

THE BIBLE ON TRIAL:  
**A Reliable Copy?**

# THE BIBLE ON TRIAL: A RELIABLE COPY?

## **About the Bible:**

- “Bible” means books
- Written in various literary genres
- Old and New Testaments
- Written over span of 1500 years
- Written by 40 authors
- Written in three languages
- Best selling book in history

# THE BIBLE ON TRIAL: **A RELIABLE COPY?**

## Objections:

- #1 “We don’t have any original documents”
- #2 “What about the time gap between the originals writings and manuscripts?”
- #3 “Aren’t there alterations and discrepancies among the manuscripts?”
- #4 “Why are there so many different “Bibles” today?”

# THE BIBLE ON TRIAL: **A RELIABLE COPY?**

## Objections:

- #1 “We don’t have any original documents”



# OBJECTION #1

“WE DON’T HAVE ANY ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS”

## **Establish when the originals were written:**

- 50AD-100AD

## **Consider why we don’t have originals:**

- Written on papyri

## **Weigh the objection:**

- Do we need the originals in order to believe the copies?

# THE BIBLE ON TRIAL: **A RELIABLE COPY?**

## Objections:

- #1 “We don’t have any original documents”
- #2 “What about the time gap between the originals writings and manuscripts?”

# OBJECTION #2

“WHAT ABOUT THE TIME GAP BETWEEN THE ORIGINAL WRITINGS AND THE MANUSCRIPTS?”

**Three basic rules of witness evaluation:**

- Multiple witnesses
- High quality witnesses
- Differing witnesses







# OBJECTION #2

“WHAT ABOUT THE TIME GAP BETWEEN THE ORIGINAL WRITINGS AND THE MANUSCRIPTS?”

Applying this criteria to the New Testament witnesses:

- Does the New Testament have high quality witnesses?

Herodotus		1,400YRS.
Julias Caesar		1,000YRS
Homer		500YRS
Aristotle		1,400YRS.
Plato		1,200YRS
New Testament		250YRS(part in 25yrs)

# OBJECTION #2

“WHAT ABOUT THE TIME GAP BETWEEN THE ORIGINAL WRITINGS AND THE MANUSCRIPTS?”

**Applying this criteria to the New Testament witnesses:**

- Does the New Testament have differing witnesses?



Rome:  
Justin Martyr

Carthage:  
Tertullian

Smyrna:  
Polycarp

Alexandria:  
Clement

Sinope:  
Marcion

Antioch:  
Ignatius

Jerusalem  
Alexander



# THE BIBLE ON TRIAL: **A RELIABLE COPY?**

## Objections:

- #1 “We don’t have any original documents”
- #2 “What about the time gap between the originals writings and manuscripts?”
- #3 “Aren’t there alterations and discrepancies among the manuscripts?”

# OBJECTION #3

“AREN’T THERE ALTERATIONS AND DISCREPANCIES AMONG THE MANUSCRIPTS?”

Research shows at least 150,000 variations in manuscripts

Most complaints, Nov. '09	
United Airlines	252
American Airlines	165
Delta Airlines	119
Fewest	
Alaska Airlines	13
Southwest Airlines	22
Continental Airlines	60

# OBJECTION #3

“AREN’T THERE ALTERATIONS AND DISCREPANCIES  
AMONG THE MANUSCRIPTS?”

## Textual Criticism

- Classifying the manuscripts
- Classifying the variants
- Cross-examining the text



# OBJECTION #3

“AREN'T THERE ALTERATIONS AND DISCREPANCIES  
AMONG THE MANUSCRIPTS?”

## Textual Criticism

- Example:

- 1) I can do all t#ings through Christ who strengthens me
- 2) I can do all th#ngs through Christ who strengthens me
- 3) I can do all thi#gs through Christ who strengthens me
- 4) I can do all thin#s through Christ who strengthens me

# OBJECTION #3

“AREN'T THERE ALTERATIONS AND DISCREPANCIES  
AMONG THE MANUSCRIPTS?”

**Textual Criticism applied:**

**Total variants:**

**150,000**

# OBJECTION #3

“AREN'T THERE ALTERATIONS AND DISCREPANCIES  
AMONG THE MANUSCRIPTS?”

**Textual Criticism applied:**

Remaining variants:

**7,500** ↓95%



# OBJECTION #3

“AREN’T THERE ALTERATIONS AND DISCREPANCIES  
AMONG THE MANUSCRIPTS?”

**Textual Criticism applied:**

Remaining variants:

**375**

↓95%

# OBJECTION #3

“AREN’T THERE ALTERATIONS AND DISCREPANCIES  
AMONG THE MANUSCRIPTS?”

**Textual Criticism applied:**

Remaining variants:

**150**

↓42%

# OBJECTION #3

“AREN’T THERE ALTERATIONS AND DISCREPANCIES  
AMONG THE MANUSCRIPTS?”

**Textual Criticism applied:**

**Remaining variants:**

**50**

↓33%

↓0.03% from  
original number



# OBJECTION #3

“AREN’T THERE ALTERATIONS AND DISCREPANCIES  
AMONG THE MANUSCRIPTS?”

**Textual Criticism applied:**

**Remaining variants:**

**0**

# THE BIBLE ON TRIAL: **A RELIABLE COPY?**

## Objections:

- #1 “We don’t have any original documents”
- #2 “What about the time gap between the originals writings and manuscripts?”
- #3 “Aren’t there alterations and discrepancies among the manuscripts?”
- #4 “Why are there so many different “Bibles” today?”

# OBJECTION #4

“WHY ARE THERE SO MANY DIFFERENT “BIBLES” TODAY?”

## Disputed texts or books

- Majority of all printed Bibles are translating from the same reconstructed Greek and Hebrew text
- Exception: Catholic Bible includes Apocrypha
- Gnostic gospels and other disputed books



# OBJECTION #4

“WHY ARE THERE SO MANY DIFFERENT “BIBLES” TODAY?”

**Translation philosophy:**

- Accuracy
- Readability

# THE BIBLE ON TRIAL: **A RELIABLE COPY?**

## Objections:

- #1 “We don’t have any original documents”
- #2 “What about the time gap between the originals writings and manuscripts?”
- #3 “Aren’t there alterations and discrepancies among the manuscripts?”
- #4 “Why are there so many different “Bibles” today?”





# OBJECTION #3

“AREN'T THERE ALTERATIONS AND DISCREPANCIES AMONG THE MANUSCRIPTS?”

## Classifying the variants:

- Unintentional errors:
  - Skipping a word
  - Skipping lines
  - Repeating lines
  - Repeating lines
  - Incorrectly dividing words (GODISNOWHERE)
  - Mistake one word for another (“Affect” and “Effect”)

# OBJECTION #3

“AREN’T THERE ALTERATIONS AND DISCREPANCIES  
AMONG THE MANUSCRIPTS?”

## Classifying the variants:

- Intentional errors:
  - Updating style or grammar
  - Correcting apparent errors of fact
  - Harmonizing of texts
  - Doctrinal alterations