

The Keavy Encourager

WELCOME TO THE KEAVY CHURCH OF CHRIST!

(February 15 2026)

- Visitors: Please fill out a visitor card and grab a Visitor Welcome Kit!
- Communion is available in the front of the building on the table.
- Our website is: www.keavychurchofchrist.com, and our email address is keavychurchofchrist@outlook.com Please share this information with your family, friends, and social media pages! Services are available online at our website and on our YouTube page.
- If you would like to be subscribed to brother Mark Tabata's email list (for weekday devotionals and other Bible and Bible related studies), please let him know!

February Prayer List

Kurt And Joanne Martin, Sanders Family, Eddie Craft (Cancer), Jimmy Brooks (Tammy's cousin, cancer), Kathy Mingus (Cancer), Anne Baker (Cancer), Sandi Tabata, Bill and Mary Ruth Browning, David and Ivy Mosley, Margie Turner (Hospice), Jake Robbins (Cancer), Coy Gilliam (Cancer), Roger and Sandra Frazier & Family, Carman Carroll, Edward Young Sr., Ed Young, Harmony Mullins, Claude Humphrey (Cancer), Felicity Lanham (Cancer), Piere Daigel, People In Ukraine, Earnie Baker (Phyllis Sanders Brother In Law), Barbourville Work, Marlene Howard, Rod Hill (Cancer friend of brother Paul), Charlene Reef (Cancer), Jimmy Turner (Cancer), Danny Day, Katherine Myers, Jim and Linda Day, Mary Martin, Chad Couch, Kathy McFall (Brother Gary Lewis' Cousin, Cancer), Lisa Hurt, Martha Moberly, Terry & Rita Wooton And Family, Keith Bowling Family, Gary Fleming, Bessie Young Family (Lost Loved Ones), Tiffany Cox And Family, Barry Mitchell (Surgery), Don Stidham (Surgery), Gary Fleming

Were Jesus And Mary Magdalene Married?

Part Three: Are The Gospels Credible?

(More Bible Studies Available @ www.marktabata.com)

Acts 10:39-43-And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree. 40 Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly, 41 not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, *even* to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. 42 And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God *to be* Judge of the living and the dead. 43 To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins."

"It doesn't matter if the Gospels were written by the Apostles. I don't believe that they recorded the truth of the life of Jesus!"

These words were spoken by a gentleman I was studying the Bible with at Huddle House in Hazard, Kentucky, several years ago. We had been discussing the controversy regarding Dan Brown's book, *The Da Vinci Code*, and the subject of whether or not the Gospels accurately recorded the truth of Jesus' life. Ben (not his real name) had been raised in the church of Christ all of his life, but had turned away from the faith while in high school. Part of his departure from Christ had been struggles with drugs, and part of it had been indoctrination into the subjects raised by the *Da Vinci Code*.

After having studied with me about the genuineness of Gospels, and seeing that they were indeed written by the Apostles of Jesus and their companions, Ben now argued that we just cannot trust what the Apostles reported. This issue-whether or not a document is accurately recording historical events-deals with the subject known as "credibility."

How do we know that the Apostles of Christ did not "fudge the facts" in what they recorded regarding Jesus?

Let's study.

Some years ago, former atheist turned Christian, Lee Strobel, interviewed a scholar named Craig Blomberg in his book, *The Case For Christ: A Journalist's Personal Investigation Of The Evidence For Jesus*. (Part of the following information is from the Kindle Edition of that book, pages 20-46). When asked if the Gospels are credible, Blomberg detailed eight tests which

historians use in ascertaining the reliability of testimonies. When applied to the Gospels, they pass with flying colors!

- *The Intention Test.* Did the writers state their desire to accurately preserve historical fact? See Matthew 1:1-18; Luke 1:1-4; John 20:30-31.
- *The Ability Test.* Were the writers able to accurately record the historical details of Jesus Christ? Were they in a position to be credible eyewitnesses? See Matthew 16:13-19; John 19:35; 21:24; Acts 1:1-3; 2:32; 10:39-43; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; 2 Peter 1:16; 1 John 1:1-4.
- *The Character Test.* Is there any evidence of character defects which would infringe on the ability of the Apostles to be credible witnesses? Do they show evidence of immorality, greed, or ulterior motives in what they report and record? Did they have anything to gain from falsifying their reports? See Acts 5:18; 12:1-7; 16:23-24; 2 Corinthians 11:22-33.
- *The Consistency Test.* Do multiple accounts line up with each other? Do the eyewitnesses display consistency among the various reports? Some skeptics say the Gospels fail this test, alleging contradictions between each other. However, there is a difference between a discrepancy and a contradiction. One former atheist turned Christian who is a recognized expert in the field of forensic eyewitness testimony believed that the Gospels would be riddled with contradictions. He decided to use his particular skill-set to examine the Gospels. To his amazement, they actually showed overwhelming evidences of consistency and credibility! So strong was the evidence that he eventually became a committed follower of Jesus Christ. He writes:

“As we discussed in chapter 4, one of the most important tasks for a detective is to listen carefully when multiple eyewitnesses provide a statement about what they observed at the scene of a crime. It’s my job to assemble the complete picture of what happened at the scene. No single witness is likely to have seen every detail, so I must piece together the accounts, allowing the observations of one eyewitness to fill in the gaps that may exist in the observations of another eyewitness. That’s why it’s so important for eyewitnesses to be separated before they are interviewed. True, reliable eyewitness accounts are never completely parallel and identical. Instead, they are different pieces of the same puzzle, unintentionally supporting and complementing each other to provide all the details related to what really happened....When I first read through the Gospels forensically, comparing

those places where two or more gospel writers were describing the same event, I was immediately struck by the inadvertent support that each writer provided for the other. The accounts puzzled together just the way one would expect from independent eyewitnesses. When one gospel eyewitness described an event and left out a detail that raised a question, this question was unintentionally answered by another gospel writer (who, by the way, often left out a detail that was provided by the first gospel writer)....As a cold-case detective, I've experienced something similar to this a number of times. Often, questions an eyewitness raises at the time of the crime are left unanswered until we locate an additional witness years later. This is a common characteristic of true, reliable eyewitness accounts...I decided to investigate the claims of Christianity (to see if they could be defended) before I ever decided to call myself a Christian. My investigation (some of which I described in section 2) led me to conclude that the Gospels were reliable.” (Jay Warner Wallace, *Cold-Case Christianity: A Homicide Detective Investigates The Claims Of The Gospels*, 183-187; 255 (Kindle Edition, emphasis added, M.T.); Colorado Springs, CO; DavidCook).

- *The Bias Test.* Did the Apostles have any personal bias in what they reported? Could any personal bias have caused them to incorrectly record what they did in the Gospels? Actually, the Bible shows that what the Apostles recorded about Jesus directly challenged their biases, and so they clearly pass this test. See Mark 9:31-32; Acts 1:6.
- *The Coverup Test.* Are there any indications that inconvenient facts of events were kept hidden? Did the Apostles work to hide embarrassing or inconvenient facts that would challenge their credibility in what they record or paint them in a negative light? See Matthew 26:31-35, 40-47, 56; Mark 14:50-52; 16:9, 11-14; Luke 24:13-15; John 20:1-28; 21:1-3, 15-17. Actually, the Gospels record many events in the lives of the Apostles which would be embarrassing to them and would serve to put them in a less than favorable light. They also reported that women were the first eyewitnesses of the Resurrection, which was something they never would have done in the first century context if they were fabricating those events. Women were not allowed to testify in courts of law in that time and land! These facts argue for the credibility of their accounts.
- *The Corroboration Test.* Are there other eyewitnesses or historical accounts which verify the testimonies under investigation? In the case of

the Gospels, we have numerous evidences from Jewish sources, pagan sources, and archaeological findings which corroborate the Gospels.

- *The Adverse Witness Test.* Are there other testimonies which are hostile to the accounts provided and who would have a vested interest in seeing them overthrown, yet who bear witness to their accuracy? See Matthew 12:24; John 7:1-5 with 1 Corinthians 15:7; Acts 2:22; 6:7; 26:26. We could list several of these hostile witnesses which bear evidence of the truthfulness of the Gospels, both from within the Bible and from without.

Adding these things together, we may safely conclude that the Gospels are indeed credible. They report the truth of Jesus Christ.

Let me share with you the words of a former skeptic who investigated the Bible (and especially the Gospels) with all the determination, learning, and tools of his vocation (a modern day attorney).

He writes:

“At the beginning of this book I told you that I began my adult spiritual journey as a nonbeliever. I was constantly seeking God, searching for answers, and trying to understand why I couldn’t bring myself to believe in Christianity. Different people planted various seeds in the garden of my life, but my faith didn’t finally blossom until that last seed was planted, which was the discovery of the messianic prophecies. Many other seeds helped lead me to that final moment of belief—I’m sure I was and remain unaware of half of them. But what I do know is that in my case, in my life, Christian apologetics had a profound impact. Studying theology and Bible doctrine was also crucial. It is because of my experiences that I decided to write this book.... As I believe I’ve shown in this book, there is an enormous amount of evidence that the Bible is historically reliable and that it was written by real men who were united in their commitment to truth. I believe the evidence shows, well beyond a reasonable doubt, that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, and that it teaches that God entered this world in human form when Jesus Christ was born, that Christ lived a sinless life, that He was crucified, that He died, and that He was resurrected. I believe all these things, and I encourage you to believe them as well, because if they are true, your acceptance or rejection of them—your decision whether to place your saving faith in Jesus Christ—will, the Bible tells us, affect your eternal destiny. I

also agreed to undertake this project because I believe I can relate to skeptics, having been one for many years. I don't look down on skeptics; in fact I believe I understand their perspective. But I also know that nonbelievers don't have to remain that way. The Holy Spirit beckons all to come to Jesus Christ in faith." (David Limbaugh, Jesus On Trial: A Lawyer Affirms The Truth Of The Gospel, 333-334 (Kindle Edition): Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing)

Take A Moment And Smile

Psalm 126:2 (TPT)-We laughed and laughed and overflowed with gladness. We were left shouting for joy and singing your praise. All the nations saw it and joined in, saying, "The Lord has done great miracles for them!"

"From World's Greatest Collection of Church Jokes, published by Barbour Publishing, Inc. Used by permission."

AN ORDER OF RIBS In Miss Lilie's kindergarten Sunday school class, she was teaching how everything in the world was created by God, including human beings. Little Georgie was particularly interested in how Eve was created out of Adam's rib. Later in the week the five-year-old's mother found him lying down as though he were ill. She asked him, "Georgie, what's the matter?" To which Georgie replied, "I have a pain in my side. I think I'm going to have a wife."

Announcements

- Brother Quintin Nelton responded to the Gospel Sunday morning, requesting prayer for personal struggles that he is facing. Please continue to pray for him!
- Regularly Scheduled Events; Sunday Bible Class All Ages (Every Sunday @ 10:00); Sunday Worship (Every Sunday @ 11:00 AM And 5:00 PM); Wednesday Evening Bible Class All Ages (Every Wednesday @ 5:00); Keavy Ladies And Supportive Saints (K.L.A.S.S. Every First Sunday Of The Month After Evening Service); Keavy Support Group And Youth Group Meeting (Every Tuesday @ 6:00); Adult Night (Every Second And Fourth Friday @ 6:00); Keavy Fellowship Meal (Every Last Sunday of The Month After Morning Service)

Sermons

A.M. God's Divine Purpose For The Jewish People (John 4:21-22)

P.M. The Bible And Household Baptisms (Mark 16:15-16)

Bible Class And Sermon Notes