

What Is Apologetics?

'An apologetic' is just a fancy way to say '**a defense.**' Christians are clearly expected to be prepared to give this defense of their faith in any situation. The most obvious command for an apologetic (a defense of our faith) is 1 Peter 3:15b:

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." 1 Peter 3:15b

So, the study of Apologetics is the study of the defenses of the Christian faith. One can hardly imagine the multitude of reasons that may emerge that will require this defense. We may be drawn into a debate over worldviews, or be asked to explain our perspectives on various life situations when we are counseling others who are craving for our (and God's) help. Therefore the study of apologetics is clearly a very important and serious endeavor, and a requirement for **all** Christians.

One does not study Apologetics, however, just to win arguments. Although many famous apologists are involved with other highly trained philosophers debating atheism, creationism, and a million other -ism's, the main purpose of apologetics is not to convince but to **confirm**. The Master Himself tells us in an explanation of 'the greatest commandment' that our faith is an exercise of the mind as well:

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment." Matthew 22:37-38

The heart will not accept that which the mind cannot. God never says that our faith is to be based upon things we cannot rationalize in our minds, despite what non-believers would have us believe. In fact, Christianity is the most rational of all world beliefs. When one considers some of the wild things that pass for conventional wisdom these days, and compares them against the clear evidences for and the realities of Christianity, one can take comfort in the faith and worldview of the Christian. And the Christian need not be bothered by the some of the things that world takes for granted, because a Christian by definition thinks differently from the rest of the world:

"Do not deceive yourselves. If any one of you thinks he is wise by the standards of this age, he should become a 'fool' so that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight." 1 Corinthians 3:18-19a

'Presuppositional' apologetics assumes that life begins to make sense when it is considered with a Christian perspective in mind. Once you 'pre-suppose' that Christianity is true, everything else begins to fall in line and make sense. This does not imply however that an apologetic defense cannot confirm the truth for someone who 'pre-supposes' that there is no God or Christ. **In this case it is God bringing around the heart of the hardened to Him, and through us (thus the command for the defense preparation!)** In the

study of Apologetics we confirm our faith both for ourselves, and for others who are truly searching for the truth.

Therefore, Apologetics is an essential evangelism tool. A basic understanding of our faith will enable us to be used by the Spirit of God, when the Spirit moves within someone and draws him or her to you to explain the reasons for your faith in Christ:

"Preach the Word; **be prepared** in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage...discharge all the duties of your ministry." **2 Timothy 4:2a, 5c**

We must be ready to accomplish the commands of God upon us:

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you..." **Matthew 28:19a, 20**

What a glorious purpose and incredible incentive for the study of apologetics, to be the hands and feet of the Lord in His plan of salvation for the world! But ultimately, the reasons alone are not enough for anyone to accept the Christian Faith. It is our intuition, our spirit that leads us to accept the evidence as true, because it satisfies our longing and searching. It is

"not philosophy (or logic) but religious experience that propels anyone through the door. The appropriate apologetic is thus not an argument directly for the existence of God, but an argument for the rationality of forming beliefs on the basis of experience, including religious experience." **John Hick, Four Views of Salvation in a Pluralistic World. Pg 248**

<http://www.whyibelieve.org/Apologetics/Apologetics.htm>

Who Decided What Would Be In The Bible?

The 'canon' is a term that refers to the 'standard,' or 'rule.' The early church fathers, in an effort to preserve the integrity of the ancient writings and the doctrines of the Church, 'canonized' the books that were recognized as 'inspired' by God. When the writings were 'canonized,' this simply means that the church accepted them as the 'official' documents that were prescribed by God. It is important to realize that they were not simply 'appointed' as official, but that they had been recognized for some time by the majority of the Church at the time as the inspired word of God and used as such. The canon simply documents this recognition.

The Old Testament was known (essentially) as three 'books', the Law (Genesis to Deuteronomy), the Prophets (Joshua through 2 Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the 12 'minor' prophets), and the Writings (the remainder of the

OT books.) These books were confirmed by Christ and the early Church fathers as they referred to them with comments such as 'It is written' or 'God says...'. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls included every book of the Old Testament except Esther, indicating an acceptance of them as scripture from the first Century A.D.

Generically, the New Testament canon includes those writings which were most universally accepted by the majority of the early church. The most controversial (those which were adhered to by a few sects, but not a majority) were eventually culled out of the official 'list'. Several books, including Revelation, James, Jude, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, were included by the end of the second century.

Four key questions were considered by the Council Of Carthage (397 A.D.) that declared the official canon of the New Testament church:

- 1) Is the writing Apostolic? If an Apostle either was credited with authorship, or with direct influence (as with Mark and Luke) the canonicity was generally assumed. This is not a rigid requirement; for example, the book of Hebrews' authorship is still under question.
- 2) Is the writing Orthodox? If the writings conform with the early understandings of the faith, and do not obviously contradict another accepted canonical writing, it is generally accepted.
- 3) Is the writing universal? Writings that seem specific to a certain group, and apparently not intended for the Church as a whole were generally not considered to be appropriate to a canon of the Universal Church.
- 4) Has the writing had influence over the Church over time? The proven ability for the writing to provide guidance, sustenance and inspiration for the Church is expected.

Understanding these requirements show that the writings were not simply 'chosen', but proven to be inspired by their 'intrinsic authority and constant usage.' (Adapted from Zondervan's Handbook To The Bible.)

What About The 'Apocrypha'?

Even after the official canonization, there was some debate going on. In ~385 A.D., the ancient Church father Jerome developed a version of the Bible that included the books of the Apocrypha, although he later disavowed them as canonical, in his 'Vulgate' Bible. In 1545 the Council of Trent declared the Vulgate Bible the official Bible of the Roman Catholic Church. The protestant movement sided with Jerome, who by then had separated the Apocrypha from the remainder.

<http://www.whyibelieve.org/Apologetics/Bible/Canon.htm>

Are There Any Independent Collaborations?

The existence of extra-Biblical documentations only helps to confirm the validity of the Bible, and provides incentive for the serious consideration of the Bible's messages.

"Secular" Collaborating Information

Regarding	Artifact	Date	Significance	Further Info
Dating of the Bible Documents	<i>War Of The Jews / Antiquities Of The Jews</i> Flavius Josephus	77 or 78 A.D. / 93 A.D.	Describes the horrendous torture and slaughter of the Jews by the Romans in 70 A.D. Every historical writing after this period discusses this event. The gospels are silent, however, providing rational circumstantial evidence that they were written prior to 70 A.D.	
Confirming the Execution of John the Baptist	<i>Antiquities Of The Jews</i> Flavius Josephus; Book 18, Chapter 5.	93 A.D.	Describes that "John, that was called the Baptist", was murdered by Herod.	
Confirming Existence and Importance of Jesus	<i>Antiquities Of The Jews</i> Flavius Josephus; Book 18, Chapter 3. There is much controversy over the validity of this passage, whether it was entirely written by Josephus or added manipulated by Christians.	93 A.D.	"Now, there was about this time, Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works, -a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ; and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principled men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him, for he appeared to them alive again on the third day, as the divine prophet had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him' and the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day."	
Confirming Death of Jesus, and the Persecution of Christians	Tacitus - A Roman Historian (60 - 120 A.D.)		Refers to fact that "Chrestus...was executed at the hands of the procurator Pontius Pilot in the reign of Tiberius." Also mentions that Nero put many of his followers to death	Chalmers; Evidences of the Christian Revelation Tacitus; Annales xv.44 Documents of the Christian Church
Confirming Persecution of Christians	Suetonius - A Roman Historian (TBD)		Refers to Jews who were 'continually making disturbances at the instigation of Crestus' were expelled by Claudius from Rome.	
Confirming Death of Jesus, and the resulting Darkness That Fell Over The Land	Julius Africanus	221 A.D.	Refers to a work by Thallus, who wrote in ~52 A.D. mentions the crucifixion of Jesus. Thallus describes the event as a solar eclipse, but Africanus disputes this, since the moon was full at the time of the Passover. (Thallus' work has been lost, but its significance is confirmed by the mentioning by Africanus.	The New Testament Documents - Are They Reliable? 113

Confirms Existence and Execution of Jesus	The 'Mishnah', which is part of the Jewish Talmud.		"On the eve of Passover they hanged Yeshu (of Nazareth)." This confirmation comes from a Jewish source (non-Christian), which was a record of events sanctioned by the Jewish Sanhedrin.	Habermas; <u>Ancient Evidence For the Life Of Jesus</u> , Pg 98
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<http://www.whyibelieve.org/Apologetics/Bible/Collaborations.htm>

Are There Any Archaeological Evidences?

As with the independent collaborations, archaeological evidences discovered confirming items and events in the Bible serve to provide reason to consider the Bible and its teachings seriously. It has been remarked that NO archaeological evidence has been discovered that disproves anything mentioned in the Bible!

Independent Collaborating Information

Regarding	Verse	Confirming Artifact	Significance	Reference / Further Info
Roman Census Order	Luke 2:1,3 "In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world....everyone went to his own town to register.	A census order from 104 A.D., requiring all to return to their homes to be counted was found in Egypt	Confirms that census' were a function of the Roman government. An earlier census (dated ~6A.D.) was also found, although the dating is in dispute.	<u>Jesus: The Evidence</u> ; Ian Wilson; pg 47
Quirinius (a ruler)	Luke 2:2 "(This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was the governor of Syria.)"	An inscription describing Quirinius as a person of authority in Syria was found in Antioch	Confirms a historical aspect of Luke's Gospel	<u>The Bible As History</u> ; Werner Keller; pg. 323
King David	2 Samuel 5:4. 'David was thirty years old when he became King, and he reigned forty years.'	A basalt stone monument dated ~900 B.C., discovered in Galilee, describes 'The House Of David' and 'The King Of Israel'	Until this find in 1993, a record of King David has never been found outside of the Bible, leading many scholars to improperly believe that David was a fictitious character.	<u>Is The Bible True?</u> ; Jeffery Sheler; pg. 59
Nazareth, the Town In Which Jesus Was Raised	Luke 4:16a. 'He went to Nazareth, where He had been brought up...'	Many farming community relics, dated to the first century A.D., discovered in the precise location Nazareth was supposed to be.	Until this find in the 1950's by Belarmino Begatti, no evidence of Nazareth was found, leading skeptical scholars to believe that the town was a Biblical fantasy.	<u>The Archaeology Of The New Testament</u>
Capernaum, a Town Which Jesus Visited	Luke 7:1b,3. 'Jesus entered Capernaum...The Centurion head of Jesus and sent some elders of the Jews to him, asking him to come and heal his servant...' "This man deserves to have you do this, because he loves our nation and has built our synagogue."	Captain Charles Wilson (1866) confirmed the location of the town. Virgilio Corbo (1974) discovered a synagogue there, dated to the early first century .	Skeptics, once again requiring archaeological proof before they will believe anything, were again confounded at the discovery of this city. Corbo believes that we are justified in believing that this synagogue was the very one built by the Centurion mentioned by Matthew, Mark and Luke.	<u>The Archaeology Of The New Testament</u> pg 99

A House In Capernaum, Where Peter and Andrew Lived, and Where Jesus Visited	Luke 4:38. 'Jesus left the synagogue and went to the home of Simon.'	The oldest Christian church yet discovered, attested by documentation dated ~350 A.D. describing a pilgrimage to the 'house of the first of the apostles [where] a church was made...Here the Lord cured the paralytic.'	Also described in 570 A.D. as a basilica that preserved the house of Peter.	<u>The Archaeology Of The New Testament</u> pg 110
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<http://www.whyibelieve.org/Apologetics/Bible/Archaeology.htm>

Which Translation Is The 'Right' Translation?

There are several methods given to translating the Bible. Some are intended to provide strict translation and interpretation from the original (the source) language, and others are intended to relay meaning from the original into today's (the receptor) language. To assure the most independent and unbiased translations and interpretations, in all reputable cases, a board of scholars is employed, along with specialists in history, grammar, etc. Why interpretation along with translation? Because the Hebrew and Greek languages are grammatically quite different from most all others. Just simply translating word to word would be difficult, and in some cases impossible, if the purpose is to relay coherent meaning. For example, according to specialist Raymond Elliot:

The word 'of' is very common in English, and it is used to represent a wide variety of relationships between words. In only the first chapter of the Gospel of Mark, nine different English translations use the word 'of' between eighteen and thirty one times. The word represents such relationships as possession, kinship, location, names of geographical places and features, the material from which something is made, political jurisdictions, the doer of an action, and so on. **But there is no word 'of' in Greek at all!** Greek has other ways of expressing those relationships that are translated by 'of' in English...The problem for the translator is to find, in the receptor language, those forms that will appropriately represent the structures of the source language - first as to meaning, style, and naturalness, then as much as possible as to form. **Raymond Elliot; "Bible Translation"; in [The Origin Of The Bible](#); Philip Wesley Comfort editor**

In order to translate and interpret for the masses today, specialists utilize (generically) two forms of strategy:

Formal Equivalence attempts to preserve the original language structure and vocabulary (the form). While strictly preserving what was originally written, it may cause difficulty in understanding items such as a historically unique statement that has no close English parallel. An

example of a translation with Formal Equivalence intent is the New American Standard Bible. This type of translation leaves it up to us to figure out what the original meaning is.

Dynamic Equivalence attempts to relate the structure to commonly understood terms in the 'receptor' language (the meaning). For example, when Paul (Romans 7:18) speaks of the 'sinful flesh' (NAS) we know that he is speaking of the 'sin nature' (NIV). Tries to interpret the meaning for us, accurately and fairly.

Examples of Translation and Interpretation

Reference	Literal Greek Translation	King James Version	New American Standard Bible	New International Version
Matthew 1:1	Book ancestry Jesus equals Christ son David son Abraham.	The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.	The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.	A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.
John 1:13		Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man, but of God.	who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.	children born not of natural descent, not of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

Isn't The King James The Only 'Real' Bible?

There is somewhat of a controversy regarding the King James Bible. Because this version is the 'oldest' English version, it is what many of us grew up with. We are comfortable with it, despite the fact that it was written over 500 years ago, in a style of English that is no longer in use. It is beautiful and poetic, and gives the Word of God a sense of style and class, as one would expect. BUT, it is certainly not the only English interpretation that is accurate and reliable. As has been said 'if the King James Version was good enough for Paul, then it's good enough for me' exposes the silliness of this debate.

Are There Any 'Unreliable' Translations?

Generally, there is minimal scholarly 'issue' with the English translations that we have today. This is easily provable, first, since there is essentially no 'active' debate regarding the translations, and second, because the quantity and availability of scholars (Christian and non-Christian) to assure us is copious. To confirm this in your mind, especially if you still have doubts, take any English translation to your local university Greek or Hebrew scholar, and have them confirm the translation's near perfect validity.

Currently, the only 'active' debate is more political than scholarly, regarding the 'gender-inclusion' translations of the **TNIV**, or '**Today's New International Version**.' In places where the original languages refers to (essentially) mankind as 'he' or 'him', this version has changed the terms to 'they' etc. While troublesome to some traditionalists, this debate seems to miss the mark in practicality, since most parents of daughters explain to them

that (in general) the blessings or curses attributed to 'man' means 'mankind', to assure their girls that they are not left out.

The bottom line is, that our English translations of the Bible are assuredly trustworthy, and reliable.

Recommendations

Because of the reliable condition of the English translations, a version should be picked (generally) based upon your purpose and your preference. For beauty and elegance, the **King James Version** is classic. For readability and study purposes, choose the **New International Version**. For serious contemplation and consideration, many prefer the **New American Standard Bible**.

<http://www.whyibelieve.org/Apologetics/Bible/Translation.htm>

Aren't There A Lot Of Contradictions In The Bible?

One particularly favorite game of a skeptic is to find alleged discrepancies within the Bible, under the assumption that the existence of these discrepancies invalidate the claim of Divine inspiration - after all, if the Bible were truly inspired, then it would be perfect and have no contradictions or discrepancies - right? In addition to this game, the issue can be of serious importance to a seeker who sees the difficulties, perceives intellectual issues and needs resolution in order to continue serious contemplation of Christianity. It can be a significant stumbling block when not properly understood.

Causes of the Perception of Discrepancy - All of the seeming contradictions can, when properly analyzed and understood and not just taken 'at the surface', become resolved. Most are examples of mistaken assumptions by the reader, or of insufficient knowledge about ancient linguistic syntax or cultural interpretation, or simply a misunderstood perspective of the writers intent.

The following are examples of some of these most common types of misunderstandings, and their resolutions:

Perceived Contradiction	Reference	Reference	Resolution
Judas' Death	So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself. Matthew 27:5	With the reward he got for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out....they called that field...the field of blood. Acts 1:18,19b,d	Both can be true, and not contradictory. Judas may have hung himself alone, and then fallen headlong onto the field, etc. One reference can simply be telling more details of the story than another. An example of the requirement of a proper perspective for interpretation.
Jesus' Period Of	For as Jonah was three days and	After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first	In Jewish custom, any part of a day

Death	three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Matthew 12:40	day of the week...he has risen. Matthew 28:1a,6b	is considered part of a full day. We see this confirmed in Esther chapters 4&5, where 'on the third day' is equivalent to 'after three days'. And, even now in Jewish custom, the new 'day' begins at sundown of the previous day. An example of the requirement for cultural understanding for proper interpretation.
Jesus Curses The Fig Tree	He said to it, ' May you never bear fruit again! ' Immediately the tree withered. Matthew 21:19	Then He said to the tree, 'May no one ever eat fruit from you again.' In the morning, as they went along, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. Mark 11:14,20	Clearly a matter of timing. The issue is in the implications however. In Matthew, we assume that the object lesson on faith happened immediately afterwards, but we are not told this directly. Mark may be more descriptive in the chronology of events, while Matthew was describing the event in whole, with breaks in time eliminated to round out the point. An example of the requirement for proper syntax (structure) understanding for correct interpretation.

We can clearly see that things that appear at first glance to be difficulties, are not, yet need to be properly understood. One minor lesson from this is that the Bible is to be studied, not 'glanced'. When you come across a perceived difficulty, don't just simply write the Bible off as errant and therefore not inspired - delve into the facts of the context and pursue proper understanding. In other words, give the Bible the benefit of the doubt!

Finally, when one considers the fact that the Bible has survived incredible persecution (from the abolition of Rome in A.D. 303 where scores of Christians were killed, and a massive 'book burning' of all Bibles that could be found occurred - yet just 10 short years after this Christianity was accepted as the 'official' religion of the Roman Empire, to Voltaire and Thomas Paine's vain predictions in the 18th century that the Bible will soon be forgotten) is evidence of seemingly supernatural intervention. Clearly, these supposed 'contradictions' and 'difficulties' have been worked through for a VAST amount of people for thousands of years. The Bible is clearly meant to be taken seriously.

<http://www.whyibelieve.org/Apologetics/Bible/Contradictions.htm>

Why I Believe...God Exists (Its as easy as ABC!)

95% of the people in the world admit to a 'belief' in a 'God.' Clearly it is not a matter to pass off lightly. But how important is it to carefully consider the subject ? Mortimer Adler explains why the subject of God comprises the largest chapter in his compilation of The Great Ideas: A Synopicon of Great Books of the Western World.

"The subject of God is the most widely published discussion in history because '**More consequences for thought and action** follow the affirmation or denial of God than from answering any other basic question.'" (**Paul Little, Know Why You Believe, pg 19.**)

If God does exist, then the study of God is by definition the most important endeavor a person can undertake. And for Christians required by God to provide a reason for our faith, it is **essential for us to understand and be able to explain** a clear basis for our faith in God's existence.

So let's begin an active study of the existence of God, and what it means for us. Here we will study the **REASONS FOR BELIEF** in the **CHRISTIAN GOD**. In a different area we will contrast that with the beliefs in other Gods before we are done with our study.

SO TO BEGIN, I believe that there are **three clear witnesses to the fact that the CHRISTIAN GOD exists**, which are in front of us each day. For starters, by remembering that the belief in God is a **BASIC** belief, it is easy to start with the basics. So we need to...

Remember our ABC's:

Our AWARENESS, the BIBLE, and the CREATION

AWARENESS - Our own human nature (conscious, moral fiber, etc) suggests to us that there must be something beyond ourselves. – we just 'know' in our 'hearts' that there is more to life than what we can see and touch. Many of us are good at putting this feeling aside or trying to fulfill the need with outside influences, philosophies, etc., but it always stays there, perpetually unfulfilled. No 'purpose' on this earth (money, sex, power) ever seems to fill that vacuum. Many people spend their entire lives striving to fulfill this need, but it always stays there, even after the accumulation of wealth or the fulfillment of personal goals. This 'God shaped vacuum' (as described by the eminent scientist Blaise Pascal) can only be filled by the relieving **purposeful existence** discovered when we understand our position with God, and when we become reconciled back to Him. Could it be that this longing within us is the result of God pulling us to Himself? Because this feeling is universal, it is the first of what is considered 'general revelation' from God.

The BIBLE – Our awareness leads us to look for God. The Bible is the evidence that God has left us, as a self-autographed documentation of His nature and His plans (this is the first of the 'special revelations' from God.) More than just any other book, even any other 'religious' book, the Bible is singularly unique. It is neither a single book, nor is it written by one person, as are most 'religious' texts. It is a **collection of 66 books** that were written by **40 or more different authors** in three different languages, in 3 different continents. These books were written over a period of about **1600 years**. The authors represent society at large. They were not just scholars and preachers, but they also ranged from common folk such as shepherds, doctors, government officials, fishermen, and tax collectors, to Kings. There are many styles of journalistic method involved, including history, poetry, government records, dialogue, parables, sermons, prophecy, letters and religious instruction.

The Bible has been translated into over 1200 different languages or dialects. Despite this huge diversity of history, there is **one central theme** of the whole collection of writings: that **God loves us and has a plan for our lives.**

The Bible is **most** unique in its claim of **Divine inspiration.** Is it likely that the above facts of the Bible could have occurred by accident, or by some 'religious conspiracy?' Or must Divine inspiration and purpose must have occurred for the previously mentioned points to come together and to survive for thousands of years. Divine inspiration is a most outrageous claim, and it leaves no room for a gray area. Either the book is of God and deserves our careful study, or it is not and is an incredible and monumentally improbable hoax. Was it by accident that it has become the most influential book in the history of mankind?

CREATION demands a Creator – One of the 'general revelations' about God surrounds us each day, as we see the miracles of creation and the evidence of a creator everywhere. Science can only explain or predict what might happen, but not **why** things happen (what exactly is an electron anyway and how did it get here?) Contrary to popular belief, evolution and the thought that the cosmos began from nothing are simply theories. They are **not** fact, and they are **not** as widely believed in academic circles as the general public thinks that they are. To the average non-believer struggling to get through each day, it is convenient (it fits into our self-worldview) to believe that there is a logical explanation for the creation so we don't have to believe in a creator. But make no mistake, it was all placed here, with a purpose, by a Personal Creator.

Think about it for a minute, which makes more sense? 1) Everything in the cosmos either existed forever or came from **NOTHING**, that gasses evolved into light elements, and then into heavy elements. Next came the evolution of 'dead' elements into something alive, which finally mutated into a person who has the capability to eat, see, think, procreate and know right from wrong. (None of these steps, by the way, have been observed in nature, and in fact are contrary to known natural law - they are simply what 'must' have happened in an anti-theistic worldview.) **OR** is it perhaps easier to believe: 2) That Something created everything and shows us the evidence of its authorship in the amazing details, synergies and complexities of the cosmos and of life? Certainly both take an active choice (faith?) to believe, since there were no eyewitnesses (but would we believe the eyewitnesses anyway?) The answer to the question is usually based upon a person's pre-conceived notions, and sometimes upon a misinterpretation of scientific 'facts.' We must however use ALL of our faculties, our intuition and senses, to answer the question truthfully. It does not relieve our minds to accept mere scientific fact if we don't also answer the questions why and how. Between the choices above (and there are no other choices) I believe it is much easier to believe in a Creator.

To Summarize - With all the evidence for God that we've reviewed, we have seen that it is certainly not illogical to believe in God. **In fact, It is clearly reasonable to believe that God exists, and has placed all the evidence**

needed within our reach for us to believe in Him, and to cause us to pursue Him. But the final commitment is ours – this is our free will. We know that FAITH is not blind, but informed and rational, indeed a PART of us, leading us (complemented by our emotion and desires) to acknowledge the existence of the Creator, and inflame the desire to know more about Him and His plans for us. And Thank God, He has revealed these to us as well!!

<http://www.whyibelieve.org/Apologetics/ABC's.htm>

Some Resources For Bible Study

Online Bible Resources:

[Bible Gateway](#) - Provides a nice search feature with many translations and lots of additional information.

[NET Bible](#) - The New English Translation

[Bible Crosswalk](#) - Another nice search feature with many versions online, includes Strong's numbers!

[Parallel Comparison](#) - From the folks at Crosswalk - compare texts of two different translations!

[Bible History.com](#) - TONS of Bible information, history, maps, geography, timelines, etc etc etc

Public Domain Dictionaries:

[Baker Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#) - From the folks at Crosswalk - one of the finest Dictionaries in use today!

Public Domain Commentaries:

[Crosswalk Commentaries](#) - Many public domain commentaries, including Scofield's notes and Wesley's notes!

Public Domain Concordances:

[Crosswalk Concordances](#) - Many public domain concordances, including Nave's and Strong's.

Bible Study Software:

[E-Sword.net](#) - A nice, basic system with many resources and a good search engine. FREE!

[Gramcord.org](#) - A nice tool to work with original languages, many versions and reference materials

[Logos](#) - The cream of the crop (high end)! \$150 - \$600.

Greek / Hebrew Information:

[Lexicon](#)- From UnboundBible.org, enter a word and determine the Greek or Hebrew meaning/equivalent

Foreign Language Versions:

[Text available in MANY different languages, provided from the Bible Gateway folks](#)