



**REASON #1:
THE CHURCH
FOLLOWS A FLAWED BOOK**

Origins

How did Christianity get started? How did they embrace certain beliefs, and choose which books to include in the Bible?”—a lot of people would say those decisions were made not for spiritual reasons, but actually for political reasons. If the Bible were the product of one human culture—you would think it would fit in that culture and offend everyone else. BUT, if the Bible actually came from God, and it wasn't the product of any human culture, doesn't it make sense that it would offend every culture in some way? Which it very much does.

Changes

Lots of people believe that the Bible has been drastically changed over the centuries. Is it true that what we read in the Gospels is different today than when it was written? When it comes to manuscripts, there are two questions: how many do we have still surviving today, and what's the gap in time between when the original was written and the earliest manuscript we have. We have more than a thousand manuscripts containing either entire books of the Gospels or portions of Gospels. We have a portion of the Gospel of John that archaeologists have dated to about 135 AD! That's about 45 years after John wrote the original! For comparison, a famous Roman history book, the Annals of Roman History has only two surviving manuscripts. One from 850 AD. And the other one is dated around 1100AD. So at least 700 years after the original was written. That's a big gap.

Contradictions

If you spend any time on atheist web sites, it's just a given: the Bible is full of contradictions. Is that true? In the four gospels there are four different reporters; reporting on many of the same events in the life of Christ. And sometimes the stories don't seem to match up. Whenever you have different witnesses reporting on the same event, you expect to get some apparent contradictions. In fact, in court, if the stories of two witnesses match up too neatly, you suspect collusion. Right? But if they're not colluding, you naturally get different details that come out. And that's exactly what you find in the Gospels.

Morality

“Wait— isn’t the Bible a book about good morals? Why would anyone have a problem with the morality in the Bible?” Well, because more and more people actually believe the Bible’s moral teachings are dangerous. A very common moral accusation is that the Bible leads to violence. Is that true? The honest answer is, “Sometimes, yes.” 35 people were killed in the Witch Trials of Salem, Massachusetts in the late 1600s. In the name of God! That’s awful. And it was much worse in Europe. During the Crusades and the Inquisitions, up to a million people were killed in the name of Christianity. Those things happened not because people were following the Bible. They happened because people were distorting the Bible. And that’s a big difference.

At the end of the day, I don't worship and follow a Book; I worship and follow Jesus. And every time I open the Scriptures, I meet him and I reconnect with him. He's the one who's chipping away at my pride and my jealousy and my anger; he's the one who's making me a man of patience and compassion and forgiveness and generosity and courage. So I'm just thankful that the Bible keeps pointing me to Jesus.

Pastor Dave Gustavsen

Done with Church

TIME TO LEAN IN, LISTEN, & LEARN