



Q & A

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Trustworthy

Thirteen Arguments for the Reliability of the New Testament

July 30, 2024 | \$22, 160 pages, paperback | 978-1-5140-0758-7

“Much of what we know about our final destiny depends on the accuracy of the New Testament documents. Are they trustworthy? This small but powerful book by Dr. Ben Shaw will show you, in an easy-to-understand manner, that the most important documents ever written are indeed trustworthy. That’s good news for the ultimate Good News!”

—Frank Turek, coauthor of *I Don’t Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*

The New Testament is Trustworthy

Who were you envisioning when you wrote *Trustworthy*?

Benjamin Shaw: Too often the arguments related to New Testament reliability are only discussed in academic or pastoral settings. Everyday believers are interested in these discussions as well but often do not understand what the specialists are talking about nor do the specialists always have an effective way of communicating or systematizing these arguments.

Trustworthy is designed to present a robust case for the reliability of the New Testament in a way that is very accessible to the new Christian or those seeking to understand the New Testament better and why it is trustworthy. This is also important given the fact that most professionals will encounter nonbelievers more so than pastors or academics, so they need to have an introduction to these issues and arguments while also having the resources to dig deeper.

The ultimate goal is to provide a book that informs everyday believers and provides a practical work that can help encourage them in their understanding of the New Testament and their walk as disciples.

Simply put, what is the message of this book?

Shaw: The New Testament is trustworthy. This book’s incredible brevity and systematic presentation of a robust number of arguments that all increase the case for the reliability of the New Testament make it quite a distinctive work among others in the literature.

What are some major arguments about the New Testament that many everyday believers may not fully be able to understand or defend?

Shaw: Though some may be familiar with manuscript evidence for the New Testament or the dating of the Gospels, two key arguments discussed in the book—though perhaps less well-known—are *creeds* and *criteria*. Many “everyday believers” may not recognize either of these two evidential categories as they are reading through their Bible.

What would your response be to those everyday believers?

Shaw: When we refer to New Testament creeds, we are not referring to things like the Apostles’ Creed or the Nicene Creed. Rather, these are very early oral traditions that were included in the written text of the New Testament. Perhaps the most well-known of these statements is in 1 Corinthians 15 in which Paul explicitly tells believers that he is reminding them of the Gospel he “received” and “delivered” to them. Many scholars date this, and other New Testament creeds, to the early AD 30s! Additionally, this information is often considered to be connected or confirmed by eyewitnesses such as Peter and James (cf. Galatians 1:18-19).



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Benjamin C. F. Shaw (PhD, Liberty) is president of [Core Apologetics](#). He also serves as adjunct professor of theology at Liberty University and affiliate faculty member of Colorado Christian University. He has been working with Dr. Gary R. Habermas for over a decade to collaborate in philosophical, historical, and theological research and publishing.

Historical criteria provide a different type of reliability. Historians utilize various types of criteria that are quite intuitive to everyday believers as well. When various criteria are met, it adds probability to the reported event having occurred. So, for example, one could use these historical tools as it relates to Jesus' death on the cross. One criterion or principle used would be to point out that Jesus' death is reported in several sources. This is referred to as multiple independent attestation. Jesus' crucifixion was also considered to be highly controversial or embarrassing in the ancient world (1 Corinthians 1:23). Thus, the principle or criterion of embarrassment highlights the fact that this is not something the disciples would have likely invented.

These two considerations are part of a cumulative case for the reliability of the New Testament. These arguments, along with the several others, provide believers with strong reasons for the reliability of the New Testament. The arguments themselves may seem overwhelming to some, at least at an initial glance. But as we look into them, we see that they make good sense in light of our own everyday experiences and are relatively easy-to-follow. At the same time, each argument remains deep enough such that entire works can be written on each one!

What makes this book unique among others about the case for the New Testament?

Shaw: *Trustworthy* systematically presents numerous arguments that are often discussed in isolation. Thus, it provides a presentation that integrates these arguments in a logical manner. It does not just focus on the head or intellectual matters, but has a chapter dedicated to the transformative power of the New Testament which is also consistent with the New Testament being trustworthy. It does much of this from what I believe to be rather widely agreed upon pieces of data.



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