

# 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Foundations

## Apologetics: Historical Argument

### OVERVIEW

This is one of the most important arguments, because it answers the questions, “Is Jesus a real person?” and “Can we trust the New Testament authors?” Over the past 20 years, more and more historical evidence has been found to support Christianity’s claims in the New Testament and the person of Jesus. This is extremely important, because this continues to bring validity to Christianity as the one and only way. No other religions, outside of Christianity, hinge on historical events. When those events can be proven, it brings more and more Truth to the claim that Jesus is “the way, the truth, and the life.” In 2006, the book *Jesus and Archaeology* said, “No reputable scholar today questions that a Jew named Jesus son of Joseph lived; most scholars readily admit that we now know a considerable amount about his actions and his basic teachings.” So, we can start here, then C.S. Lewis asks the question, if Jesus is real, is he a “Liar, Lord, or Lunatic?” If he is real, based on what he did and said, he has to be one and we have to choose.

### ON YOUR OWN

How does it make you feel that there is historical evidence that can help prove the existence of Jesus and the reliability of the New Testament?

Do you think the Liar, Lunatic, or Lord argument is a good argument? Why or not?

# **LARGE GROUP**

## Historicity and Accuracy of the New Testament:

### 1. Historicity

- There are over 5,800 manuscript copies of the New Testament writings.
- 39 ancient sources document the life of Jesus that are consistent with the New Testament teachings

### 2. Accuracy

- There are between 200,000 – 400,000 variants between the New Testament manuscripts.
  - 70-80% of all variants are **misspellings** (p. 86, The Case for the Real Jesus)
  - **Nonsense errors** which are errors that are obvious and can be easily reconstructed (p. 86).
  - The other are variants regarding **synonyms** and different uses of synonyms (p. 86).
  - **Inflection errors** because the order of Greek words is not as important as in English. "...there are sixteen different ways in Greek to say, 'Jesus loves Paul,' and they would be translated into English the very same way" (p. 87).
  - **The errors that are disputed do not contradict the teachings of Scripture.**
- Textual Criticism
  - A long, tedious, respected process of comparing manuscripts gathered through history to get the most accurate original manuscript.

## Video: 4 Proofs of the Resurrection

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FT4Cj-Pi4m0>

### 1. Jesus was dead

- "Historically it is indisputable that Jesus was dead."

### 2. Early Accounts for the Resurrection

- A creed dated back to within months of the death of Jesus

### 3. Empty Tomb

- Opponents of Jesus admitted the tomb is empty

### 4. Eyewitnesses

- "We have no fewer than nine ancient sources inside and outside the New Testament confirming and corroborating that the disciples encountered the risen Christ."

## ***SMALL GROUPS***

How does knowing the historical evidences around these different things help you in apologetics?

If someone came up to you and said, “How can you believe Jesus was a real person,” how would you respond?

Read the attached page about the 6 Evidences of the Resurrection (pp. 22-23, The Case for Christ Answer Booklet). What sticks out to you the most?

## ***TAKE IT HOME***

Go to your browser and search “**When an atheist says 'Why should I believe in Jesus?' Video credit: Mobbin For Christ**” and watch the video. Write down the main points and talk about them with a parent or trusted adult.