

SOPHIA DEFENDS THE FAITH

SOPHIA IN GREEK MEANS WISDOM

SKEPTIC: Why should I believe what the Bible says and that Jesus Christ rose from the dead? It is just myth.

SOPHIA: There is strong evidence to support the Bible. The Bible is reliable in its **transmission** in that the New Testament is supported by **over 5000 ancient Greek manuscript copies** in whole or in part with some dating back to the second century. By comparing these copies we can reconstruct the New Testament to essentially **its original condition**. The Old Testament was quoted and the New Testament was written by the **apostles of Jesus who walked with Jesus**. **Eyewitnesses of the events accepted the apostle's writings as being accurate historical accounts.**

If the New Testament writings of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were cross examined in a court of law they would be found innocent of collusion and contradiction meaning that the Gospels and the book of **Acts are factual reports from different perspectives of the historical events.** They blend into one true historical account.

Archaeology has confirmed that the people and places of the Old and New Testament existed as described. People can visit many of these places today. I can provide you with documents to support what I am telling you. **Besides this, the Old Testament accurately describes the life of Jesus Christ hundreds of years before Jesus was born.**

SKEPTIC: OK! The Bible might be accurate concerning many things, but it is wrong about Jesus Christ rising from the dead. People do not rise from the dead!

SOPHIA: Why not? We know the universe is **dying** a heat death and is winding down. Therefore it is **not eternal**. Therefore it had **to have had a beginning**. The universe **could not have created itself**. An **Eternal Being must have created** the universe and the **people** on our planet. If so, then this Creator God can easily raise someone back to life.

The evidence indicates that Jesus could not have survived death by crucifixion. A spear was thrust into Jesus' side to **confirm His death**. The disciples **did not steal** the body from the tomb because before the resurrection they were cowards who became bold and **died as martyrs** because of the resurrection. The Romans or Jewish officials did not **take the body** because they were unable to produce the body to stop the growth of Christianity. **Eyewitnesses** wrote about Jesus rising from the dead in the New Testament. They **died as martyrs** because they refused to deny what they **knew to be true**. They were not hallucinating because there were **over 500 eyewitnesses** of the risen Christ.

SKEPTIC: OK! But only Jesus' followers believed in the resurrection. None of his enemies did.

SOPHIA: False! Thomas **refused** to believe until the risen Jesus **appeared to Thomas** and allowed Thomas **to touch Him**. Jesus' relative James did not believe in Jesus until **Jesus appeared to him** after the resurrection. Thomas and James died as martyrs. The Apostle Paul tried to stop the spread of Christianity to the point of approving of the murder of believers. After the **risen Christ appeared to Paul**, Paul became a believer and wrote many of the epistles of the New Testament. He suffered for Christ and **died as a martyr** because **he had seen the risen Christ**.

SKEPTIC: So what if the Bible is true and Jesus rose from the dead? Why is this important?

SOPHIA: You know that **everybody breaks the Ten Commandments**: thou shalt worship only God in truth, keep the Sabbath, honor parents, thou shalt **not** murder or put people down, lust or commit adultery, steal, lie, covet, etc. The Bible calls this **sin** and **sin separates us from a Holy God**. **Jesus is God**, the eternal second person of the Holy Trinity, who became man, **lived a sinless life, died for our sins, was raised to life for our justification and ascended into heaven**. The Bible says we must **receive Jesus as Lord and Savior into our hearts by faith** to be saved from our sins and from being condemned by God at **the Day of Judgement at the Last Day**. True believers will be raised to **eternal life with God at the Last Day**. (See John 1:1, 12-14; 5:24-29; 6:40; 12:48; Romans 3:9-31; 4:25; 10:9-13)

Why don't you read the New Testament by starting to read the **Gospel of John** and the **Epistle to the Romans**. I would like to give you a Bible and a book called "**The Case for Christ**" by Lee Strobel. It will give you the reasons and the confidence to believe that what you read in the Bible is true. Why don't you come to church with me?

SKEPTIC: It would be wise of me to do that. **Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.**
CHRIST HAS RISEN! (*Christos Anestee*) (See Luke 18:9-14 and Acts 16:14b and 1 Peter 3:15)

ATHEIST: There is no God!

(See Psalm 53:1)

SOPHIA: Does this mean that you do not believe that you will have to give an account of your life at the Day of Judgment?

ATHEIST: There is no God. There is no Day of Judgment. I will not have to give an account of my life.

SOPHIA: In other words you believe that **your life does not count.**

ATHEIST: Well, I would not put it that way.

SOPHIA: **Would you agree that if anything now exists (and it does), then either something must be eternal or something not eternal must have emerged from nothing?**

ATHEIST: What are you talking about?

SOPHIA: There are really only two choices to try to explain our existence. **Either something must be eternal or something not eternal must have emerged from nothing.** What other choice is there?

ATHEIST: **From nothing, nothing comes.** Everybody knows that.

SOPHIA: If there was ever a time when there was absolutely nothing, then there would be nothing today. Therefore, **something must be eternal!**

ATHEIST: Isn't the universe eternal?

SOPHIA: **According to the second law of thermodynamics the universe is not eternal.** According to this law our sun and the stars are losing heat energy. Eventually all their heat energy will be dissipated and the stars including our sun will cease to exist in their present state. Since they will die out, then they had to have had a beginning. Since the universe had a beginning, **the universe is not eternal.** Therefore to account for the existence of the universe **something must be eternal that has self-existence that created the universe.**

ATHEIST: I will have to think about that.

SOPHIA: An excellent book on this subject is called **“Defending your Faith”** by R.C. Sproul. I will give you a copy if you will read it.

ATHEIST: I will take you up on that. Thank you.

SOPHIA: That's great. Read the book and we will talk some more.

ATHEIST: We will do that.

SOPHIA: Also please take this **Gospel of John booklet.** **While you are reading “Defending your Faith” you might become interested in learning about Jesus Christ.**

The Bible says concerning Jesus Christ in John 1:1-3, 14: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made....And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

SOPHIA: Why are you not a Christian?

EVOLUTIONIST: Because I was taught in school that we developed by a process of evolution. Yet **the Bible teaches that we were created.** (See Genesis 2:7).

SOPHIA: May I ask you a couple of questions?

EVOLUTIONIST: Yes, you may.

SOPHIA: The human brain depends on the human heart to pump blood to the brain so that the brain can function. Is that correct?

EVOLUTIONIST: Yes, that is correct.

SOPHIA: The human heart depends on the brain to send nerve signals to the heart so that the heart can function. Is that correct?

EVOLUTIONIST: Yes, that is correct.

SOPHIA: The brain depends on the heart to function and the heart depends on the brain to function. **How could the first heart and first brain have developed independently over a long evolutionary process?** How did the heart and brain reproduce themselves during this process of evolution?

EVOLUTIONIST: I will have to think about that. The Bible has just as many problems. For example, where did Cain get his wife?

SOPHIA: The Bible says **Adam and Eve had many sons and daughters over a period of time.** God had not yet given the commandment to not marry siblings, because the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve were only one step from the creation of Adam and Eve. Their genes had not been subject to very much mutation. So **Cain married one of his sisters.**

EVOLUTIONIST: There are other problems with the Bible. Science contradicts many things in the Bible.

SOPHIA: Scientists are always changing their theories. What may be a problem today may not be a problem tomorrow. There are **many scientists** who believe **the Bible is true** from cover to cover. They believe that the **evidence from history and science supports the creation model instead of the evolutionary model.**

EVOLUTIONIST: I don't see how this could be.

SOPHIA: An excellent book on this subject is called the **“Answers Book: The 20 Most Asked Questions about Creation, Evolution and the Book of Genesis Answered.”** I will give you a copy if you will read it.

EVOLUTIONIST: I will take you up on that. Thank you.

SOPHIA: That's great. Read the book and we will talk some more.

EVOLUTIONIST: We will do that.

SOPHIA: Also please take this **Gospel of John booklet.** While you are reading the **“Answers Book”** you might become interested in learning about **Jesus Christ and the evidences for His resurrection.**

Jesus Christ says in Mark 10:6: **“From the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.”**

ARIUS: Hello! May I leave this interesting free tract from the **Watchtower** with you to read?

SOPHIA: You must be a **Jehovah's Witness**. (Note: Modern day fourth century **Arians**)

ARIUS: Yes, I am.

SOPHIA: Do you believe that **Jesus Christ is the One LORD Jehovah God of the Old Testament?**

ARIUS: We believe that Jesus Christ is a god.

SOPHIA: Not just a god. I mean is **Jesus Christ the One LORD Jehovah God of the Old Testament who was never created and has always existed as Jehovah God?**

ARIUS: Jesus was created. He is not Jehovah God.

SOPHIA: Maybe you can explain something for me. Do you believe that **the Bible is the Word of God?**

ARIUS: Yes, I believe that.

SOPHIA: May we look at a passage in the book of Revelation together?

ARIUS: Yes, we may.

SOPHIA: Let's read **Revelation 2:8** which says, **"These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive."**

Who died and came to life again? Who is the First and the Last?

ARIUS: Jesus Christ!

SOPHIA: Then we agree that **Jesus Christ is the First and the Last**. Let's read **Revelation 22:13 and 16** which says, **"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last...I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star."**

Who is the First and the Last in this passage?

ARIUS: Jesus Christ!

SOPHIA: Now let's read some verses from the **Old Testament**. **Isaiah 44:6** says, **"Thus saith the LORD [Jehovah] the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD [Jehovah] of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God."** **Isaiah 48:12** says, **"Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last."** **Isaiah 42:8** says, **"I am the LORD [Jehovah]: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images."**

There can be only one First and one Last. We see that: Only Jehovah God is the First and the Last. Jesus Christ is the First and the Last. Therefore, Jesus Christ is Jehovah God.

ARIUS: I will have to study this and contact you again.

SOPHIA: I will look forward to our next meeting. Please study the **Gospel of John**. Learn about the real Jesus of the Bible. Receive the **LORD Jesus Christ as LORD GOD and Savior** and be saved from your sins! **Jesus said in John 12:44, "He that seeth me seeth him who sent me."** **GOD** is the **"him"** who sent Jesus. **Therefore Jesus is saying, "He that seeth me seeth GOD."** **Jesus claimed to be the LORD GOD.**

THEO: I could not find the word “**Trinity**” in the Bible. Why do Christians believe in the **Trinity**?

SOPHIA: The word “**Trinity**” is a word that refers to a doctrine that is clearly **taught in the Bible**.

THEO: How does the **Bible teach** the doctrine of the **Trinity**?

SOPHIA: The **Bible says** in 2 Peter 1:17, “**For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.**”

Do you see that the **Bible says** that there is a **person called the Father who is God**?

THEO: Yes, I understand that the **Bible says** that there is a **person called the Father who is God**.

SOPHIA: The **Bible says** in John 1:1-3, 14, “**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made....And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” Do you see that the **Bible says** that there is another person who is the Word, who is Jesus Christ, who is God?**

THEO: Yes, I understand that **God became a man in the person of Jesus Christ**. I am aware that the **Bible teaches** in many places that **Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man**.

SOPHIA: The **Bible says** in Acts 5:3-4, “**But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.**”

Do you see that the **Bible says** that lying to the **Holy Ghost is lying to a person who is God**?

THEO: Yes, I can see that the **Bible says** that there is another person called the **Holy Ghost who is God**. Does this mean that there are three Gods?

SOPHIA: Absolutely Not! The **Bible says** that **there is only ONE GOD**. Isaiah 44:6, 8 says, “**Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God. . . .Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared it? ye are even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any.**” Other verses that say there is **only ONE GOD** are Isaiah 43:10-11, 44:24, 45:5; Mark 12:29 and many others.

THEO: I see that the **Bible says that there is one and only ONE GOD**. But I am confused.

SOPHIA: Do not be confused. We have seen that the **Bible says** that there is a **person called the Father who is God and that there is another person who is Jesus Christ, the Word, the Son of God, who is God and that there is another person called the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit who is God; BUT there is only ONE GOD**. This is called the doctrine of the Trinity. **God is a tri-personal being**.

THEO: I can see that this is logical, but I don’t understand **how** God can be **three persons and ONE GOD**.

SOPHIA: I realize this is difficult. We would have to be God to fully understand the nature of God. God has told us that there are **three distinct persons but only ONE GOD in essence or nature**. We must believe this even if we don’t understand **how** this could be. There is nothing illogical or contradictory in this doctrine.

THEO: We are saying that there are **three distinct eternal persons in the one divine essence of God**.

SOPHIA: That is correct. **Jesus Christ says** in Matthew 28:19 “**baptizing them in the name [singular] of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.**” There are **three distinct equal persons in the ONE GOD**.

TIM: What do you believe about **the rapture**?

SOPHIA: **I believe what the Lord Jesus Christ teaches!** First Thessalonians 4 and 5 says that the rapture and resurrection of believers will happen at the same time. So **let's learn from Jesus Christ!** Read **John 6:40**.

TIM: “And this is the will of him that sent me, that **every one** which seeth the Son, and **believeth on** him, may have everlasting life and I will **raise him up at the last day.**” (KJV) (See also John 6:39, 44, 54; 11:24.)

SOPHIA: **The Lord Jesus Christ says all believers will be raised at the last day!** **So I believe** that all believers will be raised **at the last day.** Do you believe all believers will be raised **at the last day?**

TIM: I thought that the rapture takes place 7 years before the last day with the tribulation after the rapture.

SOPHIA: **Jesus Christ says all believers will be raised at the last day.** So the rapture **cannot** take place 7 years before the last day. Do you believe all believers will be raised **at the last day?**

TIM: It's how you interpret the Bible. Jesus isn't talking about a regular day.

SOPHIA: Don't you take the Bible literally? Do you know **what Jesus Christ says** will happen if you do not take the word **“day”** to mean day? Let's read **John 12:48**.

TIM: “He that rejecteth me, and **receiveth not my words**, hath one that judgeth him: **the word** that I have spoken, the same shall **judge him in the last day.**” (KJV) (See also 2 Peter 3:10-13)

SOPHIA: **Jesus Christ says the word which He spoke will judge at the last day.** **Jesus says that all believers will be raised at the last day and unbelievers will be judged at the last day.** There will be no one left to go through a time of tribulation and receive a second chance. **We better listen to the Lord Jesus Christ!**

With the same syntax **that Jesus said He** would be raised on **“the third day”** (LUKE 24:46), **Jesus said all believers will be raised at “the last day.”** The grammar is the same in both phrases in the original Greek except that the word **“last”** replaces the word **“third.”** In the **same way** that you believe **Jesus** was raised on **the “third” day** you **must** believe **Jesus when He says all believers will be raised at the “last” day!**

TIM: Doesn't the book of Revelation say that the tribulation comes after the rapture?

SOPHIA: Someone's interpretation of Revelation and its symbolism will **not make the words of Jesus Christ go away.** Let me read **John 5: 28-29**. **Jesus Himself says:** “Marvel not at this: for the **hour** is coming, in the which **all** that are in the graves shall **hear his voice**, And shall **come forth**; they that have done good, unto the **resurrection of life**; and they that have done evil, unto the **resurrection of damnation.**” (KJV)

TIM: I thought 1007 years separated these two resurrections.

SOPHIA: No! **Jesus says this is at the last day.** **Jesus says that all** will hear **Jesus' voice** and **come out**. No one will hear **Jesus' voice** and come out 1007 years later. When **Jesus said** “come out,” Lazarus **came out!**

TIM: Isn't this just your interpretation?

SOPHIA: **There is nothing to interpret.** **Jesus says all believers will be raised at the last day.** **He is explicit and clear.** **Jesus says** in John chapter 10: **“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”**

The idea that the rapture would occur 7 years before the last day was not taught until about 1830. Interpretations of Bible verses that contradict Jesus Christ **are wrong**. **Jesus Christ says all believers will be raised at the last day!** **How can you be wrong when you believe every word that Jesus Christ says?**

INQUIRER: How did we get the New Testament and what about “The Da Vinci Code”?

SOPHIA: Jesus Christ appointed apostles whose message was certified by God with miracles. An apostle (or his close companion) wrote the New Testament books in Greek. These books were in harmony with the Old Testament which Jesus said was the Word of God without error (Matthew 22:29). The New Testament books were copied, circulated and received as accurate by eyewitnesses of the events described including the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

INQUIRER: Do we have the original documents?

SOPHIA: We do not have the original autographs, but we have over five thousand Greek manuscript copies in whole or in part of the New Testament with some dating back to the second century.

INQUIRER: I heard that there are many errors in these Greek copies.

SOPHIA: Most of the errors are very minor consisting of spelling and word order. By comparing these many copies, scholars have been able to correct the errors and reconstruct the New Testament to essentially as it was first written in Greek by the apostles.

INQUIRER: What about the other early writings that were not included in the New Testament?

SOPHIA: They were not included because they were not written by Jesus’ apostles. They were not commissioned by Jesus or certified by God with miracles. They were written long after all of the eyewitnesses had died. These writings contradicted the Old Testament and they had other agendas besides recording accurate history. People throughout history have tried to use these writings to promote their books and false agendas. The Jesus Seminar and “The Da Vinci Code” are present day examples.

INQUIRER: Why are there so many translations of the Greek manuscript?

SOPHIA: We are blessed to have many scholars working to translate the Greek manuscript into our modern languages. Languages, including English, are constantly changing. So translations need to be constantly updated and improved.

INQUIRER: Which English translation of the Bible should we be reading?

SOPHIA: A few late dated Greek Byzantine manuscripts were used to produce the King James Bible translation in 1611. While the King James Bible has proven to be an excellent and trustworthy Bible, we have since then gathered more ancient manuscripts. Through more study we have tried to sharpen up the Greek text. Most modern translations are based on this Greek text. It is difficult to say which of the excellent translations is the best. It is a good idea to read the King James Bible along with a translation using modern day English.

INQUIRER: What should I do?

SOPHIA: The King James, The New King James, The New American Standard, The English Standard and The New International Version are all excellent translations. It is good to read more than one of these. Christian Gift and Bible can help you select a Bible that is right for you.

READ: John 14:26, 15:27, 16:13-14; Luke 24:44-48; Matthew 22:29-32, 24:35

To see how to get to heaven read the Gospel of John (See John 20:31, 14:6, 17:3, 8:24). Then read the book of Romans and then the rest of the New Testament and the Old Testament.

CHRIST HAS RISEN!