

**Hypocritically  
leaves out  
“inspired” books?**

**Spiritually accurate  
but not historically  
accurate?**

**The Bible**

**Cannot or should  
not be read or  
applied literally?**

**Contains numerous  
errors and  
contradictions?**

# The Bible

- **Given that these accusations are always becoming more accepted by society:**
  - **How can we continue to believe in the legitimacy of the Bible?**
  - **How do we address the claims that question the integrity of the Bible?**

# **The Bible – Addressing the Opposition**

- **Hypocritically leaves out other “inspired” books. Name one...**
  - **“The practice of Christian forgery has a long and distinguished history...the debate lasted three hundred years...even within “orthodox” circles there was considerable debate concerning which books to include.” (Bart Ehrman – New Testament scholar)**
  - **Also believes the Bible is made up of thousands of mistakes, some deliberate**

# **The Bible – Addressing the Opposition**

- **Hypocritically leaves out other “inspired” books:**
  - **Epistle of Barnabas (70-130 AD)**
    - **Speaks against Judaism, sees NT as superseding Mosaical law**
    - **Claims that the Jews were never in a covenant relationship with God; Jewish traditions not accurately interpreted**
    - **Claims to have “special knowledge” (*Gnosis*) regarding Christianity**

# **The Bible – Addressing the Opposition**

- **Hypocritically leaves out other “inspired” books:**
  - **Shepherd of Hermas (120-160 AD)**
    - **Man claims to have received visions from God instructing him regarding new mandates (mainly moral)**
    - **Refers to a “Son of God” as a “virtuous man” that was filled with a “pre-existing spirit” who was adopted as the “Son”**

# **The Bible – Addressing the Opposition**

- **Hypocritically leaves out other “inspired” books:**
  - **Gospel of Thomas (proposed 60-140 AD)**
    - **Claims to have the secret knowledge that Christ revealed only to those closest to Him**
    - **Does not deal with doctrine, but rather “experiencing” truth**
    - **Claims that salvation is achieved through “insight”**

# **The Bible – Addressing the Opposition**

- **Hypocritically leaves out other “inspired” books:**
  - **Gospel of Judas (160-180 AD)**
    - **Claims that Jesus had in fact entrusted Judas with secret knowledge regarding how events must unfold**
    - **Claims that Jesus instructed Judas to hand Him over to the Jews**
    - **Claims that none of the other apostles, save Judas, understood Jesus’ teachings**

# **The Bible – Addressing the Opposition**

- **Hypocritically leaves out other “inspired” books:**
  - **Didache (70-120 AD)**
    - **Claims that every disciple and teacher must be received for two or three days, but if they stay longer, they are false teachers seeking money**
    - **Baptism essential, but if enough for immersion was not available, then pouring water three times was accepted**



## **The Bible – Addressing the Opposition**

**– “People may still be heard to say, 'After all, these Apocryphal Gospels and Acts, as you call them, are just as interesting as the old ones. It was only by accident or caprice that they were not put into the New Testament'. The best answer (...) has always been, and is now, to produce the writings and let them tell their own story. It will very quickly be seen that there is no question of anyone's having excluded them from the New Testament: they have done that for themselves.”**

**– M.R. James (1862-1936 British scholar)**

**Spiritually accurate  
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**The Bible**

# The Bible – Addressing the Opposition

- **Spiritually but not historically accurate?**  
**Name an example...**
- **Criterion of independent attestation** - the more sources that mention an event, the more likely it is to be historically accurate. Just because an event or saying is found only in one source, that alone is not evidence that it is historically inaccurate.
- **Criterion of dissimilarity** - the more a witness or source makes claims counter to their vested interests, the more that testimony is likely to be true
- **Criterion of contextual credibility** – sayings, deeds, experiences must fit within the context of the era

# **The Bible – Addressing the Opposition**

- **Spiritually but not historically accurate?**
  - **To name a few:**
    - **No grapes in Egypt? (Gen. 40) Herodotus says otherwise...**
    - **The Hittites – found that they had an empire that rivaled Egypt and Assyria**
    - **No King Sargon of Assyria? (Is. 20:1)**
    - **The Flood? Babylonian flood tablets, archeology of cities**
    - **Proposed dating errors, such as AI and Jericho, suggested that the cities did not exist; now archaeology has proven they did exist**

# **The Bible – Addressing the Opposition**

- **Spiritually but not historically accurate?**
  - **To name a few:**
    - **No writing in Moses' time? (c. 1400 BC) Proven that there was writing in Moses' time**
    - **Sodom and Gomorrah sites likely found to the south of the Dead Sea**
    - **Even outside historical sources confirm cities conquered, kings defeated, events occurred**
      - **Moabite Stone**
      - **Egyptian, Babylonian, Assyrian records**

# **The Bible**

**Cannot or should  
not be read or  
applied literally?**

# The Bible – Addressing the Opposition

- **Cannot or should not be read or applied literally?**
- **Poetry** - as in the Psalms
- **Parables** - as in many of the sayings of Jesus
- **Prophecy** - as in Isaiah, Jeremiah, etc.
- **Letters** - as in Romans, Philemon
- **Biography** - as in the Gospels.
- **Autobiography/Testimony** - as in the book of Acts where Luke offers testimony in using “we”, “us”
- **Authentic historical facts** - as in I & II Kings, etc.

# **The Bible – Addressing the Opposition**

- **Cannot or should not be read or applied literally?**
  - **In the study of any ancient text, you consider the writer’s intent, his audience, and the context of his thoughts**
    - **In this way, it can generally be understood what is meant to be historical (Genesis) and what is meant to be symbolic (Revelation); what is meant to be literal (I Tim. 2:12) and what is meant to be figurative (I Cor. 1:12-13, 4:6-7)**



# **The Bible**

**Contains numerous  
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contradictions?**

# The Bible – Addressing the Opposition

- **Contains numerous errors and contradictions?**
  - Name one...
    - A “contradiction” is defined as “*a statement or proposition that denies, or is opposite to, another*”
    - The harmony of the Gospels
      - Does the addition or subtraction of a detail constitute a “contradiction”?
    - Jesus’ two genealogies – Matt. 1, Lk. 3
      - Why can’t they both be right?

# **The Bible – Addressing the Opposition**

- **Contains numerous errors and contradictions?**
  - **Despite being written by possibly 40 different authors, over a span of about 1500 years, there is not a single contradiction.**
  - **There are perceived “discrepancies” that, when studied, can be explained or given plausible and logical explanations.**
  - **Never an outright opposing statement made.**

# **The Bible – Addressing the Opposition**

- **The originals have been copied so many times that they have lost their original meaning?**
  - **Almost every single difference between copies is either grammatical or accidental.**
  - **When taken objectively, none of the differences between manuscript copies change the passages in question.**

**We should have confidence in the Bible  
that God continues to preserve through  
His power.**

## **The Bible**

**We should be able and willing to  
provide a response to those who  
question the legitimacy of the Gospel.**