

Room for Doubt

How Uncertainty Can Deepen Your Faith

Ben Young

Appendix

Can You Trust the Bible?

*“It is not certain that
everything is uncertain.”*

Blaise Pascal

Some skeptics believe the Bible is full of myths. However, this belief is not well founded when you look at the actual contents of the Bible. I mentioned Bart Ehrman several times in this book and how he left the Christian faith. Some of his skepticism came from seeing variances in the texts that throw some people off track.

However, there are so many conservative scholars, like Daniel Wallace, J. I. Packer, and Richard Pratt, who hold to inerrancy while understanding the variances in the text. I would put myself in the same camp. I hold to inerrancy while embracing the numerous yet insignificant variances. You don't have to go through a season of doubt and lose your trust in the Bible or your faith altogether. Check out the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy if you need detailed help explaining how minor variances do not affect the inerrancy of the Bible.

I wrote the following section to help Christians answer the claims of skeptics who say, "The Bible is full of myths," or "You can't believe the Bible because it contains miracle stories," or "Monks changed the words over the years of translating."

Not the Stuff Myths Are Made Of

First of all, if you were to say the Bible is full of myths, I would have to ask you what you mean by the word *myth*. If you have read the Bible and have studied classical literature at all, you have seen that the Bible is not written in a mythical style. Nor does it read like a fairy tale, which is highly fanciful. It reads like a record of history that contains a wide variety of literary genres—biography, poetry, narrative, and eyewitness accounts.

Let's take a moment to look more closely at one of these eyewitness accounts. See how realistic in nature John's account of the Pharisees and the adulteress is. These self-righteous men

threw her at the feet of Jesus, testing Him to see if He would condemn this “obvious sinner.” Instead of condemning her, the writer reported that Jesus quietly began writing in the sand. This is exactly what a true eyewitness would tell us—details he understood no more than we do. This is not the sort of detail that ends up in legends.

And what of the specific names and dates in the gospel accounts that place them on an actual timeline? (For example, Luke mentions a census that took place “while Quirinius was governor of Syria.”) These are not characteristic of the vagueness of legends either. Consider all the little insights into character we get as well. Legends don’t have such depth. If the Gospels are not genuine eyewitness accounts and are merely fantasy or legend, then not only did these Galilean commoners invent the biggest and most successful hoax in human history, but they also created a unique and unprecedented literary form—the realistic fantasy—and that is highly unlikely.¹

Here’s a thought: perhaps the reason people see the Bible as mythical is not because it has the characteristics of myths but because myths have the characteristics of the Bible.

Do You Believe in Miracles?

Most often, when people say they have a problem with the Bible because it seems mythical, what they are really saying is they have a problem with the supernatural—the parting of the Red

Sea, the virgin birth, the walking on water, and the raising of the dead (just to name a few). Skeptics say: “The Bible is basically a bunch of myths ... miracles like that don’t happen these days, and if they don’t happen now, why would they have happened then?” In other words, “We now live in a modern, enlightened world, and everyone knows that miracles do not happen because they are contrary to the laws of nature.”

How do you know miracles do not happen today? Let’s think about this question for just a moment. How much information would you really need to make such a claim? How much data about the natural realm would you have to have at your disposal to know for a fact that miracles are impossible? The answer is obvious if you’re intellectually honest with yourself: you would have to know every conceivable fact of science to make the grandiose claim that a supernatural world does not exist.

How do you account for the immutable laws of nature, given your worldview? How do you know that nature operates in a law-like manner? Perhaps you would answer, “I know nature obeys certain laws because I can see and test those laws.” The first problem with that answer is this: not all of nature is contained in your minute experience. In philosophical argumentation, you are guilty of a *hasty generalization*, which means you are taking a tiny bit of evidence and universalizing it.

The second problem with your answer is a little more complicated: if all you can know is what you can see and test, then you really can know very little. Why? Because you cannot be

sure the knowledge you take in at this present moment can be applied to the past or to the future. You may *assume* it applies, but you cannot *know*—because you can neither go back in time nor jump to the future to test it. This is one of the reasons atheistic philosopher David Hume said we cannot see causation (the relationship between causes and effects). In other words, you cannot determine that A necessarily causes B simply because B happens to follow A at a given point in time. You can see that B may follow A *most* of the time, but you cannot possibly know that it always has or always will.

You can learn a lot about the difference between causation and mere correlation from Lisa Simpson in this humorous scene that appeared in an episode of *The Simpsons*:

Homer: Not a bear in sight. The “Bear Patrol”
must be working like a charm!

Lisa: That’s specious reasoning, Dad.

Homer: Thank you, dear.

Lisa: By your logic, I could claim that this rock
keeps tigers away.

Homer: Oh, how does it work?

Lisa: It doesn’t work.

Homer: Uh-huh.

Lisa: It’s just a stupid rock. But I don’t see any
tigers around, do you?

Homer: Lisa, I want to buy your rock.²

If you cannot see causation, then you cannot say with any authority that there are certain laws nature has always and will always obey. Therefore, to reason that you can know that miracles are impossible simply because Mother Nature follows certain rules is completely arbitrary, given your inability to account for these rules. The truth is, in order to do science or math, or even think and argue logically, you need an omniscient and omnipresent God who providentially controls and guides the universe in a predictable way.³

Have Monks Morphed the Texts?

A common argument skeptics use to cast doubt on the reliability of the Bible is to say it has been “embellished” over the centuries. Maybe you agree with them and would say to me: “How can you be sure the Bible you have today is the original? Surely the scribes and monks who made copies of the original manuscripts changed the texts through the years, and therefore, no one can really know for sure if it contains the true words of Christ.” Well, do you have evidence to back your claim? What if I said I didn’t think Mark Twain really wrote *Huckleberry Finn* and accused him of plagiarizing the whole thing? I can make that argument all day long, but it is mere opinion if I don’t provide you with evidence. Where is the evidence that medieval monks tampered with the original?

Furthermore, do you have any knowledge in the field of textual criticism? Here's what author and scholar Helmut Koester has to say on how the New Testament (NT) fits in that field:

Classical authors are often represented by but one surviving manuscript; if there are half a dozen or more, one can speak of a rather advantageous situation for reconstructing the text. But there are nearly five thousand manuscripts of the NT in Greek ... The only surviving manuscripts of classical authors often come from the Middle Ages, but the manuscript tradition of the NT begins as early as the end of [the second century AD]; it is therefore separated by only a century or so from the time at which the autographs were written. Thus it seems that NT textual criticism possesses a base which is far more advantageous than that for the textual criticism of classical authors.⁴

Let's look at Plato as an example of the type of classical author Koester is talking about. Does anyone doubt that the words we read from *The Republic* are indeed Plato's words? Probably not. What about the history of the manuscript? Well, Plato wrote it in about 355 BC, and the earliest manuscript we have is from AD 900. That's a gap of more than twelve centuries, for those of you keeping score at home.

Now, let's take the Scriptures, specifically the New Testament. It was written between AD 50 and AD 90, and the earliest manuscripts we have are from around the year AD 100. That's a gap of only fifty years at most. That's not a significant amount of time for tweaking of epic proportions—pun intended. (What would have been the monks' motivation anyway?) Here's what even a liberal scholar like John A. T. Robinson says about the credibility of Scripture: "The wealth of manuscripts, and above all the narrow interval of time between the writing and the earliest extant copies, make it by far the best attested text of any ancient writing in the world."⁵

The New Testament and the Old Testament—check out the Dead Sea Scrolls if you want more evidence—are reliable books of antiquity. Their historical credibility is verified not only through stout manuscript evidence but also through continuing archaeological discoveries that support the evidence for the lives of the people and the events mentioned in their pages.

Longevity and Reliability

And something must be said for the Bible's longevity. Look at what the *Times* of London said about it:

Forget modern British novelists and TV tie-ins.
The Bible is the best-selling book every year. If
sales of the Bible were included in best-seller

lists, it would be a rare week when anything else would achieve a look-in. It is wonderful, weird ... that in this godless age ... this one book should go on selling, every month.⁶

Further, the Bible has been translated more times and into *more* languages than any other book. Highly unlikely stats for a book with sketchy credibility, wouldn't you say? On top of all that, we could look at the Bible's amazing influence on political figures, thinkers, writers, emperors ... you name it. Here are just a few examples:⁷

- *Abraham Lincoln*: "I believe the Bible is the best gift God has ever given man. All the good from the Saviour of the world is communicated to us through this book."
- *George Washington*: "It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible."
- *Napoléon*: "The Bible is no mere book, but a Living Creature, with a power that conquers all that oppose it."
- *Daniel Webster*: "If there is anything in my thoughts or style to commend, the credit is due to my parents for instilling in me an early love of the Scriptures ... If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will go on prospering and to prosper; but if

we and our posterity neglect its instructions and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury all our glory in profound obscurity.”

- *Thomas Carlyle*: “The Bible is the truest utterance that ever came by alphabetic letters from the soul of man, through which, as through a window divinely opened, all men can look into the stillness of eternity, and discern in glimpses their far distant, long forgotten home.”
- *Thomas Huxley*: “The Bible has been the Magna Carta of the poor and oppressed. The human race is not in a position to dispense with it.”
- *Immanuel Kant*: “The existence of the Bible, as a book for the people, is the greatest benefit which the human race has ever experienced. Every attempt to belittle it is a crime against humanity.”
- *Charles Dickens*: “The New Testament is the very best book that ever was or ever will be known in the world.”
- *Sir Isaac Newton*: “There are more sure marks of authenticity in the Bible than in any profane history.”

Either all these people were duped, or there is, indeed, something powerful about this book.

The Bible Is Bad Propaganda

There is one last argument I would like to make for the credibility of the Bible. Some say that the Bible is nothing more than a piece of propaganda that's been used by political figures throughout history to further their own agendas.

Here's why that line of reasoning does not work: The Bible makes a really bad piece of propaganda. The Scriptures are fraught with the many failures of its main characters and even heroes.

- We can start with Noah, who got drunk and passed out naked.
- There was Abraham, who lied about his wife being his sister on more than one occasion because he was afraid for his life.
- Moses was a murderer.
- David was an adulterer *and* a murderer.
- Solomon made pagan women his wives and lost his closeness with God.
- Judas—one of the original disciples—turned Jesus in for a meager thirty pieces of silver and then committed suicide.

- Peter denied Christ three times.
- Saul (later Paul) had followers of Jesus stoned to death while he looked on with approval.

And these are the guys who messed up. What about the innocent ones who were persecuted, sold into slavery, beaten, thrown to the lions, and even killed in some cases—like Abel, Joseph, Daniel, all the disciples ... and Jesus Himself! A good piece of propaganda would not expose the faults of its so-called heroes, nor would it highlight the sufferings of those faithful to it.

Who Is Your Ultimate Authority?

All of us turn to an authoritative source for answers and information that will help us make sense of the world we live in. For the world of finance, many people turn to *The Wall Street Journal*. In the world of fashion, *Vogue* and *GQ* are respected authorities. When it comes to ultimate issues, perhaps your standard is empiricism (“Seeing is believing”) or rationalism (“I think, therefore I am”). But whether you would define yourself as an empiricist or a rationalist, what you’re ultimately saying is this: you are your own authority when it comes to deciding life’s truths. As a Christian, I turn to the Bible as my authoritative source for answers about life.

As I write this, I can already hear your concern: “But why do you accept the Bible as the only divinely inspired book?”

Why not accept the Koran or the Bhagavad Gita as well?" My response is twofold:

1. The Bible is uniquely inspired and, as such, presents a unique worldview. It claims to be God's very words, and it instructs us that other sources that contradict or distort these words are to be dismissed. This does not mean I cannot find some truth in Buddhism, Hinduism, or Islam. However, ultimate truth is found in God's once-and-for-all revelation to mankind: the Bible. I have yet to find a more complete, authoritative source for life and all of its complexity.

2. Jesus is my ultimate authority. He claimed to be God revealed in a person, so His words are more authoritative than those of any other religious leader. My belief in the authority of the Bible also stems from my faith commitment to Jesus Christ, who regarded the Scriptures as authoritative and commissioned His followers to pass on His message to all people, in all places.

So, everyone has a standard to which he or she turns in order to make sense of reality. My standard is the revelation

of God, who has no other need for verification. (That's what makes God, *God*.) If there is a God who stands outside of temporal reality, then He has the ultimate interpretation on every fact in the known world and beyond. This does not mean that I, or any other Christian, have "all the answers," but it does mean we have placed our trust in Someone who does.

You may say this is a cop-out, but you can't avoid trust—it's a given everywhere around us and in everything we do. We are all believers—it's just a matter of who or what we choose to believe in. You may have noticed that throughout this book, I've refrained from using the terms *believers* and *unbelievers* to refer to Christians and non-Christians. Why? Because "doing so would encourage the totally erroneous notion that 'believing' or 'having faith' is something only some of us do," explains Michael Guillen, former ABC News science correspondent and theoretical physicist. "Truth is, every one of us 'believes.' Every one of us 'has faith.' What divides us are the different objects of our faith, our different gods."⁸

So suppose for a moment there is a God who rules everything and is the Creator—the Eternal, the All-powerful, and the All-knowing. Could you think of any higher authority than this God? What kind of God would He be if He needed a mere man or a mere man's philosophy to vouch for Him? He certainly wouldn't be very "God-like," would He? Therefore, wouldn't you expect this God to speak with self-attesting authority? Who else could authenticate His revelation to humans? How could

any person know what this God would say and be like in order to confirm this revelation?

Really, it comes down to this: If you will not accept the Bible on its own terms, then what you are saying is that you will never accept a revelation from God. Only God, if He is God, could reveal Himself with final authority, and that is exactly what He does. So those who reject the Bible reject it not for reasons of hard evidence but simply because they have a different absolute measure by which they judge truth. I presuppose the Bible as my ultimate authority and foundation for truth, and they presuppose their own minds.

Let's take a breather and simplify for a moment. Questioning the authority or authenticity of the Bible is, for me, a little like deconstructing "Mary Had a Little Lamb." Think about it. We could all hone in on particular aspects and pose our questions. For example, how little was the lamb exactly? Was it really little or just little in comparison to Mary? Perhaps Mary is rather large. Did the lamb really follow her *everywhere* she would go? If it did, then why does it specifically say that it followed her to school one day? Perhaps we must not take "everywhere that she would go" literally.

And on and on it goes, but no matter where our questions take us, we're still left with the same undeniable facts: Mary *did* have a lamb. Its fleece was white, and it did go with her to school.

By the same token, no matter how much you want to deconstruct and question the Scriptures, you are still left with some

unavoidable facts: There was a woman named Mary. She had a son named Jesus. He had many followers who wrote about Him and who spread His claim that He was the Son of God. He was referred to as the “Lamb of God.” And He changed the course of human history.⁹

Tips For Reading: Context Is King

A bit of literary instruction would be fitting here. Have you ever heard a tidbit of information out of its entire context and then later heard it in its entirety and, as a result, saw it from a different perspective? For example, let’s say you walk by your boss’s office and hear, “Yes, I agree that [*your name here*] should definitely not be included.” Prior to making the decision to jump out of your twenty-story office window, it would first behoove you to find out exactly what it is you are not to be included in. It may in fact be a plus not to be included in the next round of layoffs that were being discussed prior to your overhearing that one small phrase without context.

Too often, parts of the Bible are taken in pieces—outside of the context of the Bible in its entirety—and its message is distorted. Let’s take the following extreme but salient example. Perhaps you are somewhat in despair regarding your current life situation and are looking for advice or encouragement from the Bible. You randomly open the Bible to Matthew 27:5b and read, “And he [Judas] went away and hanged himself” (NASB).

Thinking this can't possibly be the word of advice you were seeking, you turn randomly but hopefully to Luke 10:37b and read, "Then Jesus said, 'Go and do likewise'" (NASB).

Interpretation of Scripture is of utmost importance. You cannot and should not interpret every genre the Bible contains in the same way. Not all words strung together are created equally. Words have meaning of their own, but they have greater and varied meaning within the context of the surrounding words. The context contains the purpose and intent with which they were spoken or written.

This is not only true of the Holy Bible. Many things are only fitting and helpful considering their intended use. Product instructions for assembling a new bicycle are not amusing as a bedtime story. Likewise, the nursery rhyme "Old Mother Hubbard" is not helpful in assembling a new bicycle out of a box. Consider this traffic law: stop at all intersections with a red traffic light. Not entertaining or amusing, nor is it literary genius, but it is very beneficial to protect you and the other drivers and pedestrians on the road around you.

Just as each of these phrases should be considered in the context in which they were intended, various passages of the Bible should also be considered within the appropriate genre in which they were written. Parts of the Bible are written as history, while other parts are written as poetry. And they must be read as such.

In life, we can easily recognize the intent and purpose of most writing whether it comes in the newspaper or a children's

book or out of a new appliance box. However, we are prone to take the Bible out of context. When reading Scripture, first consider the literary genre (historical narrative, poetry, etc.) and then read it within the context in which it was originally written.

©
Copyrighted Material

Small Group or Bible Study Questions

Chapter 1: You Are Not Alone

1. What are the most difficult questions you ask God?
2. Describe what it's like to wrestle with doubt.
3. How has your relationship with your earthly father affected your relationship with God?
4. What's the connection between doubt and courage?
5. Reflect on or discuss the Kierkegaard quote "Life can only be understood backwards."

Chapter 2: Sliding on Ice

1. Describe your emotional state during a time of doubt.
2. Why do we see doubt as an enemy of faith?
3. How can doubt be a positive element in your life?
4. Examine or discuss the relationship between faith, certainty, and doubt.
5. Why do most people keep their doubt a secret?
6. How has this chapter changed your understanding of faith and doubt?

Chapter 3: Throwing Dishes at God

1. How have you processed those seasons of orientation, disorientation, and reorientation in your relationship with God? Talk about those seasons.
2. The story of Job often disturbs its readers. How do you feel about this visceral story?

3. Do you believe it's okay to vent at God like Job did? Why, or why not?
4. "Pain entered into, accepted, and owned can become poetry." How can we make that a reality in our lives?

Chapter 4: Demanding Evidence

1. What evidence for the existence of God do you find outside of the Bible?
2. Given the reality that Thomas saw Jesus perform miracles, why did he doubt?
3. Think of a time in your life when you felt isolated in doubt as John the Baptist did. Describe where you were when it happened.
4. Fill in the blank. All my doubts would cease if God would _____.
5. Explain why miracles do not guarantee belief in God.

Chapter 5: Famous Doubters

1. Who are some of your heroes, and why do you admire them?

2. How do you relate to Mother Teresa's doubt about not feeling loved by God?
3. Mother Teresa, Martin Luther, or C. S. Lewis—whose doubt story surprised you the most? Why?
4. Talk about or write down some methods you've used to deal with doubt in your life. Which ones were most effective?
5. How do you feel about the way C. S. Lewis dealt with his anger toward God?

Chapter 6: Disappointed with God

1. Describe a time in your life when you felt God let you down.
2. What questions flood your mind when you are disappointed with God?
3. How do you process disappointment? What's your default response?
4. "There were others" has a haunting feel to it. How does this section of Hebrews 11 affect your view of faith?
5. Which five books of the Bible would you take to a deserted island? Explain the reason why you chose each book.

6. How can doubt strengthen your faith? What does it mean to “lean into doubt”?

Chapter 7: Searching For Certainty

1. Describe an area of cognitive dissonance in your life and how you attempt to resolve that tension.
2. How did modernism affect the Christian faith?
3. Discuss which worldview—modern or postmodern—is most compatible with Christianity.
4. How does our culture affect the way we think and live?
5. Explain the reasons why certainty sells across so many diverse cultures and religions.
6. How does certainty eliminate the need for faith?

Chapter 8: Letting Go of Certainty

1. How can clarity or certainty become an idol in our lives?

2. What are some of the ways we seek to achieve a sense of certainty? Think outside the box of religion.
3. How is our reason limited?
4. Are science and religion compatible? Explain your answer.
5. What does letting go of certainty look like for you?

Chapter 9: Burning Down the House

1. Describe the wide variety of foundations on which we build our lives.
2. How do you relate to the four layers laid out in this chapter? Describe the layers in your life.
3. List the essential elements of the Christian faith. Which ones are nonnegotiable?
4. Have you ever had doubts concerning your salvation? How have you dealt with those doubts?
5. Luther emphasized that the gospel is outside of you. What does that mean?

6. Christianity is a life experience, not a thought experiment.
Discuss that statement.

Chapter 10: The Moon Is Round

1. If you have ever attended a Twelve Step group, describe that experience.
2. Where are some safe places you go to deal with doubt?
3. What aspects of Christianity trouble you? Do these aspects create doubt?
4. What emotions surround doubt? Why is shame most common?
5. Discuss new ways to befriend doubt.
6. Do you have any “the moon is round” reminders in your life?
Write them down, or share them.

Notes

Chapter 1: You Are Not Alone

1. Paul C. Vitz, *Faith of the Fatherless: The Psychology of Atheism* (Dallas: Spence, 1999), 20, 26–31, 47–48, 104–7.
2. Søren Kierkegaard, *Journals IV A 164* (1843). Full quote is “It is perfectly true, as the philosophers say, that life must be understood backwards. But they forget the other proposition, that it must be lived forwards.”
3. Julia Baird, “Doubt as a Sign of Faith,” *New York Times*, September 25, 2014, www.nytimes.com/2014/09/26/opinion/julia-baird-doubt-as-a-sign-of-faith.html.
4. Paul Tillich, *Dynamics of Faith* (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), 117–18.

5. Jon Acuff, “The Scars Are Lighthouses,” *Stuff Christians Like*, December 4, 2013, <http://stuffchristianslike.net/2013/12/04/scars-lighthouses/>.
6. Leighton Ford, *The Attentive Life: Discerning God’s Presence in All Things* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014), 79–80.

Chapter 2: Sliding on Ice

1. Kallistos Ware, *The Orthodox Way* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1979), 16.
2. Os Guinness, *God in the Dark: The Assurance of Faith beyond a Shadow of Doubt* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1996).
3. Lee Strobel, *The Case for Christ: A Journalist’s Personal Investigation of the Evidence for Jesus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998), 9–19.
4. To be clear, I believe in the inerrancy of Scripture, but what I am referring to here is the naïve, wooden belief that our current manuscripts do not contain variances.
5. Bart Ehrman, *Misquoting Jesus: The Story behind Who Changed the Bible and Why* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 1–16.
6. Christopher Hitchens, *God Is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything* (New York: Twelve/Hachette, 2007), 1–13.
7. Peter Hitchens, *The Rage against God: How Atheism Led Me to Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 9–29.
8. Daniel Taylor, *The Skeptical Believer: Telling Stories to Your Inner Atheist* (St. Paul, MN: BOG Walk, 2013), 10–11.
9. Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking: A Theological ABC* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1973), 20.

10. Hank Hanegraaff, *Christianity in Crisis* (Eugene, OR: Harvest, 1993), 66–71.
11. Gregory Boyd, *Benefit of the Doubt: Breaking the Idol of Certainty* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2013), 199.
12. Boyd, *Benefit of the Doubt*, 196.
13. Author paraphrase of David K. Clark, *Dialogical Apologetics: A Person-Centered Approach to Christian Defense* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 18.
14. Clark, *Dialogical Apologetics*, 19.
15. Quoted in Christopher H. K. Persuad, *Famous People Speak about Jesus* (Xlibris Corporation, 2004), 181, www.xlibris.com.
16. Ware, *Orthodox Way*, 16.

Chapter 3: Throwing Dishes at God

1. Dan Allender, “The Hidden Hope in Lament,” Allender Center, Seattle School of Theology and Psychology, June 2, 2016, <http://theallendercenter.org/2016/06/hidden-hope-lament/>.
2. Noted in Walter Brueggemann, *The Psalms and the Life of Faith* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1995), 201, ebook.
3. Peter Kreeft, *Three Philosophies of Life: Ecclesiastes, Life as Vanity, Job, Life as Suffering, Song of Songs, Life as Love* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1989), 91.
4. Mike Mason, *The Gospel According to Job: An Honest Look at Pain and Doubt from the Life of One Who Lost Everything* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1994), 55–57.

5. Gary R. Habermas, *The Thomas Factor: Using Your Doubts to Draw Closer to God* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 1999), 12.
6. Jennifer Michael Hecht, interview by Krista Tippett, “Speaking of Faith,” American Public Media transcript, May 3, 2007.
7. Jerry Sittser, *A Grace Disguised: How the Soul Grows through Loss* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 24–27.
8. Stephen Shortridge, *Deepest Thanks, Deeper Apologies: Reconciling Deeply Held Faith with Honest Doubt* (Brentwood, TN: Worthy, 2011), 8.
9. Kreeft, *Three Philosophies*, 88.
10. Ann O’Neill, “The Reinvention of Ted Turner,” CNN, November 17, 2013, www.cnn.com/2013/11/17/us/ted-turner-profile/.
11. Sittser, *Grace Disguised*, 24–27.
12. Eugene H. Peterson, *First and Second Samuel* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1999), 144.

Chapter 4: Demanding Evidence

1. Madeleine L’Engle, *Two-Part Invention: The Story of a Marriage*, The Crosswicks Journal, bk. 4 (New York: HarperOne, 1989).
2. Bertrand Russell, *Bertrand Russell on God and Religion*, ed. Al Seckel (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1986), 11.
3. “George Müller, Orphanages Built by Prayer,” Christianity.com, accessed April 5, 2017, www.christianity.com/church/church-history/church-history-for-kids/george-mueller-orphanages-built-by-prayer-11634869.html.
4. Lee Strobel’s *The Case for Christ* and *The Case for the Resurrection* utilize this same evidential approach for proving the truthfulness of

- Christianity. I highly recommend both books as tools for presenting Christ to the wary listeners you might encounter.
5. V. Raymond Edman, *The Disciplines of Life* (Eugene, OR: Harvest, 1982), 33.
 6. Frederick Buechner, *Secrets in the Dark: A Life in Sermons* (New York: HarperCollins, 2006).

Chapter 5: Famous Doubters

1. C. S. Lewis, *A Grief Observed* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), Kindle edition.
2. Frank Newport, “Mother Teresa Voted by American People as Most Admired Person of the Century,” Gallup, December 31, 1999, www.gallup.com/poll/3367/mother-teresa-voted-american-people-most-admired-person-century.aspx?version=print.
3. Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light: The Private Writings of the “Saint of Calcutta,”* ed. Brian Kolodiejchuk (New York: Doubleday Religion, 2007), 405.
4. Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 291.
5. Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 210.
6. Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 288.
7. Chris R. Armstrong, “A History of Darkness,” *Leadership Journal*, vol. 32, no. 4 (fall 2011), www.christianitytoday.com/le/2011/fall/historydarkness.html.
8. Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 214.
9. Armstrong, “A History of Darkness.”
10. Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 214.

11. Armstrong, "A History of Darkness."
12. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together: The Classic Exploration of Christian Community* (New York: HarperOne, 2009), 23.
13. Martin Marty, *Martin Luther: A Life* (New York: Penguin, 2008), Kindle edition, chap. 3.
14. Mark U. Edwards Jr., "Luther as Skeptic," *Christian Century*, November 17–24, 1999, www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=1493.
15. Erik H. Erikson, *Young Man Luther: A Study in Psychoanalysis and History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1958), 58.
16. Armstrong, "A History of Darkness."
17. Armstrong, "A History of Darkness."
18. Armstrong, "A History of Darkness."
19. Marty, *Martin Luther*, 409–13.
20. Marty, *Martin Luther*, 417–24.
21. Marty, *Martin Luther*, 417–24.
22. M. J. Porter, "Wheaton College to Screen C. S. Lewis Documentary," *Daily Herald*, October 20, 2001, www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-79384514.html.
23. "The Chronicles of Narnia," Box Office Mojo, accessed April 5, 2017, www.boxofficemojo.com/franchises/chart/?id=chroniclesofnarnia.htm.
24. Clyde S. Kilby, *The Christian World of C. S. Lewis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 13.
25. C. S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life* (Orlando, FL: Harcourt, 1995), 132–33.

26. Kilby, *Christian World of C. S. Lewis*, 16.
27. Kilby, *Christian World of C. S. Lewis*, 18–19.
28. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*, 221.
29. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*, 222.
30. Kilby, *Christian World of C. S. Lewis*, 19–20.
31. Walter Hooper, in preface to *Lewis, Christian Reflections* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1967), vii.
32. C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (London: Collins, 1952), 54–56.
33. Lewis, *Grief Observed*, chap. 2.
34. Lewis, *Grief Observed*, chap. 3.
35. Lewis, *Grief Observed*, chap. 22.
36. “H” is how Lewis referred to his wife, Joy Davidman, in the book *A Grief Observed*, which he originally wrote under the pseudonym N. W. Clerk.
37. Lewis, *Grief Observed*, chap. 27.
38. Lewis, *Grief Observed*, chap. 40.
39. Lewis, *Grief Observed*, chap. 28.
40. Lewis, *Grief Observed*, chaps. 15–16.
41. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 140.
42. Madeleine L’Engle, foreword to Lewis, *Grief Observed*.

Chapter 6: Disappointed with God

1. Michael Leunig, *The Prayer Tree* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992).

2. Eugene Peterson, *Reversed Thunder: The Revelation of John and the Praying Imagination* (New York: Harper Collins, 1991).
3. Stanley Hauerwas, *God, Medicine, and Suffering* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994).
4. Peter De Vries, *The Blood of the Lamb* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961).
5. Hauerwas, *God, Medicine, and Suffering*, 84.
6. I realize I will be criticized for insinuating that Jesus Christ doubted. I am aware of the theological problems that causes. Whether He doubted is not what I wish to argue. What is important is the question He asked. What He said is not up for debate, so just read His words and let them speak to you.
7. Quoted in Roger Lundin, *Emily Dickinson and the Art of Belief* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004), 3.
8. Hauerwas, *God, Medicine, and Suffering*, 84.

Chapter 7: Searching For Certainty

1. Leanne Payne, *The Healing Presence: Curing the Soul through Union with Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995), 183–84.
2. Peter Enns, “The Benefit of Doubt: Coming to Terms with Faith in a Postmodern Era,” lecture, Asuza Pacific University, November 16, 2010, text available at <http://peterennsonline.com/2010/11/24/the-benefit-of-doubt-coming-to-terms-with-faith-in-a-post-modern-era/>.

3. Bradley Sickler, "Conflicts between Science and Religion," Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, February 11, 2009, accessed June 1, 2014, www.iep.utm.edu/.
4. Trevor Hart, *Faith Thinking: The Dynamics of Christian Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1995), 29.
5. Ralph Allan Smith, "The Harmony of Faith and Reason: Why Believe the Bible?," Covenant Worldview Institute, 1998, www.berith.org/essays/apol/apol01.html.
6. John Cottingham, "Descartes, Doubt and Knowledge," iTunes University, Open University, June 13, 2011, www.open.edu/openlearn/history-the-arts/philosophy/exploring-philosophy?track=10.
7. Cottingham, "Descartes."
8. Smith, "Harmony."
9. Hart, *Faith Thinking*, 34.
10. Lesslie Newbigin, *Proper Confidence: Faith, Doubt, and Certainty in Christian Discipleship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1995), 25.
11. Enns, "Benefit of Doubt."
12. James Sire, *The Universe Next Door* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2009), 225.
13. Robertson Davies, *The Manticore* (New York: Penguin, 1972), 212.
14. Newbigin, *Proper Confidence*, 18.
15. Bart Ehrman, *Misquoting Jesus: The Story behind Who Changed the Bible and Why* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 1–16.
16. Daniel Taylor, *The Myth of Certainty: The Reflective Christian and the Risk of Commitment* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1999), 17–18, 152–53.

17. Jim Tour, interview by Ben Young, Houston, Texas, August 2009.
18. Dallas Willard, *Hearing God: Developing a Conversational Relationship with God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2012), 283.

Chapter 8: Letting Go of Certainty

1. Mark Batterson, *In a Pit with a Lion on a Snowy Day: How to Survive and Thrive When Opportunity Roars* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah, 2016), 93.
2. Peter Enns, “The Benefit of Doubt: Coming to Terms with Faith in a Postmodern Era,” lecture, Asuza Pacific University, November 16, 2010, text available at <http://peterennsonline.com/2010/11/24/the-benefit-of-doubt-coming-to-terms-with-faith-in-a-post-modern-era/>.
3. Daniel Taylor, *The Myth of Certainty: The Reflective Christian and the Risk of Commitment* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1999), 68.
4. James Spiegel, *The Making of an Atheist: How Immorality Leads to Unbelief* (Chicago: Moody, 2010).
5. Thomas Nagel, as quoted in J. Budziszewski, “The Second Tablet Project,” *First Things*, June/July 2002, 28.
6. Richard P. Feynman, *Six Easy Pieces: Essentials of Physics Explained by Its Most Brilliant Teacher* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1994), 138.
7. Quoted in Dean Nelson, “Why Certainty about God Is Overrated,” *USA Today*, August 29, 2011, 7A.

8. *Blaise Pascal: Quotes and Facts*, ed. Blago Kirov, trans. Krasi Vasileva (CreateSpace Independent, 2016), 13.
9. Taylor, *Myth of Certainty*, 25.
10. Taylor, *Myth of Certainty*, 6.
11. Timothy Keller, *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism* (New York: Penguin, 2008).
12. Quoted in Nelson, “Why Certainty about God Is Overrated.”
13. Quoted in Philip Yancey, *Reaching for the Invisible God: What Can We Expect to Find?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000), chap. 4.
14. Enns, “Benefit of Doubt.”

Chapter 9: Burning Down the House

1. B. B. Warfield, quoted in Kenneth Boa and Robert M. Bowman Jr, *Faith Has Its Reasons: Integrative Approaches to Defending the Christian Faith* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006), 84.
2. Letter from Martin Luther to Philip Melanchthon, Wartburg, August 1, 1521, Luther’s *Works*, vol. 48, p. 282.
3. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together: The Classic Exploration of Christian Community* (New York: HarperOne, 2009), 22.
4. Leanne Payne, *The Healing Presence: Curing the Soul through Union with Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995), 184.
5. *Daily Readings with Søren Kierkegaard* (Springfield, IL: Templegate, 1991), 34.

6. C. Stephen Evans addresses this concept in his book *Why Believe?: Reason and Mystery as Pointers to God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), Kindle edition, chap 8.
7. *The God Who Is There*, in *The Francis A. Schaeffer Trilogy: Three Essential Books in One Volume* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1990).

Chapter 10: The Moon Is Round

1. Anne Lamott, *Plan B: Further Thoughts on Faith* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2006), 257.
2. Stephen King, *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010).
3. This note is for any of you who may hail from the ultra-conservative perspective and are leery of this leniency of the AA program to have grace for those who don't immediately and wholly accept the complete inerrancy of Scripture. Dr. James R. DeLoach is a lifelong godly mentor of mine. He is ninety-one years old, and he was a valiant warrior in the battle for inerrancy in the Southern Baptist Convention in the 1980s. He once told me that, over his lifetime, he has seen untold numbers of people come to faith in Christ through the AA program, in fact more so than through any other overtly evangelistic ministry.
4. Philip Yancey, "Faith and Doubt," 2009, accessed April 6, 2017, PhilipYancey.com, <http://philipyancey.com/q-and-a-topics/faith-and-doubt>.
5. John Bradshaw, *Bradshaw on the Family: A New Way of Creating Solid Self-Esteem* (Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications, 1988), 2–3.

6. Brennan Manning, *Ruthless Trust: The Ragamuffin's Path to God* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 104.
7. Robert M. Baird, "The Creative Role of Doubt in Religion," *Journal of Religion and Health* 19, no. 3 (fall 1980), 172–79, www.jstor.org/stable/27505571.
8. Martin Marty, *Martin Luther: A Life* (New York: Penguin, 2008), Kindle edition, 336–45.
9. Marty, *Martin Luther*, 336–45.
10. Bryan Chapell, *The Hardest Sermons You'll Ever Have to Preach: Help from Trusted Preachers for Tragic Times* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011).

Appendix: Can You Trust the Bible?

1. Much of this chapter was influenced by Peter Kreeft, *Between Heaven and Hell* (Madison, WI: InterVarsity, 1982), 75–80.
2. "Much Apu about Nothing," *The Simpsons*, Fox Broadcasting Company (May 5, 1996).
3. Dr. Gregory Bahnsen used this line of argumentation in his epic 1985 debate with Dr. Gordon Stein, the former editor of *Skeptic Magazine*.
4. Helmut Koester, *History and Literature of Early Christianity*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), 16–17.
5. John A. T. Robinson, *Can We Trust the New Testament?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977), 36.
6. *The Times* (London, England), www.soon.org.uk/page19.htm, referenced March 22, 2006.

7. *People's Gospel Hour*, "The Gospel Standard," vol. 44, no. 1 (September 1994): 17–18.
8. Michael Guillen, *Can a Smart Person Believe in God?* (Nashville, TN: Nelson Books, 2004), 2.
9. Adapted from Richard Pratt, "A Deconstruction of 'Mary Had a Little Lamb'" (lecture, Second Baptist Church, Houston, Texas, March 7, 2003).

©
Copyrighted Material