

CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

APOLOGETICS WORKSHOPS



**TRUTH ON THE
WEB MINISTRIES**

WWW.TOTW.ORG

EPH 6:17 AND TAKE...THE SWORD OF THE
SPIRIT WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD

A CHURCH OF GOD IN WOODSTOCK, ILLINOIS



**CHURCH OF GOD
AT WOODSTOCK**

CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

Common accusations made against the Bible¹

- The Bible has been edited by too many people.
- The Bible is full of contradictions.
- The Bible says... *[fill in the blank with some false statement]*
- The New Testament was largely written by people who didn't even know Jesus.
- There are some stories that are kept in and some stories that were kicked out.
- Christianity borrowed from ancient religions.

¹See Other Resources at end for more info on these



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

Psalm 19:7

The law of the LORD is **perfect**, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is **sure**, making wise the simple.

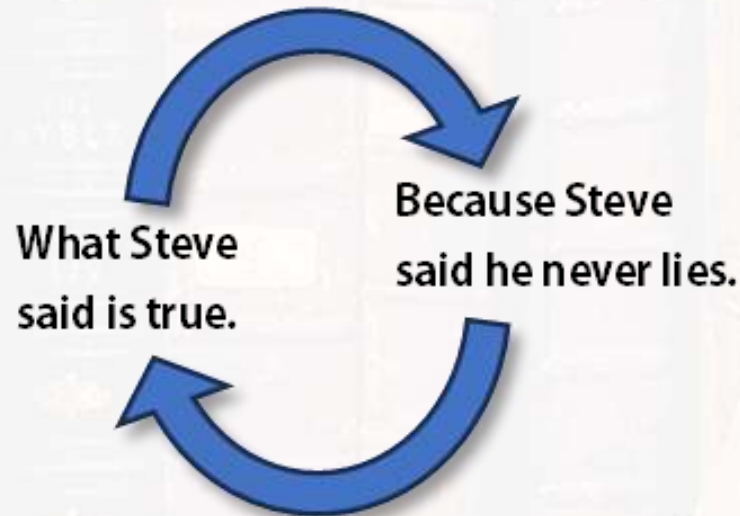
2 Timothy 3:16

All scripture is **given by inspiration** of God, and is **profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:**



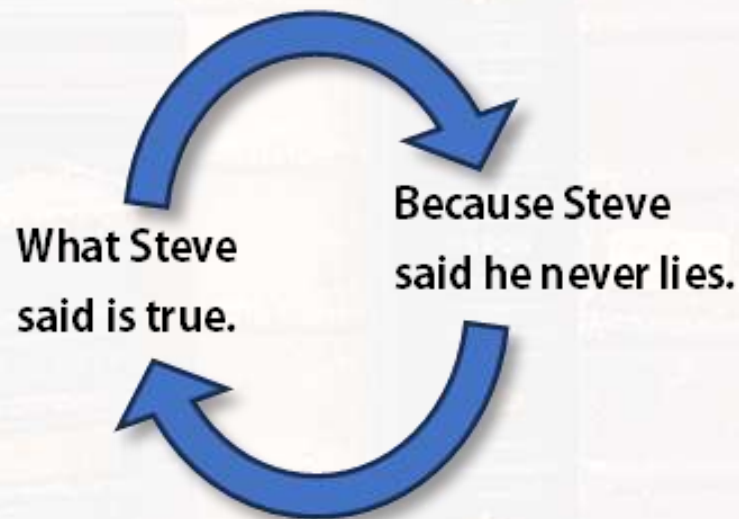
CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

Circular Reasoning



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

Circular Reasoning



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

Matthew 11:3-5 (NLT)

Are you the Messiah we've been expecting, or should we keep looking for someone else? Jesus told them, Go back to John and **tell him what you have heard and seen** — the blind see, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor.



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

We will cover two common (unsubstantiated) attacks on the Bible.

1. Do we know what the original text said?

Has it been changed over the centuries?

2. How about all the 'contradictions' and 'inconsistencies' in the Bible?

If the Bible contradicts itself, how can we trust it?

As believers we should know that the text is both faithful to the original and that it does not conflict with itself in any substantive way...



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

**Do we know
what the original
text said?**



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

Biblical inerrancy / infallibility

Inerrant – free from error

Infallible - not capable of being wrong



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

Biblical inerrancy / infallibility

Inerrant – free from error

Infallible - not capable of being wrong

- This is a 'core' tenet (precept) of **The Faith** – God's Word is true, correct and always trustworthy.
- If this isn't true, then none of it can be trusted.
- As such, it is important to be able to address doubts and attacks made against His Word.

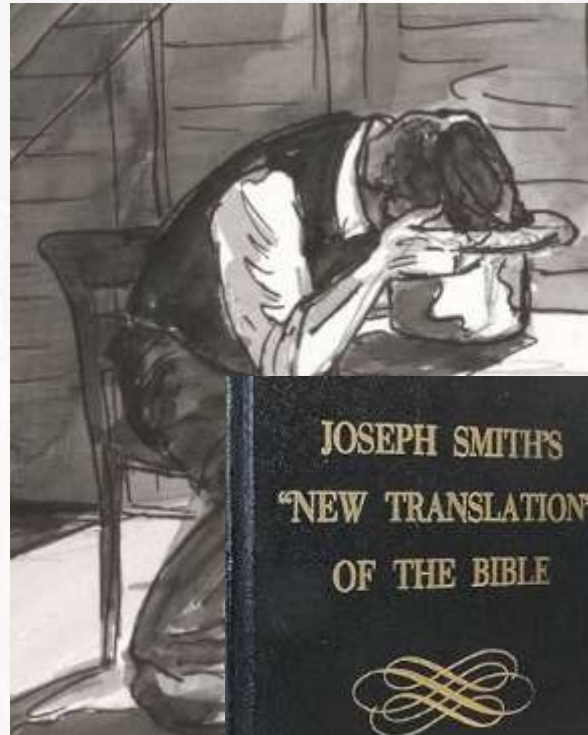


CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

Gender 'Neutral'

THE
INCLUSIVE
BIBLE

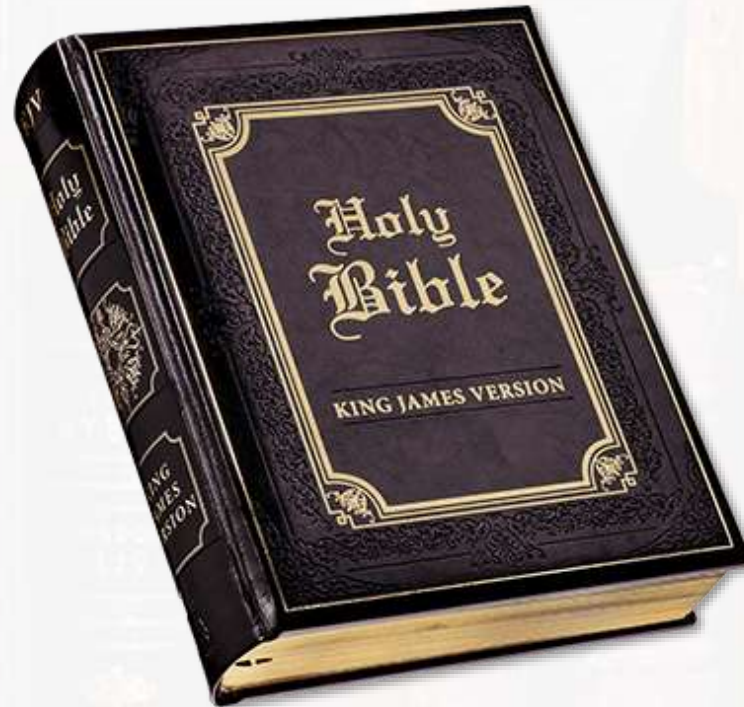
THE FIRST
EGALITARIAN
TRANSLATION



The Queen James Bible



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?



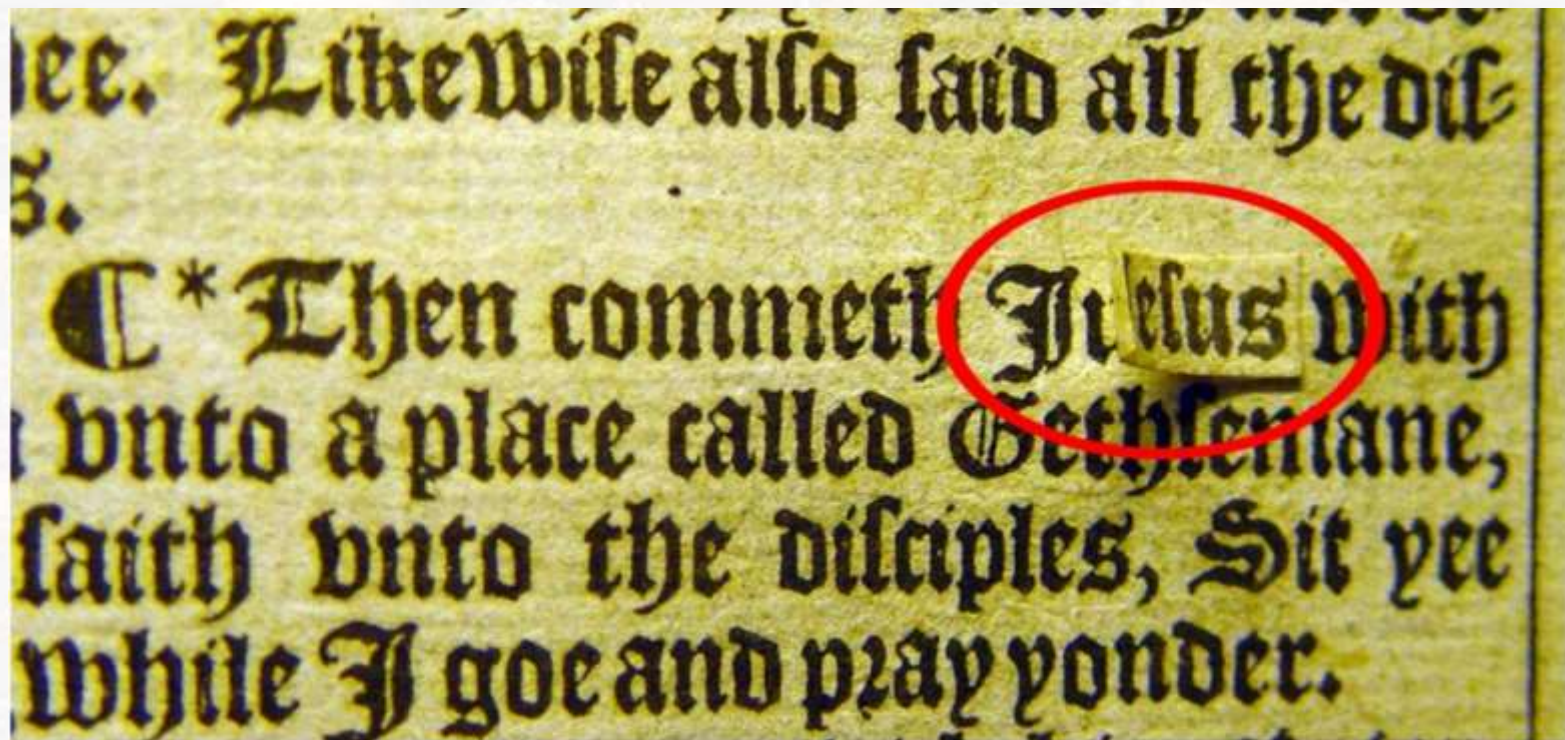
KJV



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

KJV Typos (1611, Matthew 26:36)

Jesus or Judas?



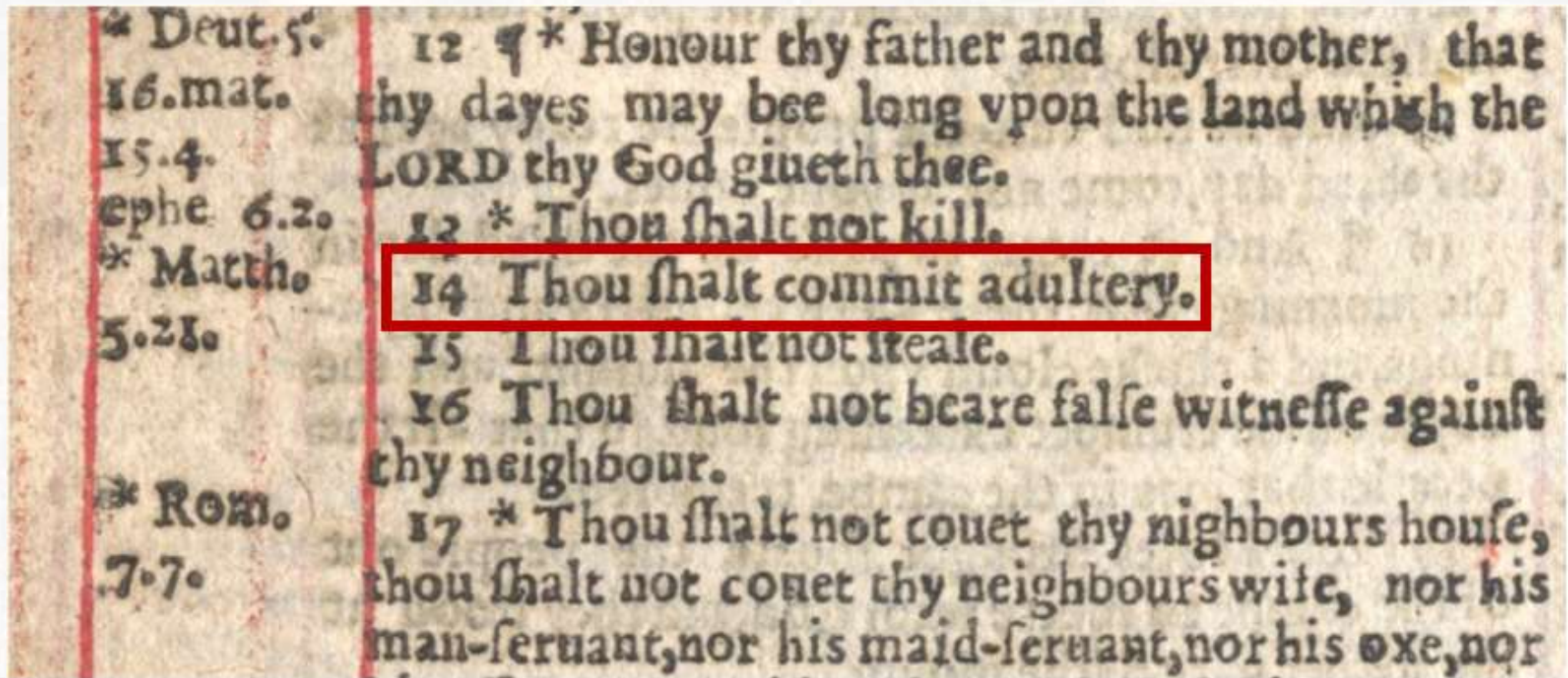
1611 King James Version, typo with "Judas" in place of "Jesus."



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

KJV Typos (1631, Exodus 20:14)

Thou shalt **NOT**...



1631 King James Version known as the "Wicked Bible."

CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

YES!

The 'Autographs'

And faithful translations
based on good manuscripts



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

How do you know your 'parents' are your parents?!

- You don't remember it!
- You don't have any original documents!
- No one that could verify it is still alive or available for questioning!
- And your social security number could belong to someone else too!



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

“What good is it to say that the autographs (i.e., the originals) were inspired?”

“We don’t have the originals! We have only error-ridden copies, and the vast majority of these are centuries removed from the originals and different from them, evidently, in thousands of ways.... There are more variations among our manuscripts than there are words in the New Testament.”

Misquoting Jesus, by Bart Ehrman



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

Textual criticism

The discipline that determines the original wording of documents whose original no longer exists.



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

1 CUP UNSALTED BUTTER, ROOM TEMPERATURE
2/3 CUP GRANULATED SUGAR
2 CUPS FLOUR
1 TSP WHISKEY



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1 cup unsalted butter, room temp
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1 CUP UNSALTED BUTTER
2 CUPS ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR
ANILLA



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

1 CUP UNSALTED BUTTER, ROOM TEMPERATURE
2/3 CUP GRANULATED SUGAR
2 CUPS FLOUR
1 TSP WHISKEY

1 cup unsalted butter, room temp
2/3 cup granulated sugar
2 cups all-purpose flour



1 CUP UNSALTED BUTTER
2 CUPS ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR
VANILLA



1 cup unsalted butter, boiled.
2/3 cup sugar
2 cups all-purpose flour



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

First, the apostles wrote the NT – all before year 100 AD – we don't have any of those

Written on papyrus – doesn't last as well.

Then they are copied, and then copies of these were made – many copies.

Codex format was widely used (pages written on both sides and bound – what we would call a book).

This means that copies of copies of copies spread all over the 'World'. No one had control over these copies, no one had the ability to collect all the copies and make changes to them.



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

Isn't the process of copy of a copy of a copy of a copy of a copy just the old "Telephone game"?
Isn't that REALLY unreliable?



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

Isn't the process of copy of a copy of a copy of a copy of a copy just the old "Telephone game"?

The Telephone Game vs. the Transmission of the New Testament Text



Every person in the chain passes the message on to only one person.

A **change** introduced by any one person will propagate through the entire chain.

The message is only reported by the final person in the chain.

The original message is LOST.



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The Telephone Game vs. the Transmission of the New Testament Text

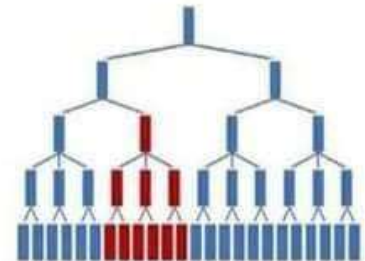


Every person in the chain passes the message on to only one person.

A **change** introduced by any one person will propagate through the entire chain.

The message is only reported by the final person in the chain.

The original message is LOST.



Manuscripts are copied multiple times, resulting in a complex web of relationships.

A **change** introduced by any one scribe will affect only a portion of the manuscript tradition.

The text is attested in over 5,000 extant Greek manuscripts, some from as early as the 2nd century.

The original message is PRESERVED.



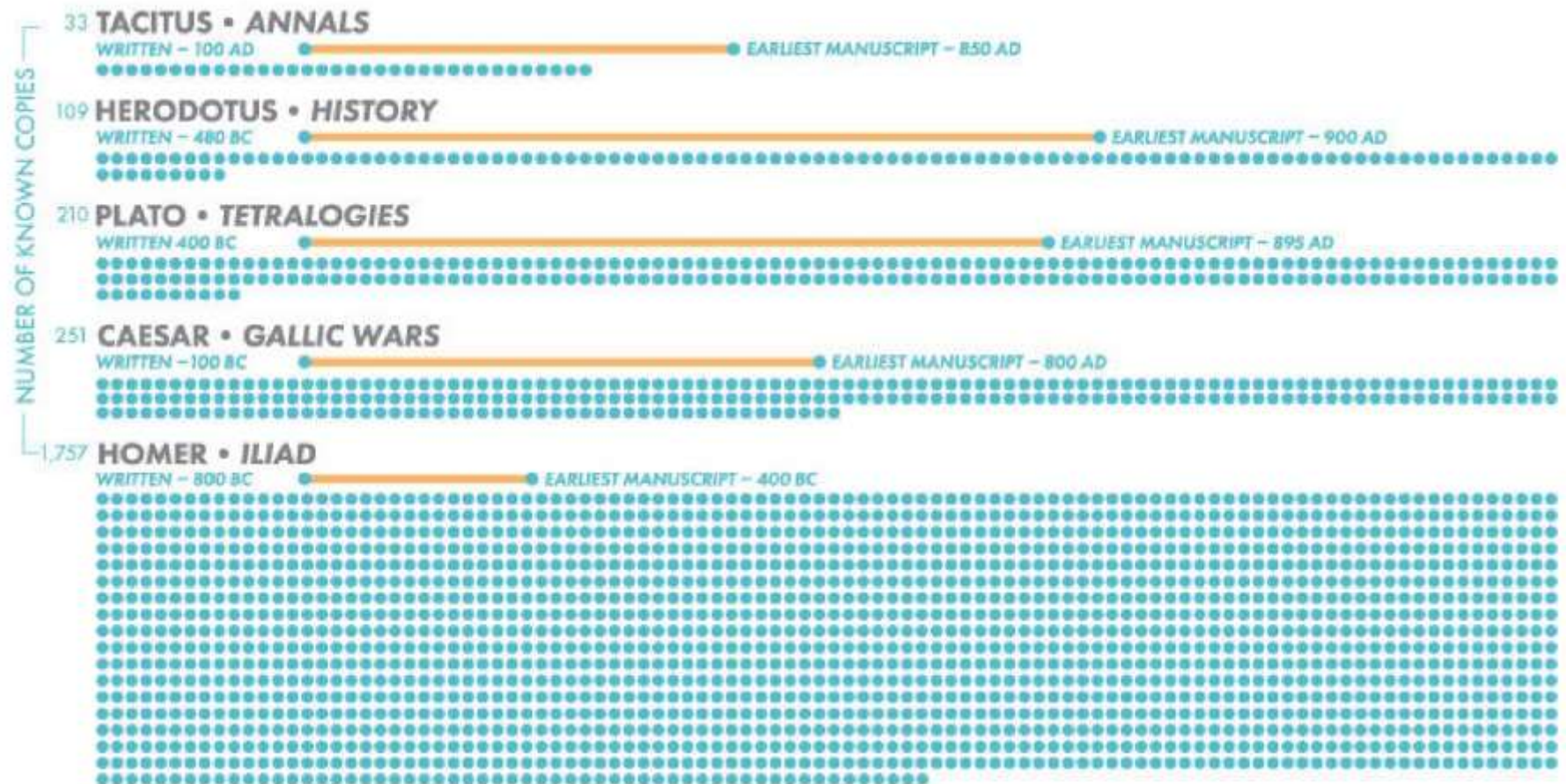
CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

The copy, copy, copy method resulted in about 400,000 variants. There are only about 138,000 words in the Greek NT.

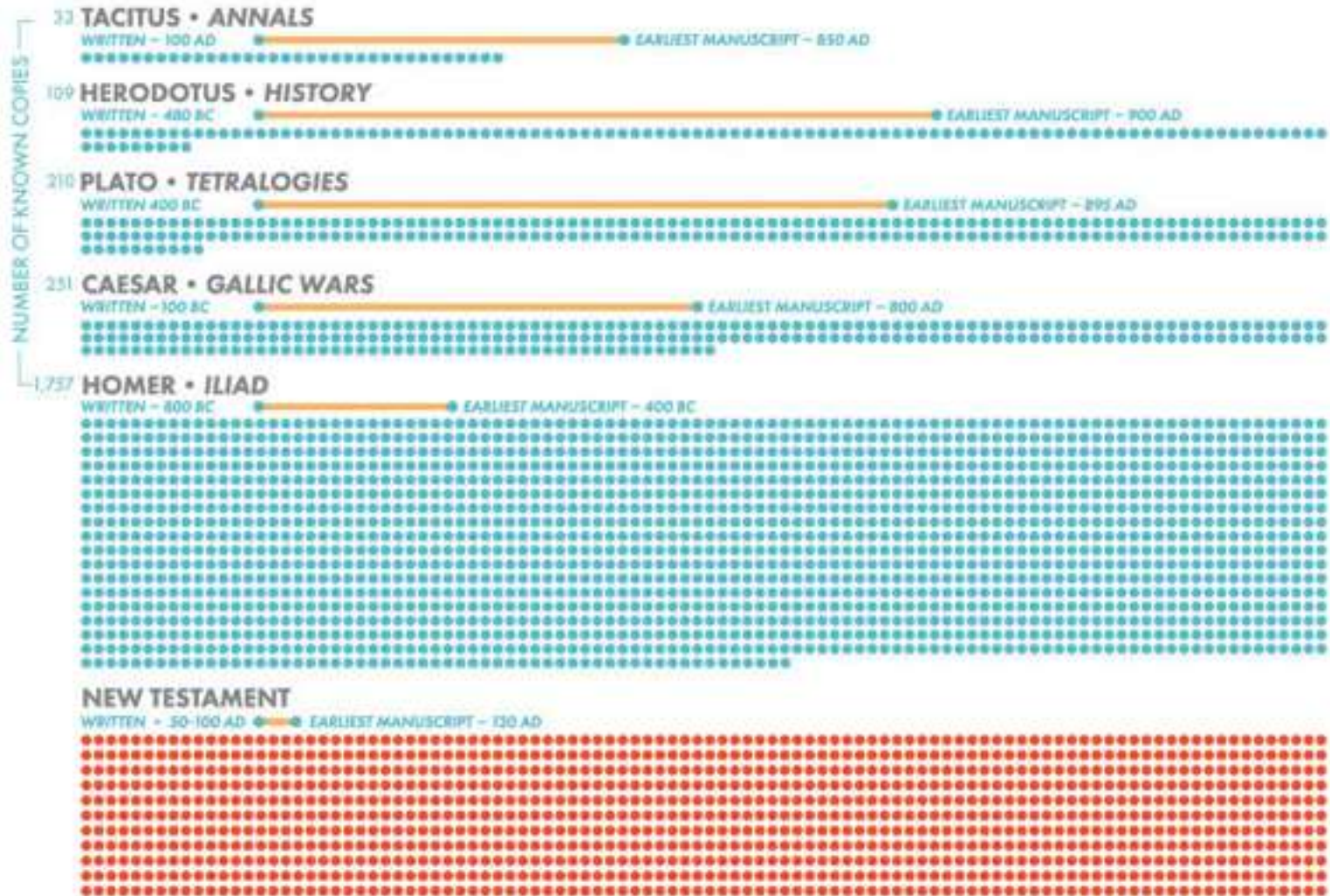
To date we have over 5800 Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, with an astounding 2.6 million pages of biblical text. While some of these manuscripts are small and fragmentary, the average size of a New Testament manuscript is 450 pages.



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

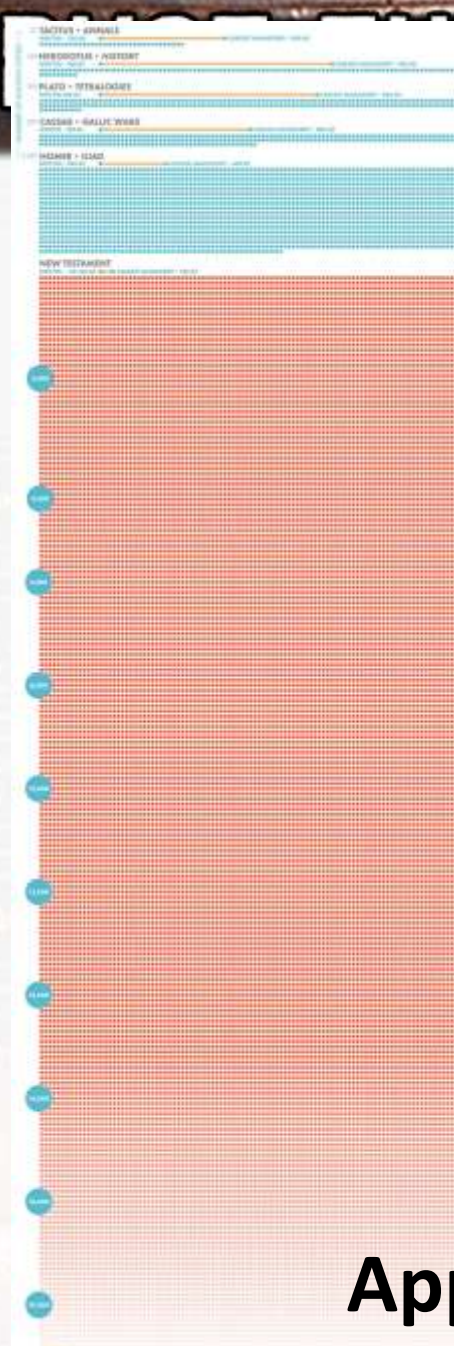


CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?



Approximately 24,000

CAN I TRANSLATE THE BIBLE?



Approximately 24,000



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

But wait, there's more...

Over 10,000 manuscripts in Latin, 4,000 in Slavic, 2,000 in Armenian, etc. – in total almost 24,000

Additionally, there are the quotations of the NT by church fathers. To date, more than one million quotations of the NT by the church 'fathers' have been tabulated. These 'fathers' come from as early as the late first century all the way to the middle ages. (There are about 8,000 verses in NT)



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

Variants

The *slightest difference* between manuscripts constitutes a variance.

The copy, copy, copy method resulted in about 400,000 known variants. There are only about 138,000 words in the Greek NT.



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

400,000 variants

Variants are categorized by whether or not they are **viable**, and whether or not they are **meaningful**.

- A variant is **viable** only if the variant has a good possibility of being part of the original wording.
- A variant is **meaningful** only if it changes the meaning of the text.



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

(Type 1) Not Viable, not Meaningful

Most of the variants fall into this category. For example, obvious differences in spelling make up **75%** of all textual variants. These are very easy for Greek scholars to detect.

These variants have no hope of being in the original, and they don't alter the meaning of the text.



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

(Type 2) Viable, but Not Meaningful

These are variants that could be part of the original text. However, they ultimately make no meaningful change to the text. About **20%**

For example, New Testament manuscripts spell John's name two different ways in Greek: Ιωvvης and Ιωvης. Both are viable options.

We just don't know if John's name was spelled with one "v" or two. Of course, **this trivial detail does not change the meaning of any particular passage.**



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

(Type 3) Meaningful, but Not Viable

These are variants that do change the meaning of the text, but they could not possibly be in the original. About **4%**

For example, the earliest and most important manuscripts of Luke 6:22 say,

“Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man.”

Codex 2882 does not include this phrase.



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

(Type 4) Meaningful and viable

This is the smallest and most significant group of variants.

These have a good chance of being authentic and they change the meaning of the text.

This group accounts for less than **1%** of all textual variants.

If you do the math, less than 4,000 variants of the 400,000 total variants are both **viable and meaningful**.



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

(Type 4) Meaningful and viable

Example from **1 John 1:4**. New Testament scholars debate over whether this text should say,

“And we are writing these things so that **our** joy may be complete” or

“And we are writing these things so that **your** joy may be complete.”

There are important manuscripts that record the word ‘**your**’ and there are important manuscripts that record the word ‘**our**’. In the original language, these two words differ by only one letter.

CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

400,000 variants

It is this small subset of variants (meaningful and viable) that is a legitimate cause for concern. However, **no major doctrines depend on any meaningful and viable variants.**

In fact, Bart Ehrman was once asked if these variants put the core tenets of Christian orthodoxy in jeopardy. Ehrman responded, “Essential Christian beliefs are not affected by textual variants in the manuscript tradition of the New Testament.”



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

Masoretic Text is the authoritative Hebrew and Aramaic text of the 24 books of the Hebrew Bible.

Textus Receptus (Latin: "received text") refers to the succession of printed editions of the Greek New Testament from Erasmus's *Novum Instrumentum omne* (1516) to the 1633 Elzevir edition.

Over the centuries, new manuscripts are discovered (such as the Dead Sea scrolls and thousands of Greek NT). Not ONE of these has revealed any significant error from what has been accepted for almost 2,000 years.



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

YES!

The 'Autographs'

And faithful translations
based on good
manuscripts



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

**How about all the
contradictions and
inconsistencies in
the Bible?**



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

Mark 16:4-6

And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great. And entering into the sepulchre, they saw **a young man** sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. And **he saith** unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

John 20:11-13

But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, And seeth **two angels** in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And **they say** unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

The accusation:

Mark says there was one angel (man), John says there were two – how can these both be true?

An answer:

Mark mentions one but doesn't say there was 'only' one. John mentions two. Mark's account doesn't contradict John's, it just contains different information. For there to be a true contradiction here, Mark would have had to say something like 'they saw a young man (and there was no one else around)', but he does not.



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

Matthew 27:3–8

Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. **And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.** And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called, **The field of blood,** unto this day.

CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

Acts 1:15–19

And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,) Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood.



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

The accusation:

Did Judas hang himself or fall and burst open?
Did Judas buy the field or did the Priests?

An answer:

If Judas hung himself from a tree over a cliff, hanging there sometime, the branch or cord could have broken, thus he fell and burst open.

Judas earned the money that was used to purchase the field. The priests were 'proxies' in this case, purchasing it for Judas as they anted nothing to do with the funds.



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

In closing



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

YES!

The 'Autographs'

And faithful translations
based on good manuscripts



CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?

- The unexplained is not necessarily unexplainable.
- Fallible interpretations do not mean fallible revelation.
- Understand the context of the passage.
- Interpret difficult passages in the light of clear ones.
- Don't base teaching on obscure passages.
- Just because a report is incomplete does not mean it is false.
- New Testament citations of the Old Testament need not always be exact.
- The Bible does not necessarily approve of all it records.
- Note when the Bible uses different literary devices.
- An error in a copy does not equate to an error in the original.

Josh McDowell, 'The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict', Pg 47



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