We have over 40 authors, most of whom never met one another because they wrote over a period of some 1,600 years.

Look in your dictionary. That would be the very definition of corroboration. So unless you have anything that would negate what we find in the Bible, you have to accept the fact, based on the evidentiary method, not the scientific method, that the Bible is a reliable collection of historical documents written down by eyewitnesses during the lifetime of other eyewitnesses.

They report to us supernatural events that took place in fulfillment of specific prophecies and claim that their writings are divine rather than human in origin. And I know that I missed verse 19, because that's where the gravy comes from. Because the gravy is, oh, by the way, I tried it, and it worked for me.

This is For Faith and Family with Dr. Richard Land. I'm Harold Harper. And today we've been listening to a message delivered by Vodhi Bakkam at a recent evangelism conference sponsored by the Southern Baptist of Texas Convention.

I know that Vodhi's message has encouraged us all to be ready to give a defense for the hope that is within us. You can find some additional information about Vodhi and his ministry, as well as the ministry of the Southern Baptist of Texas Convention, when you visit our website at [faithinfamily.com](http://faithinfamily.com). When you're there, be sure to check out our online bookstore and pick up a copy of Vodhi's book, *The Ever-Loving Truth*. All you have to do is log on to our website at [faithinfamily.com](http://faithinfamily.com). For Faith in Family, radio is produced in Nashville, Tennessee, by the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission.

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you'll join us again next time for For Faith in Family with Dr. Richard Land.

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