

PREMISE 1

The Bible Exceeds The Historical Reliability Test

Open-Book Review

Use ThinkCube to answer the following questions. The purpose isn't to test your memory, but to help you review and reinforce the most important ideas from this premise.

1. Which question is part of the historical reliability test for an ancient document?

- A. Was it written close to the events it describes?
- B. Was it written in English?
- C. Was the author famous?
- D. Is the book still popular today?

2. Why are eyewitnesses and people close to an event valuable to historians?

- A. They can provide firsthand or near-firsthand information
- B. They always agree on every detail
- C. They cannot make mistakes
- D. They do not need supporting evidence

3. Which kind of evidence can help verify people, places, and events mentioned in the Bible?

- A. Archaeology and other ancient historical sources
- B. Modern novels
- C. Personal opinions
- D. Internet popularity

4. How does the ThinkCube compare the Bible with many other accepted ancient historical works?

- A. The Bible has unusually strong eyewitness, manuscript, and outside historical support
- B. Other ancient works always have more eyewitnesses
- C. The Bible has no secondary sources
- D. Historians use completely different standards for the Bible

Be Prepared to Share

1. Someone says: "The Bible should not be treated as history." What could you ask about whether it meets the same historical tests used for other ancient writings?
2. Put it in your own words: What kinds of evidence make an ancient document more historically trustworthy?

PREMISE 2

The New Testament Was Written Too Early To Be Legend

1. Why does the early date of New Testament writings matter?

- A. Many eyewitnesses were still alive and could confirm or challenge the accounts
- B. Older stories are always more accurate
- C. The Roman Empire required early publication
- D. Legends cannot contain real people

2. About how soon after the crucifixion is the early creed in 1 Corinthians 15 commonly dated?

- A. Within about five years
- B. About 150 years later
- C. About 500 years later
- D. During the Middle Ages

3. What does Paul say about many of the more than 500 people who saw the risen Jesus?

- A. Many were still alive when he wrote
- B. None could be identified
- C. They all lived outside the Roman Empire
- D. They wrote their own Gospels

4. Which outside sources also provide early information about Jesus and the first Christians?

- A. Roman and Jewish writers such as Tacitus and Josephus
- B. Only medieval European kings
- C. Modern newspaper reporters
- D. Greek mythological poets alone

Be Prepared to Share

1. Someone says: "The resurrection story probably grew into a legend many generations later." What could you ask about how early the resurrection message was already being proclaimed and recorded?

2. Put it in your own words: Why does having eyewitnesses still alive make legendary development more difficult?

PREMISE 3

New Testament Authors Were Authentic And Credible

1. What is a primary historical source?

- A. A source produced by someone directly connected to the time or events being studied
- B. Any book written hundreds of years later
- C. A modern summary of an ancient event
- D. A fictional story based on history

2. How was Mark connected to eyewitness testimony about Jesus?

- A. He was closely associated with Peter and recorded Peter's eyewitness testimony
- B. He lived centuries after Peter
- C. He relied only on Roman legends
- D. He never knew any apostles

3. What does Luke say he did before writing his Gospel?

- A. Carefully investigated the events using eyewitness reports
- B. Copied one unknown book word for word
- C. Relied only on his memory
- D. Avoided speaking with eyewitnesses

4. Why does the ThinkCube consider the New Testament authors especially valuable historical sources?

- A. They were eyewitnesses or had direct access to people who witnessed the events
- B. They all wrote centuries after Jesus
- C. They were government historians with no connection to Christianity
- D. They never named real people or places

Be Prepared to Share

1. Someone says: “The Gospel writers were too biased to be trusted.” What could you ask about whether being close to an event automatically makes a witness unreliable—or gives that person important firsthand knowledge?
2. Put it in your own words: Why does the close connection between the New Testament writers and the people and events they describe matter?

PREMISE 4

Why Would The Authors Be Willing To Die For A Lie?

1. What important distinction does this premise make about dying for a belief?

- A. People may die for something false they believe is true, but the apostles were in a position to know whether their own claims were invented
- B. Anyone who dies for a belief proves it is true
- C. Only Christians have died for their beliefs
- D. Martyrdom automatically proves every religious claim

2. What did proclaiming Jesus as Messiah cost the early disciples?

- A. Persecution, rejection, imprisonment, suffering, and sometimes death
- B. Political power and wealth
- C. Automatic acceptance by religious leaders
- D. Freedom from hardship

3. Why is the apostles' willingness to suffer relevant to their testimony?

- A. It strongly supports that they sincerely believed what they were proclaiming
- B. It proves they could never make any mistake
- C. It means every detail of church tradition is certain
- D. It shows they expected to become wealthy

4. What did the apostles claim about the resurrection?

- A. That they were witnesses to the risen Jesus, not merely repeating a story heard centuries later
- B. That it was only a symbolic idea
- C. That no one had seen Jesus afterward
- D. That the story first appeared generations later

Be Prepared to Share

1. Someone says: "People from many religions have died for beliefs that were false, so the apostles dying proves nothing." What could you ask about the difference between dying for something you were told and dying for something you personally claimed to have seen?

2. Put it in your own words: What does the apostles' willingness to suffer tell us about whether they believed their testimony was true?