

A Faith Worth Defending

Last week, Wendy and I were driving and decided to listen to a podcast of a friend of ours with whom we used to worship at West End in Bowling Green.

The podcast is called *Balancing The Christian Life* and the host is Kenny Embry.

Kenny's guest was a lady named Christina Heard, and she was there to talk about her book, *Faith That Doubts*.

It seems like, once a week I get a question or comment from someone who has had their faith challenged by tough, often false, questions or misleading statements about Jesus or the Bible or both!

Did You Know?

Jesus wasn't born in AD?

The Roman Catholic Church decided which books are in the Bible?

The Roman Catholic Church is hiding the truth?

There are other books of the Bible (Apocrypha)?

There are over 400,000 errors in the Bible?

None of the original books of the Bible exist?

Here are links to:

Kenny's podcast: <https://www.balancingthechristianlife.com/>

Christina's book: <https://www.amazon.com/Faith-that-Doubts-Simplified-Investigation/dp/B0BZ6SLXL6>

In addition to the works referenced at the end of this sermon; perhaps the classic in the field for understanding this subject is: *How We Got The Bible* by Neil R. Lightfoot: <http://bakerpublishinggroup.com/books/how-we-got-the-bible-3rd-edition-revised-and-expanded/115313>

When Was Jesus Born, Crucified, and Resurrected?

The Bible does not contain a calendar.

We know, for instance, Jesus' birthday was not recorded (Dec. 25)

We do have an idea of how old he was at his death, burial, and resurrection.

What does the Bible tell us?

Matthew 2:1

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem,

Luke 3:23

Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli,

Herod the Great dies, 4BC. Jesus born 4-6 BC

Luke 3:1

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene,

Tiberius Caesar began his reign in AD 14.

The 15th year of his reign would be AD 28-29

"The Anno Domini dating system was devised in 525 by Dionysius Exiguus to enumerate the years in his Easter table."

Approximate Dates of Jesus' birth and resurrection:

Herod the Great died in 4 BC

Jesus born between 4 and 6 BC

Jesus was about thirty when he began his ministry.

Tiberius Caesar's 15th year AD 28-29

Jesus' resurrection and Pentecost AD 30

The Roman Catholic Church decided which books are in the Bible? The Roman Catholic Church is hiding the truth?

You may have heard someone say, "The Bible wasn't written until after the Nicene Creed of AD 325." or "The Roman Catholics decided what was in the Bible at the Nicene Council in AD 325."

Or there were other books of the New Testament but "the church" doesn't want you to know about them!

Who Decided Which Books Are In The Bible?

All 27 received by churches	AD 120	
Muratorian Fragment	AD 170	All but four
Origen's list	AD 275	All 27
Eusebius Church History	AD 312-24	All 27
Athanasius of Alexandria	AD 367	All 27
Council of Rome	AD 382	All 27 (Two councils Nicene 325, Constantinople 381)

What About The Books Of The Apocrypha?

The Old Testament Apocrypha includes; Baruch, I and II Maccabees
The New Testament has many additional books but none are considered Scripture.

Why not The Epistle of Barnabas or The Shepherd of Hermas?

The Dan Brown novel *The DaVinci Code* claimed Jesus had a child.

It came from the so-called, *Gospel of Philip*. Not written until 200-years after the apostles had died.

“the Acts and the Gospel bearing his name (Peter), as well as the Preaching and Revelation called his, we do not know at all...since no church writer either in early times or in our own has used their testimony.¹”- Eusebius, *The Church History* (AD 312-324)

“Among the spurious books are the Acts of Paul, the Shepherd [of Hermas], the Revelation of Peter, the alleged epistle of Barnabas, the so-called Teachings of the Apostles [*Didache*],”- Eusebius, *The Church History* (AD 312-324)

“Writings published by heretics...the Gospels of Peter, Thomas, Matthias, and others...have never been cited by any in the succession of church writers.”-Eusebius, *The Church History* (AD 312-324)

“their contents are so dissonant from true orthodoxy that they show themselves to be forgeries of heretics...they ought not be reckoned even among the spurious books but discarded as impious and absurd.”- Eusebius, *The Church History* (AD 312-324)

400,000 Mistakes? No Original Books?

“there are, roughly, 5,800+ partial and full handwritten Greek Manuscripts that have been found dating between the second and sixteenth centuries AD,²”-Doy Moyer, *Mind Your Faith*

“For Homer’s Iliad, there are fewer than 1,800 manuscripts with the earliest dating about 400-years from the original.”-Doy Moyer, *Mind Your Faith*

Moyer quotes Ed Komoszewski who says,

“All told, the New Testament is represented by approximately one thousand times as many manuscripts as the average classical author’s writings.”-Ed Komoszewski, *Reinventing Jesus*

Are there errors in the copies? Absolutely

Are those errors significant? Almost entirely no

Are there significant differences? Yes, in about 16 passages

John 5:3-4

Acts 8:37

I John 5:7-8

Mark 16:9-20

John 7:53-8:11

Sir Frederic Kenyon was the Director of the British museum for over twenty years. He proclaimed, “The Christian can take the whole Bible in his hand and say without fear or hesitation that he holds in it the true word of God, handed down without essential loss from generation to generation throughout the centuries.”³-Sir Frederic Kenyon, Director, British Museum

“if the New Testament were a collection of secular writings, their authenticity would generally be regarded as beyond all doubt. ...[In] point of fact there is much more evidence for the New Testament than for other ancient writings of comparable date”-F.F. Bruce

Hebrews 4:12–13

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. ¹³ And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

¹ Maier, Paul L. "Eusebius-The Church History: A New Translation with Commentary." Grand Rapids, Kregel. 1999. p93-94, 115. Print.

² Moyer, Doy. "Mind Your Faith:Essays in Apologetics. 2nd ed." Temple Terrace, Florida College Press. 2018. p192-193. Print.

³ Bruce, F.F. "The New Testament Documents, Are They Reliable?" Grand Rapids, Eerdmans. 1981. p10, 123. Print.