

# Evangelizing the Western Mindset - Part 9

by Winkie Pratney

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*Winkie Pratney explores the intersections of faith, science, and the evidence supporting Christianity, particularly through the lens of historical and philosophical arguments.*

**Duration:** 52:20

**Scripture:** Psalm 119:105, Isaiah 46:9, 2 Timothy 3:16

**Topics:** "Biblical Reliability", "Christian Apologetics"

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## Description

This sermon delves into the unique aspects of the Bible, focusing on its historical reliability, survival despite attacks, and detailed prophecies. It highlights the Bible's impact on society, literature, and individual lives, emphasizing its role in changing hearts and minds. The sermon also touches on the credibility of the Gospel of Barnabas and the objective testability of historical evidence supporting the Bible's authenticity.

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## Transcript

Three of these circles, one we call the pragmatic, one we spend a lot of time looking at various philosophies, second one experiential, we talked about the witness of the Christian church was a whole area we tried to make all these circles coincide because they all interreact to some extent. Then our third one we touched on very briefly, the cosmic basis of faith, we can look at the world around us and I'll give you these other two and then we'll come back and try and pick up on some of these others. The fourth one we have is the historical basis of faith and we'll say this again, if you want to refute Christianity you cannot do it philosophically because it is not, I mean you can bring up philosophical arguments.

The fundamental evidence of Christianity is the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the historical documents that attest to that. So two key areas here of apologetics and the ones that classical apologetics most operate on. This cosmological, remember we said there were two areas, one was natural, one was supernatural.

The cosmological of course is obviously the natural revelation, that's, you spend a lot of time in that and we're talking about literally centuries and centuries of apologetics have been developed around that. Two hundred years ago in order to go through Oxford or any one of these major universities you had to study the cosmological evidences of the hand of God in the world. I have a list of Christians who were the developers of most of the science of our time.

Many people, these are creationist scientists in the early days, many people are not aware of the Christian background of some of the men who laid the foundations of most of Western science. For instance Michael Faraday, from whom the Farad in electricity is still named. When Darwin was a backslidden 22 year old, Michael Faraday who first demonstrated the principle of electromagnetic induction, Sir William Bragg said very few men have changed the face of the world as Faraday has done.

He's one of the greatest experimental philosophers that ever appeared in this country or indeed the world. The whole world of electricity started through this guy and think what that has done today. At born the year John Wesley died, that was 1791, at 44 he was recognized as the leading man of science and honored with a doctorate by Oxford University here.

He became an elder at 50 in the chapel meeting house at Paul's Alley London, preaching there every Sunday often to fellow scientists. Near his death in 1867 he held no less than 97 unsought distinctions from international academies of science. Near the end of his death he said, my worldly faculties are slipping away day by day, happy it is for all of us that true good does not lie in them.

As they ebb may they leave us as little children trusting in the father of mercies and accepting his unspeakable gift. I bow before him who is Lord of all. The men who followed him in the construction of the electrical age which led into the electronic age were all Christians, Lord Kelvin, William Thompson, Clark Maxwell and Sir John Ambrose Fleming.

Lord Kelvin was the man who co-discovered the most widely established law today in the whole of science. It's called the second law of thermodynamics and it is this law which has been often brought up by Christians in the idea of fundamental testimony against the idea of evolution or say macroevolution meaning that through randomness and chance over a long period of time we'll move towards greater and greater order. The second law simply states in simple words that the amount of disorder in the universe always gets greater as time goes on.

That is a measure of that disorder is called entropy and entropy is sort of a term describing randomness or disorder. And the second law basically states in the corollary of it that the universe is running down not up. That things left to themselves will become more and more disorderly.

That they will not get better and better. That they will become more and more broken down. I have a physicist in Australia said I know that second law of thermodynamics is true because I have to face my desk every Monday morning.

Left to itself or left to oneself things will always get worse. They will go from the complex to the simple, from the ordered to the disordered, from the from the clean to the dirty, from the structured to the falling apart. And that is probably the most fundamental reality we know about the universe.

That's why the perpetual motion machine doesn't work. This is a master law they've called it, the master law of the universe. It's quite possible that that thing came in during the fall of man and that what we're looking at is a physical analog of a moral reality that may have taken place in the garden.

But this law simply states that if you're going to bring order into a system, for instance does this law always work? Is it true that everything always gets less and less complex? Things break down. If you take a person, say let's take you, let's leave you here for 25 years sitting at your desk, at the end of 25 years people who came in here who could wear gas masks and come in here, would discover you not as

complex as you used to be. You would, after a short time, die.

It would probably take you 40 days or less depending on how fat you were. But you would move from a complex system to a more simple system. There'd be a bit of dust and bones and a very ugly looking something left.

Your desk would not get nicer. It would get worse. That's why we buy new cars.

Things break down. Now is it possible for order to come out of disorder in this world? The answer is yes. For instance a refrigerator makes ice.

Ice is more orderly than water. It has more of a structure and a form than liquid. So how does a refrigerator make ice? Is that law defied? No it's not.

The only way you can make order in a universe where this rules is by putting in an energy source that is greater, you must waste some energy, it will come off in heat and friction or something else. You must put in power that is above or greater than the source you're trying to order, some of which will be wasted. And you must have an ordering intelligence that is at least the same order as the thing you're trying to bring into order and actually should be higher.

Now let's explain it like this. After lunch, dishes will get dirty. For those dishes to become orderly, you have to have two things.

First of all, you must put energy in. That's called washing plate energy. And then secondly, you have to be smarter than the plate in order for that order to take place.

Now it is possible for order to come into a disorderly universe if you have a higher level of intelligence and power than the system you're trying to order. In the case of the ice cube, we have a refrigerator. Electricity is put into that, some of which is wasted.

It comes off as heat and friction that wears the motor out eventually. You have to go and buy another one. So the energy is a degradable energy supply.

It takes something, you know, a bunch of liquid here, which is called water from the tap. And then by a heat exchange process, heat is thrown out until finally you get a more orderly thing. That's called an ice block.

The intelligence comes from the people who design the Kelvinator or whatever kind of refrigerator it is. The second law still operates when the machine breaks down two weeks after you buy it and you've got to take it back to Sears or wherever the place is you bought it. Now the challenge the Christian world says to the concept of evolution is that it cannot operate like that.

Their defense is that the universe is not a closed system. It is open to energy flux from outside. So that the earth is not a closed system, that the energy is coming from other places.

So you can get a little bit of order, that's the order on earth, if you get a great deal more disorder in the universe, which you can't recognize. Any problem is, is that first the energy is not the sort that can put this together. Life does not come from non-life just by running energy into it.

You understand that? It's quite simple. You believe that life can come from non-doer Frankenstein. Go down and get a chicken out of the supermarket, hook him up to a kite, fly him in the thunderstorm and see if he walks.

When they first hooked up the nerves of a frog to electrical batteries and the frog's legs kicked, they saw Eureka! That's what we're going to go for and it never really has worked. They've tried every kind of energy. They have shot long-suffering things with bullets even.

They've even fired bullets into things to try and duplicate the conditions that brought more complexity out of disorder and it just really hasn't worked. The second thing is, where is your structuring intelligence? So people have actually made challenges. They've made open challenges.

You show me, give you 5,000 bucks if you can show me a natural process that creates order without a higher order of intelligence and energy in the universe, show it to me. Matter of fact, that was a challenge made by one guy, it still stands today, I published it some years back and this was the little track that I did for last days. There's three of them here.

One of them deals with origins. It's even more complex when you get into life. When you grew up in high school, you probably taught about how they ran electrical discharges through a bunch of gases and came up with amino acids and that was probably the way that life arose.

Have you ever heard that one? You didn't? Well, you should have. You know, it was supposed to be, you see, they analyzed the soup and then they found out that there were some amino acids which are the basic building blocks of life. It was a wonderful idea and fortunately the gases they ran through on analysis of early rocks were not, they had methane here, they had ammonia, none of those gases were in any significant percentage in Earth's early atmosphere.

So it was an artificial situation. Secondly, the amino acids they had were nowhere near as complex as the mix you need to make a DNA. And thirdly, which is even more embarrassing, the amino acids of life, the ones that are made up, are a special kind of molecule.

I'm a chemist by background and I'm going to make this simple. When you make molecules, if they get any more than very simple, you can have two forms of them. They call them left-handed and right-handed molecules.

See, these hands are exactly alike except the thumb is in a different place in each one, okay? So when you make molecules, it's like that. In one place, they're chemically identical except that the molecule sticks out on this side in one and the molecule of its system thing sticks out on this side. Chemically identical, tiny physical differences.

Well, here's what they discovered. When they're looking at the structure of life, they came to a discovery which John Maddox, that's the guy's name, yeah, John Maddox, English biologist, calls this an intellectual thunderbolt. Whenever you run this kind of thing and you get them, you know, run power through gases and you get amino acids, they have what's called a racemic mixture.

It's an equal mix of right and left-handed molecules. But life consists of left-handed molecules alone. In other words, you can form two kinds of vitamin C, which is ascorbic acid, see? And you can make right-handed vitamin C and eat it and your body can't use it, it'll just pass straight through.

It's only left-handed vitamin C that, see now, how in the fact did life arise left-handed when the mix is all you get? And they have gone crazy these last 20 years trying to find some little, maybe there's some kind of catalyst that gives a tiny mix more of left-handed molecules than right-handed molecules. You know, the battle that's gone on in this is unbelievable. It's not the same simple little Mickey Mouse thing it was 40 years ago.

Now we've got to find out why in the cheese did man become left-handed? Why did plant, why are they all left-handed? That's an intellectual thunderbolt indeed. And how could that take place accidentally? The yields, they're getting exotic catalysts, platinum, things that never could have been there in the early atmosphere, they're hoping maybe we could mix a little, this one, it'll shift the yield in some tiny way, it's always less than 10%, which is really inadequate. So the fun ways they've come up with trying to answer that question is really interesting.

Our simple challenge is this. We know the universe is not a closed system, that Earth is not a closed system. We're talking about the kind of energy that is there and the intelligence question is still not answered.

How does life arise with its complexity out of something that is not as intelligent? That's a direct violation of the most fundamental law there is. Now you might like to look up a little bit more on this thing and that's why I put some quotes here. Didn't scientists make life in a test tube somewhere? No Virginia, they did not.

Life is a lot heavier then. There's four or five new possibilities and this whole field keeps shifting all the time. Sidney Fox had a thing called microspheres.

Perhaps he thought volcanoes did it. If you cook a dry mix of L-amino acids and you get a thermal polymer or a protenoid, you drop these amino acid chains into water and they clump into little groups he called microspheres. Since these little spheres look and act physically in many ways like living things, Mr. Fox believed this is the way it happened.

Maybe volcanoes did this. Top marks for ingenuity but protenoids resemble life like a junkyard resembles a Ferrari. They grow like a wet toilet roll, not like an orange.

Their growth is like a crystal and not like a living thing at all. Real life proteins are unique because of their structure and information carrying sequence. Protenoid is not a protein.

The name looks the same to confuse the innocent but it's not the same thing. They lack tertiary form. Their structural mix of amino acids is hopelessly different.

They're essentially random, too fragile and too simple. Other than superficial physical similarities, they have nothing complex enough going for them inside or out to ever grow up to be a real protein. So there's a lot of these other... You have to take the tracks and read them for yourself, I think.

One of the fundamental arguments that Christians use today, that whole field was first discovered by a man who himself was a Christian. He died in 1907. He invented things like the submarine cable, the absolute temperature scale, still bears his name, the Kelvin, not Calvin, but not that one, he was the one who burnt people at the stake a long time ago, this one.

And he also invented the ship's, revolutionary ship's compass, 69 other patents. He died with over 600 published scientific papers, 70 patent inventions and 21 honorary degrees. Elected unanimously at 22 as Glasgow University's youngest professor, he opened every lecture with prayer.

He often insisted the power to analyze, look for causes would sell for creation of God. He never ceased to look for causes, causes of causes and for causes of these in return. Seeking a cause for the escape of heat from the earth, he became in the end a founder of geophysics and a joint discoverer of the second law of thermodynamics and so on.

John Ambrose Fleming, the other man I mentioned to you, inventor of the vacuum tube, which is the precursor of the transistor and then to the integrated circuit and then to the computer. He was 11 when Darwin published *The Origin of the Species* and a great spiritual awakening in his year. Many people in his father's church, becoming Christians, he got saved in many, many times.

He was a tremendous lecturer, a few other men could equal his skill in completely enthralling an audience. A brilliant speaker, getting popular scientific lectures across to non-scientific audiences. Copies of his published works kept in university college for five volumes and an outspoken opponent of Darwin's theory in his time.

The thing that has put a real nail in Darwin's coffin has been, which is why they keep shifting things around in this whole question of the cosmological, has to do with the reason why Darwin's theory got off the ground so well in the start. It went like this. If time and chance and matter came up with man and the universe, that was the thing you mentioned with the infinite size thing.

Darwin's theory worked because people thought, well, you know, you've got to give it time. Maybe millions of years brought about this thing. If you gave it enough time, it would do it.

And the simple fact is, the reason why it was not testable in those days is because nobody could wait around millions of years to see if it worked out. You could say maybe millions of years had brought it the way it was now, but how can you replay that thing? So it was safe for about a hundred years. Until these guys, Christians, started developing things like electricity and then vacuum tubes and then the computer.

And when you got the computer, you got to something that could shrink time, that could actually take millions of years and billions of random variations. And the faster you ran them, the quicker time could shrink. And now you could take something which would have taken an impossible length of time to test and run it in a program that ran a week or less.

And with the new ones, you can run them in seconds. You can check the thing. And that is the embarrassing part.

I'll put this here. Some of us forget how long ago Darwin lived. He was born the same year as Abraham Lincoln, 1809, nine years after Volta reinvented the electric battery.

It really would have blown the circuits to see a Cray-1 or an S1 Mark 2A multiprocessor with the capability of eight billion operations a second. Great salvation in his days. Nobody lived long enough to disprove it.

It went like this. Just because you saw it working today didn't mean it didn't. You haven't looked long enough.

You haven't given it enough time. And anything can happen given enough time, and it probably did. And then in the last 15 years, they ran the equations.

They started running them to see if, take all of the stuff that's available, all the facts we know about chance things, about protein molecules, about DNA, put them in together, put them in the time factors, reduce them to a series of equations and run them. Now what you should have seen if Darwin's theory worked out is that in emergence of order within those things, that the shrinking time thing, you should have seen patterns come out. Much as John Cage trying to paint his paintings, much as Cage with the music and Pollock with the paintings.

You should have been able to see it mathematically. Unfortunately, without exception, the patterns have simply turned into chaos. Randomness, chance, chaos.

Put simply, it doesn't work. You start with that, it does not give you order. It just doesn't.

It plain doesn't. Because of that, great rethinking has had to go on in biology. Now we have the idea of that maybe there wasn't a slow change in between things.

Maybe just, boop, they jumped. There was a, a-boom, there was a human being, and maybe there wasn't anything in between. That bats jumped into dinosaurs, and chickens jumped into, it's called punctuated equilibrium.

Boop. That's a real leap of faith, that one. And the other thought, and here's Carl Sagan and his friends, given enough time, it goes like this.

Well, maybe there was intelligence here that designed earth. But it couldn't have been God, because we don't believe in that, that's not in. It was probably E.T., you know? Maybe somebody did design us, we're a genetic experiment, you know? Somebody put the planet together, designed it, yes, there is design there.

Not God, just a spaceman. Now what you've done is moved the question of origins to a galaxy long, long ago and far, far away. You haven't asked the obvious question, where did E.T. come from? Who made him? You just changed the face.

But Sagan's search for extraterrestrial intelligence is based on a very real need, and it goes like this. If there's nobody up there that's smarter than us, then we can't explain it. So you come up with a spaceman.

Now it doesn't surprise me when people say, Jesus is a spaceman, or we probably, you know, what else have you got? If you're thinking at all, Guyana Commodore 64 could put a hole in most of the Darwinist theory. So anyway, interesting shouting matches developed in the last 15 years between the cyberneticists, who are the computer people, and the old Darwinists. Now the man scrambles to find some new exotic catalyst or concept to account for the disappointing fact.

But leave a system to itself and all you have the end of a long time is a bigger mess than what you started with. That is the problem. And that's one of them.

By the way, this again is Mickey Mouse, Mickey Mouse, very Mickey Mouse. But it will do for the time being. You want to get into it, there's a lot of neat books and stuff, and I've given you little summaries of things here, and I want you to do some time on it.

Okay, let's throw this history one in. I've talked about briefly Christian testimony, which is part of that witness thing. Now we come back to two key areas.

These involve history, and they're testable by history. One has to do with the Bible, and the second one has to do with Christ, and intimately connected with Christ is the resurrection. And it is, these are your hard apologetics, all right, it is in this area that is an awful lot written.

In other words, can we trust the Bible? That is a prime source document. If this is a record of Christ, see the whole center of this thing is Jesus himself. Who is Jesus? Christianity stands or falls on this thing.

Is Jesus a real person? Fairly obvious that he was, simply the fact, in the Western world at least, that most coins have a date on them, and somebody split history in half, and it wasn't Buddha. If he is who we claim to be, did he die? Muslims say he couldn't have possibly died on the cross. He must have gone up to heaven, but he couldn't have died, because that would have meant that what he said might be true, which would be embarrassing.

He's not supposed to be the Messiah, even though in the Muslim Bible he is called the Messiah, Jesus the Christ, which means Messiah. So Ahmed, Didav and others have had to say, well, he didn't really die, he may have swooned on the cross and taken back and was packed in a couple of hundred pounds of spices, and Mary came in and massaged him back to life. He was luckily not buried in a grave, but in a nice airy tomb where he could recover from his terrible spell on the cross, and that this reason why he got up and said, touch me not, is because he was hurting.

And that what you have to do really, is to see that this being who just barely survived crucifixion inspired these men to lay down their lives, because they realized that he hadn't actually died after all. This is incredible, it's harder to believe than the resurrection, that a guy who staggered out of a tomb, how did he survive all those hundred and something pounds of spice on him by the way? And it's interesting, the head piece in the Bible was unwound and in a separate place, but the rest was like a glove with a hand pulled out of it. And it's like, what was left was the cocoon, like when a moth comes out.

And I think the head piece was put in a separate place just in case people thought the Shroud of Turin might be his resting place, because that's a unit, and the other thing's over there. And I always wondered, why in the world did he take the head piece and stick it in a separate place, and that was over there, and maybe because he thought, somebody's going to come along and try and prove this. There are your three tests.

First, let's look at the Bible, we've got about ten minutes or so, I have a little sheet called Mistakes in the Bible, that briefly I can give to you some of the, Mistakes in the Bible, I called it Mistakes in the Bible because it was called, the Bible is true, the people I wanted to read it would not read it. As a matter of fact, we had a debate one time between a group of Christians and a group of, I don't know, rationalists or something, and it was a public debate, and one of the rationalists made a point that the Bible is full of mistakes, and the Christian on the other side said, okay, what particular mistakes were you thinking about? And the guy said, well, yeah, I can't think of any at the moment, but there's all kinds of them. And the guy said, well, you can't think of any? Somebody passed this rationalist, my little sheet, and he said, thank you, and he started reading it out aloud.

The Bible is full of mistakes, he said, the first mistake was when Eve doubted the Word of God. The second mistake happened when her husband did too, oh shoot. Mistake after mistake is still being made

because people insist on doubting God's Word.

The Scriptures is your first line of defense in apologetics. Basically, you have to ask yourself this question, is this trustworthy? And these are historical documents. They can be subjected to the same test as any other historical document.

Now let me give you a quick breakdown. This is the kind of stuff Josh McDowell would use in a literary class. You can go in and see the unique things about the Bible without getting religious at all.

Just show them it's a totally incredible book. As a matter of fact, Josh McDowell and a friend of his had one of the guys from the Great Books of the Western World series, you know, it's put out by Encyclopedia Britannica. I think 400 volumes all the way from the Homer's Iliad and the Odyssey and that, all the way through to modern writers.

And he was selling them the great books. And he took half an hour to tell them the glories of the great books and they took another half an hour to tell them about the great book and they challenged him. You find another book written like this book anywhere in the history of the world and the guy became a Christian.

By the time we get finished with this, we'll see that there are elements to it that could only be described. How are we doing? Okay. What I want to do is show you some unique things about the Bible that are not true about any other religious or irreligious book in the world.

And we've got here, for instance, the Bible was written over a period of 1,600 years or 60 generations. It has 40 plus authors, over 2,000 times in the scripture we have the references, thus saith the Lord or the word of the Lord came to me. Those different authors all have different kinds of jobs.

Moses was a politician, Paul was a rabbi, Daniel was a prime minister, Amos was a herdsman, Matthew was a tax collector, Solomon was a king, Luke was a doctor, medical doctor, Joshua was a military leader, Peter was a fisherman. These are all different kinds of authors. They were written in different places, these books of the Bible and these sections.

Some were written in dungeons, some in synagogues, some on the hillsides, some were written on the beaches. They were written in different times. Some in times of peace, some in times of war, contains all kinds of different moods, sorrow and great joy and depression and tremendous inspiration.

The Bible was written on three different continents, in Asia, in Africa and in Europe, three different continents. It was written in three different languages, in Aramaic, which is the common dialect of the time, in Greek and it was for a long time people used to think it was a special Greek and a special kind of language, like a supernatural language, but then they dug back and they discovered it was just a common ordinary language, Greek of their time, Koine Greek and in Hebrew. And it covers literally hundreds of controversial subjects.

Now if you were to take one controversial subject, abortion for instance, go onto a college campus, or sin, or any one of the subjects the Bible deals with is bound to be controversial. Just pick about anything. If you were to ask 50 people on a university campus, what is your opinion on, and then give them that subject.

How many consensus of opinion do you think you would get? You would get a genuine fruit salad. You'd get all kinds of stuff. Now we got people writing on literally hundreds of different controversial subjects.

The most controversial subjects you could possibly talk about from all of that period of time with all of these different kinds of authors, in all these different places, in all these different moods, in three different languages and whenever they touch on one subject they have a complete unity. What is taught in the Old Testament is picked up again and integrated in the new and it is unique. You pick up the great books of the Western world, the thing we mentioned earlier, and pick one subject and they spent, I think, four million hours of research or something in the front of that, putting two books together that put together everybody's thinking on those great thoughts.

They also put the Bible in there because that is the greatest book in the Western world. But you will find so many diversities of opinion on those different things. You pick God or sin or anything, you'll see every possible idea.

But these guys, these people when they wrote, there's a profound unity. That unity and diversity that we mentioned earlier. The same in the universe, you pick up again in the Scriptures.

Now the simple way to do that, to challenge people on it, is to say if you took in just ten years and you took one generation of people and you picked just ten authors, all from one single walk of life, all college students or professors, and you put them in one place and in one time and with one controversial subject, and asked them would they agree? No way. The Bible is written like that, only on a much greater scale and whoever's read it, the more you read it, the more incredible you see that unity is. It is sometimes said that the Bible is simply the writings of men and if that is so, then some of these men, all of them as a matter of fact, were the most brilliant men that have ever lived and show a complete superiority to every other kind of writing.

Now this is not a proof that this book is supernatural or that it's God's book, but it says it is absolutely unique, it is different from any other book, including every other religious book. That is one thing. Secondly, the Bible is unique in its circulation.

I call it survival, there are mistakes in the Bible. It was the first major book in 1450 when printing began, it was a Bible that was printed. It has been read, printed and circulated more than any other book in human history.

No book even approaches the second, third, fourth and fifth books in major circulation all added together do not approach the circulation of the Bible. In 1804, by 1804, in one year there were 409 million Bibles, the Bible societies alone had printed. In 1932, the Bible societies, in that single year alone, there was 1,330,000,000 Bibles out there and 213,815 Bibles just that time.

In 1972, in that one year alone, there were 208 million copies printed and distributed, Scripture portions, all Bibles, that was just from the United Bible Societies, 55 of them and that was in just one year. Now, that year, that means to print that 218 million odd, which was a 27.6% increase over 1970, they would have had to, day and night, British Bible Society, 30 years ago to meet the needs, just of one year, they would have to print one copy every three seconds of the Bible, that's just to meet the needs of a year, the demand, 22 copies every 1,369 an hour, 32,000 something or other, I can't even read my writing, every day in the year, day and night. That year, they shipped those Bibles in 4,583 cases that weighed 490 tons and that's only one Bible society in one year, just to keep up with the demand.

It is the most translated book of all time, it has been translated now in 1,280 languages. Between 1950 and 1960, there are more than 3,000 translations were undergoing work, just in that 10 year period of time. The closest second to that, to the Bible, is 300 languages, closest second.

It's survival, the Bible not only is the largest circulated and the most unique, it is the one that has been more attacked than any other book in history. No book has had the persecution of the Bible in it, Hitler's Mein Kampf hasn't, Karl Marx's Das Kapital hasn't, you pick one book, you will never find a book that has been remotely attacked like the Scriptures have. And right through history, not just now, you go way back to the beginning.

In Roman times, people were being killed for having copies of this thing and the manuscripts were all handwritten, remember the early manuscripts were all handwritten, there was no printing until 1450, but now we have more manuscripts surviving of the Bible than any other ancient book, and I mean much, much more. The number of manuscripts exists from the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th century, all written in papyrus, of course the original ones are all gone, because papyrus rots, it's just a reed that they bashed out and dried up, and it rots pretty quick. So it only lasts about 100 years and that's it, it's finished, you don't have your fancy papers that all were acid taken out of, they just die, so they have to be re-copied, re-copied.

None of the original documents of any major books are around, but the handwritten manuscript copies, handwritten stuff, that we have of the Scriptures, there are at least 14,000 surviving manuscripts just of the New Testament. We have then the closest, the closest second, I've got a list somewhere there of manuscripts and McDowell had it in one of his deals, it's something like 243,000 portions of Scripture or New Testament manuscripts, it's 243,000, some incredible number. The closest second to that of an old manuscript we've got is the Iliad by Hermann, there are only 643 existing manuscripts of that.

So there is much more of this than anything else. The other thing is that this is not just the fact that it survived, it has been fought. People went out to find pieces of it and burned it.

The Koran for instance, in order to get some kind of unity in it, a group of people got together and decided this one is going to be the one and burned all the other manuscripts so there would be no problems with it. But the Christians never did that, they just hung on to all their different bits and we have not Christians burning their own, lest people find out there might be differences, but other people burning them because there were too many similarities. That it had one message, you study the manuscripts written or used in one place, we now have a very accurate picture of the text originally given.

I think the parts in question where they think people were doing, they put a little dot in the wrong place and the number changed or shifted or some zealous manuscript guy, there would be a little comment in the margin, the next guy wrote it into the text and all that. Have you ever played that game where you say a sentence and you pass it around in a circle and the first guy says what he originally said and then the last guy, have you ever seen that? Just in like 20 people how much corruption can take place? Now the Bible like any books in the hand copying and stuff like that should be subject to that kind of corruption. Somebody writing it down sneezes and forgets to put a word in or they lose a whole section of a thing because it got burned or something like that.

And we now know comparing manuscripts that have been found and put together, there is less doubt about, you know, the weird little bits. You constantly find little bits here. Is this thing supposed to be this number or this number? And they look for the older manuscripts and keep checking one against the other.

We're talking about a tiny, tiny percentage, half of 1% of the total of the scriptures is still up for grabs. Not quite sure about that. And none of that half of 1% deals with any significant doctrine or rule of faith in scripture.

We're dealing with this, you know, was this 40,000 or was it 4,000, that kind of stuff. Was this word, did he mean this or that? Not doctrinal things, but the same little kind of corruptions that come, should this be capitalized, should the period go here or that thing, half of 1%. No other book like that, not even remotely like it in history.

Okay, my favorite subject, and we're going to close this pretty soon, my favorite illustration is Voltaire. Voltaire, the mighty French rationalist and thinker and intellectual of his time, held up a copy of the Bible and he said, in a hundred years I'll have this book in the morgue. Hundred years later, Voltaire was in the morgue.

Fifty years after, his boast, his house was the headquarters of the Geneva Bible Society and they were printing and distributing scriptures out of his home. God has a fun sense of humor. No book has been attacked more for its reliability.

The higher and lower critics all have had their crack at it over the years. And yet more people trust, love, and obey the scriptures more than any other group of people in the world. The Bible, many, many of the critics' attacks, and men like Josh McDowell and others have pointed this out in popular forms, many, many of the critical attacks that were made 20 or 30 years ago, as more scholarship has gone and more archaeological evidence has turned up, the basis on which those original criticisms may have shown to be completely unfounded.

You know, they did computer analysis in the early days and they said, obviously this couldn't have been written by Paul because the style was different. And then they got their act together a little bit later and said, well, actually there is a possibility that it could have been. And later on they said, well, that was a stupid theory anyway.

I've got to give you one more, prophecy, we've only got a few more minutes. The Bible is unique in its statement of world history. As a matter of fact, God makes this one of his apologetics.

Remember the set forth your case thing? He says, you show me what, if you're God, you show me what you're going to do. You tell me what things are going to come down, I'm going to tell you. And the power of the Scriptures is that above all other religious books in the world, the Bible is a book of prophecy.

In detail, it gives, as a matter of fact, 25% of the Bible, a quarter of the Scriptures is in some way connected to the prophetic. It is minute and detailed prophecies. There are over 300 plus prophecies concerning the life of Christ.

For every one verse of prophecy on Jesus' first coming, there are seven of his second coming. It is an incredibly detailed book on prophecy. A man called Sir William Ramsey, I've got his books, he set out to show, he did a journey through Asia, and he set out to show, he was a higher critical and lower critical scholar, he set out to show that the journeys of Paul couldn't have possibly been like that, it was a bunch of fabrication stories.

He went out through the Middle East and checked the whole thing out and finally had a complete 180 degree reversal of his position. And now Ramsey's books on Luke and others are classics in evangelical

scholarship because he said, Luke must go down in history as a historian of the first magnitude. It is the only reliable record we have of such a journey of that time.

And that everything matched, everything checked, and so on. The greatest test, I have things on structure here, it's scientific accuracy, span of time and prophecy, the 300 plus prophecies, that one has often been given, chances these would all coincide by accident in one person are laughable, that is one in a number followed by 181 zeros. The idea of the size of that figure, think of a ball, quote unquote, packed solidly with electrons, two and a half billion to make a line, quote unquote, about one inch long.

Now in your mind imagine this ball expanded, the size of the universe we know, some four billion light years in diameter, with light traveling 196,000 miles a second, it's pretty big. Now pull out one electron, color it red, you know some weird way, stir it in, send a man who's blindfolded to pick out that one electron from all the others, first time, that's a chance that Jesus came by accident. Matter of fact, people challenge, you find one of the men in history, ten prophecies fulfilled exactly and precisely in a detail like you, just ten.

The neat one, the effect on society, you can go through the effect of the Bible as literature, on what it has done to the arts, to the sciences, we've already mentioned some of the scientists. The neatest one is the effect it has on people's lives, more than any other book in history, it has changed men and women for the better. And that's why men like Bertrand Russell's comment that all religion does harm to people is not historically true.

Wherever the scriptures have come, it's brought light. You remember the story of the group of people they found on that island, they got a copy of the Bible and they were living this incredibly, there was no crime, there was no anything and they got a shock to meet Christians, because they'd read the scriptures and modeled their life after and they're all happily in love with God and when they met quote-unquote Christians who came in from the West, gave them an awful fright. Remember Maltare when he first went to America and was all excited, oh wow, here's a Christian country and God we trust is on the coins and the terrible shock he got when he got in there.

The change this book brings in individual lives is the bottom line. And Malcolm Muggeridge debated our top national atheist, Brian Edwards, on national television in New Zealand. His basic challenge to Muggeridge was the reason why you've become a Christian now is because you're old and senile.

That in your old age your mind is breaking down and you've got to accept fairy stories. That was his basic challenge. Muggeridge did a very simple thing.

He was the guy, I don't know if Americans know Malcolm Muggeridge, but he was the guy who always played devil's advocate and would take religious groups, you know, the young Catholic League, the young communists, this and he would always play agnostic to them. He was the national cynic and he became a Christian quite late in life. And his fundamental defense was this, he just simply said, do you mean to say to me that Milton and Dante and he made a whole list of those who changed history and art and poetry and drama and they were senile and old? And his simple testimony was back partly this and partly this.

This thing has changed history. And I stand in a long line of people for the simple testimony is that the more I thought about things and the saner I got, the more I was driven towards the reality of this book. Now we have just looked simply at the first one, this is the Bible, the libel, and looked at sketchy beginnings of this evidence.

But what I strongly encourage you to do is for yourself, you need to deal with difficulties, with questions. Muslims will ask you, the Bible is full of mistakes, it's not trustworthy, it's not authenticatable, you need to know why it is. I'll give you the Gospel of Barnabas and say this thing shows the real truth about Christianity, you need to know that stuff.

And ask for the credentials of the Gospel of Barnabas and see if that stacks up. We're not talking here about what I feel, we're talking about historically testable evidence, verifiable, this is called objective testability, not something I feel, I feel this is a great book. These are facts.

They're historical facts. If you're going to do Christianity, you have to refute this. That's the first part.

We haven't got onto Jesus yet, but he is there, waiting, we won't get onto him, he'll get onto us a little later, okay, let's quit.

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