

# Living by the Word

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Unbalanced world...

## **The Trustworthiness of the Bible Was It Tampered With By the Early Church?**

by  
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### **Introduction**

Space limitations do not permit me to present a definitive study on our topic; I cannot do this topic justice in the space I have in this paper. Thus, it is beyond my scope to go into great detail here. Due to the overwhelming amount of pertinent data, the following is simply a highlight, a mere outline of the available information. However, I want to demonstrate why one should trust the Bible and therefore the biblical teaching on a given concern (e.g., on the occult), and know that it was not tampered with by the early Church.

### **Methodology**

Theologian, historian, and lawyer, John W. Montgomery rightly remarks:

The historic Christian claim differs qualitatively from the claims of all other religions at the epistemological point: on the issue of testability. Eastern faiths and Islam [witchcraft, and so forth] ... ask the uncommitted seeker to discover their truth experientially: the faith-experience will be self-validating. Unhappily, as analytical philosopher Kai Nielsen and others have rigorously shown, a subjective faith-experience is logically incapable of `validating God-talk'.... Christianity, on the other hand, declares that the truth of its absolute claims rests squarely on certain historical facts, open to ordinary investigation.<sup>1</sup>

In addressing among other questions the issue of whether the New Testament documents are historically reliable Montgomery states:

Here, let it be noted, we do not naively assume the "inspiration" or "infallibility" of the New Testament records, and then by circular reasoning attempt to prove what we have previously assumed. We regard the documents...only as documents, and we treat them as we would any other historical materials. Our procedure in determining documentary reliability will ... go directly to the documents themselves and subject them to the tests of reliability employed in general historiography and literary criticism."<sup>2</sup>

Thus, I will not simply assume the authenticity, historical reliability, or trustworthiness of the biblical text. We will examine or test it to see whether it is trustworthy or has been tampered with by the church. By this process, based upon sound principles of research, I will survey the issue and establish the biblical text's

reliability by testing it in light of the facts. The point is that we should practice proper research, not merely make assumptions one way or the other.

Our approach will be to present some basic findings or information and principles of research relative to the disciplines of archaeology, history, law, literary criticism, logic, early manuscripts, and textual criticism to discern whether the Bible was tampered with by the early Church and therefore whether it is trustworthy.<sup>3</sup>

## **Eight Evidences**

First, what does archaeological research have to tell us relevant to our concern?<sup>4</sup> How does the Bible match-up with secular history and facts? Montgomery writes:

Far from avoiding contact with secular history, the New Testament is replete with explicit references to secular personages, places and events. Unlike typical sacred literature, myth, and fairytale ("once upon a time ..."), the gospel story begins when "there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed...."

Modern archaeological research has confirmed again and again the reliability of New Testament geography, chronology, and general history....To take but a single striking example: after the rise of liberal biblical criticism, doubt was expressed as to the historicity of Pontius Pilate, since he is mentioned even by pagan historians only in connection with Jesus' death. Then in 1961 came the discovery at Caesarea of the now famous "Pilate inscription," definitely showing that, as usual, the New Testament writers were engaged in accurate historiography.<sup>5</sup>

The same can be said for the reliability of the Old Testament based on archaeological evidence; the evidence is overwhelming for its trustworthiness and reliability as well.<sup>6</sup> For example, Old Testament and language scholar, Gleason Archer says concerning the Dead Sea Scroll copies of the book of Isaiah (of course, this is also manuscript evidence):

Even though the two copies of Isaiah discovered in Qumran Cave 1 near the Dead Sea in 1947 were a thousand years earlier than the oldest dated manuscript previously known [the Masoretic text] (A.D. 980), they proved to be word for word identical with our standard Hebrew Bible in more than 95 percent of the text. The 5 percent of variation consisted chiefly of obvious slips of the pen and variations in spelling.<sup>7</sup>

The Old Testament scholar Roland Kenneth Harrison commenting on part of the significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls states, "The Biblical manuscripts from Qumran have unquestionably confirmed the general tradition regarding the tremendous care exercised in the transmission of the Hebrew Scriptures...."<sup>8</sup>

Norman Geisler and William Nix tie this point together for us:

With the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, scholars have Hebrew manuscripts one thousand years earlier than the great Masoretic Text manuscripts, [ca. 900s A.D.] enabling them to check on the fidelity of the Hebrew text. The result of comparative studies reveals that there is a word-for-word identity in more than 95 percent of the cases, and the 5 percent variation consists mostly of slips of the pen and spelling....

The thousands of Hebrew manuscripts, with their confirmation by the LXX [the Septuagint, an early Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament] and the Samaritan Pentateuch, and the numerous other crosschecks from outside and inside the text provide overwhelming support for the reliability of the Old Testament text.<sup>9</sup>

Second, certainly in the case of the New Testament, since most of it was written and circulating at such an early date (relative to the events recorded) there was no time for the accrual of myth or legend or "editing" by the early Church.<sup>10</sup>

John W. Montgomery points out based on the objective evidence--manuscript and other evidences--that *"the time interval between the writing of the New Testament documents as we have them and the events of Jesus' life which they record is too brief to allow for communal redaction ["editing" or tampering with] by the Church."*<sup>11</sup>

After a through examination and application of the three standard historiographical and literary tests for discerning the authenticity and trustworthiness of an alleged ancient document Montgomery concludes: "On the basis, then, of powerful bibliographic, internal, and external evidence, competent historical scholarship must regard the New Testament documents as deriving from the first century and as reflecting primary-source testimony concerning the person and claims of Jesus...."<sup>12</sup>

The scholar Sir Frederic G. Kenyon, who served as the director and principal librarian of the British Museum, stated based upon the existing Greek manuscripts of the New Testament:

he interval then between the dates of original composition and the earliest extant evidence becomes so small as to be in fact negligible, and the last foundation for any doubt that the Scriptures have come down to us substantially as they were written has now been removed. Both the *authenticity* and the *general integrity* of the books of the New Testament may be regarded as finally established.<sup>13</sup>

Third, the biblical writers and their successors had to advance and defend their claims, both what they orally communicated and had committed to writing. Thus, logically I must note that their claims could have been easily disproved if they had distorted or tampered with the biblical teachings or text (e.g., the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament). Relative to the life and teachings of Jesus and the New Testament, for example, F.F. Bruce says:

And it was not only friendly eyewitnesses that the early preachers had to reckon with; there were others less well disposed who were also conversant with the main facts of the ministry and death of Jesus. The disciples could not afford to risk inaccuracies (not to speak of willful manipulation of the facts), which would at once be exposed by those who would be only too glad to do so. On the contrary, one of the strong points in the original apostolic preaching is the confident appeal to the knowledge of the hearers; they not only said "We are witnesses of these things," but also, "As you yourselves know (Acts 2:22). Had there been any tendency to depart from the facts in any material respect, the possible presence of hostile witnesses in the audience would have served as a further corrective."<sup>14</sup>

Thus, had the early Church or those in the Old Testament, tampered with the true teachings of the biblical text, they could and would have been easily corrected or refuted by contemporaries who knew better and had both motive and means to do so.

Moreover, in the face of hostile charges and witnesses and resulting hardships for their teachings the biblical writers and their successors had every reason to recant if they had tampered with the biblical text.

Fourth, the biblical writers and their successors are noted for the virtue of honesty, both in teaching and practice. It is incongruous that the same individuals are at the same time guilty of gross misrepresentations and falsehoods--lying.

Indeed, they lived exemplary lifestyles. For example, the New Testament writers (and the same can be said for most of the Old Testament writers) lives were marked by a dedication to teaching and standing for honesty and truthfulness. They underwent incredible hardships and suffering for what they taught, such as social ostracism, confiscation of their property, beatings, imprisonment, and other sacrifices to preach their message (e.g., the gospel). Many died as martyrs. They had no motive to lie by

misrepresenting the teachings of Christ and the Bible. These people and their successors were not the type who would promulgate what they knew to be false or tamper with the biblical teachings (e.g., of Christ). The virtue of truthfulness is extolled throughout the entire Bible (e.g., Exod. 20:16; Ps. 5:6; Prov. 6:17, 19; 12:22 19:22; Zech. 8:16; Acts 5:3; Eph. 4:25; Col. 3:9; Rev. 22:15). Lying is inconsistent with their lifestyles and teachings. Note the following quotes from some of the New Testament writers regarding the nature of their writings and testimony.

Luke the personal physician and aid of the apostle Paul writes:

Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may now the certainty of the things you have been taught.

- Luke 1:1-4

The apostle John writes:

The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe.

- John 19:35

The apostle Peter writes:

We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

- 2 Peter 1:16

The people to whom Jesus' disciples passed the gospel on to and in turn their disciples were of the same caliber (2 Tim. 2:2) and communicated the exact same teachings.

For example, consider Papias (ca. A.D. 60-70-ca. 130-140), who was either a direct disciple of the apostle John or of the direct students of the apostles. Papias became the bishop of Hierapolis in Asia Minor and was a contemporary and colleague of Polycarp (see below). Around A.D. 130 he wrote his five volume work, *Expositions of the Sayings of the Lord* of which only fragments exist today, and at that are only cited in the works of later writers (e.g., the Church father Irenaeus and the early Church historian Eusebius [ca. 265-ca. 340], bishop of Caesarea [315-340]. Eusebius records Papias as stating:

I will not hesitate to set down for you, along with my interpretations, everything I carefully learned then from the elders and carefully remembered, guaranteeing their truth....

And the Elder [either the apostle John or another leader in the early Church whose name was also John] used to say this: "Mark, having become Peter's interpreter, wrote down accurately everything he remembered, though not in order, of the things either said or done by Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor followed him, but afterward, as I said, followed Peter, who adapted his teachings as needed but had no intention of giving an ordered account of the Lord's sayings. Consequently Mark did nothing wrong in writing down some things as he remembered them, for he made it his one concern not to omit anything which he heard or to make any false statement in them."...

So Matthew composed the oracles in the Hebrew language....

The teachings of the New Testament were also faithfully taught and handed down by Polycarp (ca. A.D. 70-ca. 155-160), who was a student of the apostle John. Polycarp became bishop of Smyrna in Asia Minor and was martyred for his faith. His student Irenaeus (see below) said of him that "He always taught what he learned from the apostles, which the Church continues to hand on, and which are the only truths."<sup>16</sup>

Irenaeus continued the tradition. Irenaeus (ca. 135-200) as a boy or young man either saw and knew Polycarp and/or studied under him, became bishop of Lyon in 177. He wrote *The Refutation and Overthrow of the Knowledge Falsely So Called* (more popularly known as *Against Heresies*), wherein he stated:<sup>17</sup>

For we learned the plan of our salvation from no others than from those through whom the gospel came to us [the apostles]. They first preached it abroad, and then later by the will of God handed it down to us in Writings, to be the foundation and pillar of our faith. ... So Matthew among the Hebrews issued a Writing of the gospel in their own tongue, while Peter and Paul were preaching the gospel at Rome and founding the Church. After their decease Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, also handed down to us in writing what Peter had preached. Then Luke, the follower of Paul, recorded in a book the gospel as it was preached by him. Finally John, the disciple of the Lord...himself published the Gospel....

- *Against Heresies* 3.1.1

In *Against Heresies* Irenaeus is primarily addressing gnostic teachings. While there were diversity of beliefs, in general gnostics held that they possessed secret or esoteric teachings or traditions passed down from the apostles themselves ("apostolic tradition") or received by a succession from the apostles. To counter this idea, among his arguments, Irenaeus appealed to the genuine apostolic tradition, that which was written down in the New Testament and publically taught by the apostles and personally entrusted by them to the Church (3.4.1). Irenaeus referred to the ostensible or public teachings of the apostles in the Bible that were orally reinforced by them when given to their students, such as Polycarp. Thus, tradition here means the correct teaching, the correct interpretation of Scripture or the teachings of Jesus that he gave to his apostles and they in turn faithfully transmitted to their students (i.e., genuine apostolic succession). It is the correct teaching. In essence Irenaeus is saying this is what Christ taught his disciples and they taught their students (e.g., Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Papias of Hierapolis, Polycarp of Smyrna), and they taught us. They told us this is what this passage means; this is how to interpret or understand this passage or teaching. Furthermore, it is the only teaching or meaning, or interpretation of what the apostles orally taught, or wrote in the New Testament. Therefore, there where no secret interpretations, meanings, or teachings that were only known by the "truly spiritual" or elite.

Thus, interestingly and appropriate for our discussion, in refuting gnostic teachings, beginning in the very next paragraph Irenaeus states:

But when they are refuted from the Writings they turn around and attack the Writings themselves, saying that they are not correct, or authoritative, and that the truth cannot be found from them by those who are not acquainted with the tradition [the secret gnostic teachings]. For this [they say (in Richardson text.)] was not handed down in writing, but orally....

- *Against Heresies* 3.2.1

But when we appeal again to that tradition which has come down from the apostles and is guarded by the successions of elders in the churches, they oppose the tradition, saying they are wiser not only than the elders, but even than the apostles, and have found the genuine truth.

- *Against Heresies* 3.2.2

The tradition of the apostles, made clear in all the world, can be clearly seen in every church by those who wish to behold the truth. We can enumerate those who were established by the apostles as bishops in the churches, and their successors down to our time, none of whom taught or thought of anything like their mad ideas. Even if the apostles had known of hidden mysteries, which they taught to the perfect secretly and apart from others, they would have handed them down especially to those to whom they were entrusting the churches themselves. For they certainly wished those whom they were leaving as their successors, handing over to them their own teaching position, to be perfect and irreproachable, since their sound conduct would be a great benefit....

- *Against Heresies* 3.3.1

Irenaeus then states that "since it would be very long in such a volume as this to enumerate the successions of all the churches" (3.3.2), then as an example proceeds to list in order the successors of the apostles Peter and Paul of the Church at Rome with a direct lineage back to them (3.3.2-4). Then Irenaeus remarks:

In this very order and succession the apostolic tradition in the Church and the preaching of the truth has come down even to us. This is a full demonstration that it is one and the same life-giving faith which has been preserved in the Church from the apostles to the present, and is handed on in truth.

Similarly Polycarp, who not only was taught by apostles, and associated with many who had seen Christ, but was installed by apostles for Asia, as bishop in the church in Smyrna--I saw him myself in my early youth--survived for a long time, and departed this life in a ripe old age by a glorious and magnificent martyrdom. He always taught what he learned from the apostles, which the Church continues to hand on, and which are the only truths. The churches in Asia all bear witness to this, as do those who have succeeded Polycarp down to the present time....

- *Against Heresies* 3.3.3-4

Lastly, I note, and particularly fitting for our discussion Irenaeus' remarks that:

So the apostolic tradition is preserved in the Church and has come down to us. Let us turn, then, to the demonstration from the writings of those apostles who recorded the gospel, in which they recorded their conviction about God, showing that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Truth, and in him is no lie....The apostles, being disciples of the truth, are apart from every lie.

- *Against Heresies* 3.5.1

These individuals were trustworthy witnesses, honest men who sacrificed much, often their very lives for the beliefs. They had no reason to lie or suffer or die for what they knew to be untrue, nothing to gain everything to lose. They had every reason to rethink or recant their position, particularly because not only was the early Church marked for persecution, but often especially the leaders. To say the least, it was costly to be a disciple of Christ.

Fifth, in light of the character and testimony of the biblical writers and their successors, a well-established principle of historical and literary research is relevant to our discussion of the authenticity and trustworthiness of the biblical text. John W. Montgomery states: "...historical and literary scholarship continues to follow Aristotle's eminently just dictum that the benefit of doubt is to be given to the document itself, not arrogated by the critic to himself."<sup>18</sup> In other words, a document and its claims are to be accepted at face value unless sufficient objective evidence is presented to discredit it. Montgomery continues: "This means that one must listen to the claims of the document under analysis, and not

assume fraud or error unless the author disqualifies himself by contradictions or known factual inaccuracies."<sup>19</sup>

Sixth, there is a similar legal principle to the historical and literary dictum just discussed that pertains to the issue of the biblical text's trustworthiness. Attorney Montgomery brings this principle to bear on our concern:

In a court of law, admissible testimony is considered truthful unless impeached or otherwise rendered doubtful. This is in accord with ordinary life, where only the paranoid goes about with the bias that everyone is lying. ... The burden, then, is on those who would show that the New Testament testimony to Jesus is not worthy of belief. Let us place the Gospel testimony to Jesus under the legal microscope to see if its reliability can be impeached.<sup>20</sup>

Montgomery's point is that the New Testament writer's credibility is impeccable and would stand in any just court of law.

Seventh, we need to consider the legal principle known as the "ancient documents" rule as it relates to our topic. Simon Greenleaf (1783-1853) who among his many achievements and credentials served as Royall and Dane Professor of Law at Harvard Law School, and became recognized as the foremost North American authority on common law evidence, and which *The Dictionary of American Biography* says produced "the greatest single authority on evidence in the entire literature of legal procedure," applied this principle to the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) in the New Testament. (For an in-depth treatment of the authenticity and trustworthiness of the four gospels from the legal perspective see his classic, *The Testimony of the Evangelists: The Gospels Examined by the Rules of Evidence Administered in Courts of Justice*.

Simon Greenleaf notes in *The Testimony of the Evangelists* the accepted rule of evidence relative to ancient documents, the "ancient documents" rule: "*Every document, apparently ancient, coming from the proper repository or custody, and bearing on its face no evident marks of forgery, the law presumes to be genuine, and devolves on the opposing party the burden of proving it to be otherwise.*"<sup>21</sup> Greenleaf also states:

The burden of showing them to be false and unworthy of credit, is devolved on the party who makes that objection. The presumption of the law is the judgment of charity. It presumes that every man is innocent until he is proved guilty; that everything has been done fairly and legally, until it is proved to have been otherwise; and that every document, found in its proper repository, and not bearing marks of forgery, is genuine. Now this is precisely the case with the Sacred Writings.<sup>22</sup>

Thus, based on legal reasoning and evidence Greenleaf (and Montgomery) conclude that the New Testament documents are authentic and trustworthy.<sup>(23)</sup>

Eighth, the discipline of textual criticism has some light to shed on the question of whether the biblical text was tampered with by the early Church. For example, in discussing the issue of variant readings the scholar John Wenham has some thoughts that have important implications for our topic--in this case the New Testament. Based on variant readings of the texts,<sup>24</sup> instances of differences of readings or wording of Greek manuscripts (the vast majority are insignificant, e.g., the spelling of a name, use of different pronouns, different word order or transposing words), Wenham writes:

The interesting and important thing about the late-second-century text is this: at that early date there was already a wide diversity of variants. These variants were of course mostly quite minor in character, but they show that there had been no recent systematic editing of the documents to make them conform to some standard version.<sup>25</sup>

Furthermore, Wenham believes that many of these variants go back to the first century and reasons, "Thus the very existence of variants is itself powerful evidence against a systematic, tendentious alteration of the manuscripts in the very early stages of the history of the text."<sup>26</sup> He then proceeds to quote the textual critic G. D. Kilpatrick's comments relative to his point: "Kilpatrick also declares that, in spite of our detailed knowledge of first- and second-century Greek, no one has so far shown that the New Testament is contaminated with the grammar or orthography [spelling] of a later period."<sup>27</sup>

Thus, from the minutely detailed study of the grammar and vocabulary of the early Greek texts of the New Testament there is no evidence to support the claims that the biblical text was tampered with by the early Church. The objectively verifiable evidence says just the opposite.

## Conclusion

There is no objective evidence that the biblical text has been tampered with by the Jews or the early Church. There is no manuscript evidence, no archaeological evidence, no eyewitness--or otherwise--testimony, no support from the writings of the early Church, nor any evidence from the study of textual criticism to substantiate witches' or other occultists' or critics subjectively based claims of a tampered Bible.

On the other hand, there is overwhelming objective evidence to support the conclusion that the biblical text was not tampered with by the early Church, but has been faithfully transmitted down through the centuries to us today and is indeed a reliable historical document of the first order.

The problem here is not a tampered with or corrupted biblical text or teachings of the Old or New Testaments, but with those who will not accept the clear teaching(s) of the Bible.

The only reason people have for believing that the Bible has been tampered with by the early Church (or anyone else) is that it clearly does not teach what they believe and practice. The Bible does not concur with their views or feelings. Therefore, they conjecture that it must have been tampered with by the early Church. This is a textbook case of circular reasoning--assuming the very thing you are suppose to or are trying to prove.

Just about anyone can assert just about anything, but this does not constitute proof of the claim. Proving it is another matter. For instance, just about anyone can file a lawsuit, but proving their case is a different issue. So it is with this charge.

Therefore, in light of the evidence, in light of accepted scholarly archaeological, historical, legal, literary, logical, and textual facts and principles, I affirm the authenticity and trustworthiness of the biblical text and acceptance of all that it teaches. Indeed, the Bible contains the definitive counsel concerning the meaning and purpose of life.

## Endnotes

1. Montgomery, *Human Rights and Human Dignity* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), 133.

2. Montgomery, *Where is History Going?* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1972), 44.

3. For further study on the three primary tests to determine the authenticity, trustworthiness, and historical reliability of a document (the bibliographical, internal, and external tests) as applied to the Bible specifically see Paul Barnett, *Is the New Testament Reliable?*, 10-15, 33-173; F.F. Bruce, *The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?*, 7-120; Josh McDowell, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict, Volume 1: Historical Evidences for the Christian Faith*, rev. ed. (San Bernardino: Here's Life Publishers, 1979), 39-78; John W. Montgomery, *History and Christianity*, 25-40; John W. Montgomery, *Where is History Going?*, 37-52; John W. Montgomery, *Human Rights and Human Dignity*, 131-160.

4. For in-depth treatments of the archaeological evidence for the reliability of the New Testament see John McRay, *Archaeology and the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991); J. A. Thompson, *The Bible and Archaeology*, 3d ed., fully rev. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 308-438; Edwin Yamauchi, *The Stones and the Scriptures: An Introduction to Biblical Archaeology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1972), 92-166.
5. Montgomery, *Human Rights and Human Dignity*, 143-44.
6. For a detailed analysis on this data see Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, 37-80; Geisler and Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible*, 343-382; R.K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 85-143, 199-288; McDowell, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict, Volume 1*, 52-60; J. A. Thompson, *The Bible and Archaeology*, 3-306; Edwin Yamauchi, *The Stones and the Scriptures*, 17-91.
7. Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, 25.
8. R.K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 217.
9. Geisler and Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible*, 382.
10. For the evidence for an early date for the writing of most of the New Testament see Barnett, *Is the New Testament Reliable?*, 33-42; Geisler and Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible*, 419-431; Douglas Groothuis, *Revealing the New Age Jesus: Challenges to Orthodox Views of Christ* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1990), 124-134; McDowell, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict, Vol. 1*, 50-52; Montgomery, *Where is History Going?*, 47-52.
11. Montgomery, *Where is History Going?*, italics in original, 50.
12. Montgomery, *Where is History Going?*, 49.
13. Sir Frederic G. Kenyon, as quoted in Montgomery, *Where is History Going?*, italics in original, 45.
14. Bruce, *The New Testament Documents*, 46.
15. *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations of Their Writings*, ed. and trans. by J. B. Lightfoot and J. R. Harmer, ed. and rev. by Michael W. Holmes, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992), 569.
16. *Against Heresies* 3.3.4.
17. The following quotes from Irenaeus' work *Against Heresies*, are from *Early Christian Fathers*, gen. eds., John Baillie, John T. McNeill, and Henry P. Van Dusen, ed. and trans. by Cyril C. Richardson in collaboration with Eugene R. Fairweather, Edward Rochie Hardy, and Massey Hamilton Shepherd (New York: Macmillan, 1970), 370-76.
18. Montgomery, *Where is History Going?*, 46.
19. Ibid.
20. Montgomery, *Human Rights and Human Dignity*, 140. See also 141-50.
21. Simon Greenleaf, *The Testimony of the Evangelists: The Gospels Examined by the Rules of Evidence Administered in Courts of Justice* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1995), italics in original, 16. See also Montgomery, *Human Rights and Human Dignity*, 137.
22. Ibid.
23. See Montgomery, *Human Rights and Human Dignity*, 137-50.
24. For a discussion on the subject of variant readings see Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, 24-25, 54-65; Geisler and Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible*, 467-489; McDowell, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict, Vol. 1*, 43-46; John W. Wenham, *Christ and the Bible* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1973), 180-183.
25. Wenham, *Christ and the Bible*, 178.
26. Ibid., 179.

27. Ibid.