

The Bible Assumes that We Research the Evidence

- 1 Corinthians 15:3 – 8 Of first importance
 - (3) The necessity that someone else pay off our debt to justice was well known. People understood that the ripple effect of their bad choices could not be reeled back in. We have no method for undoing the past. God cannot just let it slide or justice is corrupted. The Old Testament set up the argument. Jesus came to pay the debt.
 - (4) The method by which Jesus died, details of His death and burial, and the timing of His resurrection were publicly predicted and published centuries in advance.
 - (5 – 8) A large number of eye-witnesses all agreed. Group hallucinations do not happen. Delusions always get worse; they do not stop suddenly, like when Jesus went back to heaven. Deceivers do not die willingly for a lie.
- 1 Corinthians 15:12 – 19 Verifying the evidence is important
 - Some have claimed that the facts do not need to be historically accurate because Christianity is just a good way to live anyway. Paul disagrees.
 - (13 – 15) If the facts related by the writers of the Bible were not accurate, then those writers were deceivers. Do you want to live by a code of conduct promoted by con men?
 - (16 – 18) If the facts in the Bible are not accurate, then the justice problem remains.
 - (19) Living a lie is pitiable.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:14 Further promises from God are based on the historical facts. Life after physical death is one of those. (See also Romans 6:4 – 9)
- Acts 1:3, 2:24 – 32, 17:31 The fact of Jesus' resurrection was used as evidence to crowds of non-Christians. If it were a fraud, it would have been challenged. In that time, frauds were killed on the spot by angry mobs.
- Romans 10:9 Understanding that Jesus' resurrection is an historical fact is essential for being acceptable to God.

In Addition, God Provided Some Illustrations of More Difficult Concepts

- Marriage between Christians illustrates the relationship between Jesus and His church (Ephesians 5:22 – 33, Romans 7:1 – 4) The point is to show how one can have liberty and be a follower at the same time. The essential concepts are mutual trust and selfless concern. With these, relationships succeed.
- Physical death was included in creation as an illustration of separation of a spirit from God. (Romans 7:9, 1 Corinthians 15:21, 2 Timothy 1:10, 1 John 3:14). Spirits do not cease to exist. How do they relate to one another? The illustration emphasizes that those who choose not to work with the group are separated so that those who choose to be connected can do so.
- Sacrifice was designed by God to remind people that justice must be satisfied (redemption) and that relationships can be restored (forgiveness). However, sacrifice is not a negative experience as suggested by the modern usage of the word. Rather, sacrifice is a celebration of forgiveness with family and friends in the presence of God. So, Christians are "living sacrifices," illustrating the joyful nature that should characterize life.
- The unity and character development of believers demonstrates the miraculous nature of the Kingdom (John 17:20 – 23).