

APOLOGETICS CLASS

Master Reference List

Jesus: His Life, Death & Resurrection | Biblical Manuscript Reliability

Compiled for classroom use. Organized by topic for ease of reference and student study.

SECTION 1 — Books: Historical Jesus (Life, Death & Existence)

Foundational / Accessible

The Case for Christ — Lee Strobel

Former atheist and journalist interviews leading scholars on historical evidence for Jesus. One of the most widely read introductions to the topic.

More Than a Carpenter — Josh McDowell & Sean McDowell

A brief, powerful case for the resurrection, deity of Jesus, and reliability of the New Testament. Over 10 million copies in print.

Mere Christianity — C.S. Lewis

A modern classic making a comprehensive case for Christianity beginning with the moral argument. Essential reading.

The Reason for God — Tim Keller

Addresses the major objections to Christianity (evil, hell, exclusivity) and defends the core claims of the faith with pastoral insight.

Cold Case Christianity — J. Warner Wallace

A former homicide detective examines the historical Jesus through the lens of forensic investigation.

Intermediate / Scholarly

Jesus and the Eyewitnesses (2nd ed.) — Richard Bauckham

Centers on eyewitness testimony behind the Gospels. Explores oral memory, names in Gospel tradition, the Twelve, and the testimony of Papias. Engages John's Gospel seriously.

Evidence That Demands a Verdict — Josh McDowell & Sean McDowell

Nearly 900-page comprehensive defense covering the deity of Jesus, Bible reliability, and the resurrection. A standard reference for apologists.

On Guard: Defending Your Faith — William Lane Craig

Presents the cosmological, teleological, and moral arguments for God, plus robust evidence for the resurrection. Ideal for group study.

Simply Christian — N.T. Wright

Explains the Christian faith and grounds it in historical reality, including a defense of the resurrection within Jewish eschatological context.

SECTION 2 — Books: Resurrection Apologetics

Practical & Accessible

The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus — Gary Habermas & Michael Licona

The top practical training guide for presenting historical evidence for the resurrection. Includes tactics for casual conversations with skeptics. Endorsed by leading scholars across the spectrum.

The Case for Christ (Resurrection sections) — Lee Strobel

Interviews experts including Gary Habermas on the historical case for the resurrection in an accessible journalistic format.

Advanced / Scholarly

The Resurrection of Jesus: A New Historiographical Approach — Michael Licona

Grounds the resurrection apologetic in a careful study of modern historiography. Called 'required reading for anyone who wants to master this subject' by Gary Habermas.

The Resurrection of the Son of God — N.T. Wright

A massive and comprehensive treatment of resurrection in Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity. Surpasses other works in biblical knowledge.

Jesus, Contradicted: Why the Gospels Tell the Same Story Differently — Michael Licona (2024)

Argues the Gospels are ancient biography and should be read with appropriate genre expectations. A more accessible companion to his earlier scholarly work.

Did the Resurrection Happen? A Conversation with Gary Habermas and Antony Flew — Ed. David Baggett

A debate between the world's leading resurrection scholar and the most influential atheist philosopher of the 20th century. A window into the key philosophical issues.

On the Minimal Facts Method — Gary Habermas

Habermas's Minimal Facts approach argues for the resurrection using only data granted by the majority of critical scholars — including skeptical ones. Key facts: (1) Jesus died by crucifixion, (2) the disciples sincerely believed they saw the risen Jesus, (3) Paul's conversion, (4) James's conversion, (5) the empty tomb. Search YouTube for 'Habermas Minimal Facts' for excellent lecture videos.

SECTION 3 — Books: Manuscript Reliability & Transmission

Undesigned Coincidences — Lydia McGrew

Hidden in Plain View: Undesigned Coincidences in the Gospels and Acts — Lydia McGrew

Revives a powerful 19th-century argument: the Gospels and Acts contain puzzle-like 'fits' between independent accounts best explained by honest eyewitness sources. Endorsed by Craig, Habermas, Blomberg, Keener, and McDowell.

The Mirror or the Mask: Liberating the Gospels from Literary Devices — Lydia McGrew

Systematically examines claims that Gospel authors were permitted by literary convention to present events differently from how they happened. Finds these conventions wanting.

The Eye of the Beholder: The Gospel of John as Historical Reportage — Lydia McGrew

Defends the historical reliability of John's Gospel specifically, engaging critical scholarship in depth.

Testimonies to the Truth: Why You Can Trust the Gospels — Lydia McGrew (2025/2026)

Her newest work — brings together new and classic arguments in an accessible form for laypeople. Now available in audiobook.

General Bible & NT Reliability

I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist — Norman Geisler & Frank Turek

Shows that truth is knowable, then demonstrates cardinal Christian doctrines are true beyond a reasonable doubt. Covers manuscript reliability in depth.

Can We Trust the Gospels? — Peter J. Williams

A compact, rigorous defense of the Gospels' historical reliability by the principal of Tyndale House, Cambridge. Covers names, geography, and manuscript evidence.

SECTION 4 — YouTube Channels

The following channels are recommended for video teaching, student research, and supplemental viewing:

Channel Name	Host	Focus
Reasonable Faith	William Lane Craig	Historical resurrection evidence; philosophical arguments; debates with skeptics
Cold Case Christianity	J. Warner Wallace	Forensic investigation of the Gospels; NT reliability through detective methods
Testify	Erik Manning	NT reliability; historicity of the resurrection; uniqueness of Jesus; miracles
Stand to Reason	Greg Koukl	Practical apologetics tactics; defending Scripture; engaging skeptics graciously
Inspiring Philosophy	Michael Jones	Philosophical & scientific evidence; Jesus, history, consciousness, and the canon
Sean McDowell	Sean McDowell	Resurrection and NT reliability; accessible for students and younger audiences
CrossExamined	Frank Turek	Bible reliability; historical and philosophical case for Christianity
Mike Winger / BibleThinker	Mike Winger	Bible reliability; responding to critics like Bart Ehrman
Gavin Ortlund	Gavin Ortlund	Apologetics; defending Protestantism; theology and church history
Whaddo You Meme?	Jon McCray	Accessible cultural apologetics; historical Jesus

Specific Video Topics to Search

- "Gary Habermas Minimal Facts" — multiple lecture versions available across channels
- "Daniel Wallace New Testament Manuscripts" — textual criticism from a leading scholar
- "Lydia McGrew Undesigned Coincidences" — talks and interviews explaining the argument
- "J. Warner Wallace Cold Case Christianity" — forensic approach to Gospel reliability
- "William Lane Craig Resurrection Debate" — debates with leading skeptics
- "N.T. Wright Resurrection" — historical and theological case for the resurrection

SECTION 5 — Key Scholars Quick Reference

A quick-reference guide to the major scholars and their areas of specialty:

Scholar / Author	Specialty
Gary Habermas	Resurrection apologetics; Minimal Facts method
Michael Licona	Historiography of the resurrection; Gospel differences
N.T. Wright	Historical Jesus; resurrection in Second Temple Jewish context
Daniel Wallace	NT textual criticism; manuscript transmission (CSNTM)

Lydia McGrew	Undesigned coincidences; formal epistemology applied to testimony
Richard Bauckham	Eyewitness testimony in the Gospels
Craig Blomberg	Gospel reliability and historicity
Peter J. Williams	NT manuscripts; Principal of Tyndale House, Cambridge
William Lane Craig	Philosophical & historical resurrection arguments; debates
Josh & Sean McDowell	Evidence-based apologetics; reliability of the NT
Lee Strobel	Investigative journalism approach to historical Jesus
Greg Koukl	Tactical apologetics; defending Christian claims in dialogue
J. Warner Wallace	Cold-case forensic approach to the Gospels
Frank Turek	Bible reliability; historical and philosophical case for Christianity

SECTION 6 — Suggested Reading Path

Start Here (Accessible / High Impact)

- The Case for Christ — Lee Strobel (best entry point for skeptics and new students)
- More Than a Carpenter — Josh & Sean McDowell (short, powerful, great for sharing)
- Mere Christianity — C.S. Lewis (foundational for understanding the Christian worldview)

Go Deeper

- The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus — Habermas & Licona (master the Minimal Facts)
- Hidden in Plain View — Lydia McGrew (learn the Undesigned Coincidences argument)
- Cold Case Christianity — J. Warner Wallace (forensic investigation of the Gospels)
- On Guard — William Lane Craig (philosophical grounding for historical arguments)

Academic Level

- The Resurrection of Jesus: A New Historiographical Approach — Michael Licona
- The Resurrection of the Son of God — N.T. Wright
- Jesus and the Eyewitnesses — Richard Bauckham
- Evidence That Demands a Verdict — Josh & Sean McDowell (comprehensive reference)