

REASON  
AND  
FAITH  
IN THE GOSPELS

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A SCRIPTURAL GUIDE

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## REASON AND FAITH IN THE GOSPELS A SCRIPTURAL GUIDE

By Cody Libolt  
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Christians have long wrestled with the concept of faith. What is faith? Is it opposed to the senses and reason? Is it separate from them, or necessarily connected? Does God command faith apart from evidence, or faith upon evidence?

The following verses demonstrate a consistent pattern: people saw the evidence, heard the message, and believed it. In the specifically Christian sense of the word, faith is the choice to believe that God's promises are true, based upon the good evidence he has provided. In all cases of faith, the Holy Spirit is involved; faith itself is a gift (Ephesians 2:8). But faith should never be understood as something higher than reason and separate from it. Rather, faith *is* reason correctly applied to the promises of God.

Seen together, these verses cast doubt on presuppositionalism, either as an approach to philosophy or to apologetics. Presuppositionalism argues that at some point, we all have to make pre-theoretical commitments on the basis of faith. This means we decide to believe before we have a *reason* to believe. To the contrary, the biblical witness shows people being persuaded by evidence (combined with both a willingness to face facts and the aid of the Holy Spirit).

The verses are presented sequentially with minor comments to highlight their relevance to the question of evidentialism versus presuppositionalism. I included all verses that seemed relevant to the topic. If more verses should be included, please let me know. I am eager to expand this project and improve its quality. I hope to encourage a growing conversation around these verses and possibly a published dialogue. I can be contacted at [ifwewilllive@gmail.com](mailto:ifwewilllive@gmail.com).

The following verses give a compelling picture of the relation of reason and faith. Let these be the starting point as we seek to understand the nature our faith.

## **The Gospel of Matthew**

Matthew 4:23

23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

*Notice the visible, miraculous evidence of Jesus' identity.*

Matthew 16:2-3

2 He answered and said unto them, "When it is evening ye say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.'

3 And in the morning, 'It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and lowering.' O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, but can ye not discern the signs of the times?

*Jesus highlights the moral culpability of these men, who have the ability to know, but choose not to.*

Matthew 28:11-17

11 Now when they were going, behold, some of the guards came into the city and reported unto the chief priests all the things that were done.

12 And when they were assembled with the elders and had taken counsel, they gave a large sum of money unto the soldiers,

13 saying, "Say ye, 'His disciples came by night and stole him away while we slept.'

14 And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him and secure you."

15 So they took the money, and did as they were taught; and this account is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee onto a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

17 And when they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted.

*Matthew addresses the questions of fact surrounding the case. He mentions the persistence of doubts.*

## **The Gospel of Mark**

Mark 2:10-11

10 But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins—” He said to the one sick with the palsy,

11 “I say unto thee, arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.”

*Notice the visible, miraculous evidence of Jesus’ identity.*

Mark 6:52

52 for they had considered not the miracle of the loaves, as their hearts were hardened.

*The disciples do not believe because they have not given sufficient thought to the evidence. This shows moral culpability, referred to as hardness of heart.*

Mark 8:11-12

11 And the Pharisees came forth and began to question with Him, seeking from Him a sign from Heaven, testing Him.

12 And He sighed deeply in His spirit and said, “Why doth this generation seek after a sign? Verily I say unto you, there shall no sign be given unto this generation.”

*Jesus does not always give signs to those who have pre-determined not to believe them.*

Mark 16:14

14 Afterward He appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat; and He upbraided them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not those who had seen Him after He was risen.

*The disciples are morally culpable to believe reliable witnesses of the fact.*

Mark 16:17-20

17 And these signs shall follow them that believe: In My name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

18 they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them. They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”

19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into Heaven, and sat at the right hand of God.

20 And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the Word with signs following. Amen.

*Though the passage is disputed, do notice the emphasis on observable signs in verse 17 and 20.*

## The Gospel of Luke

Luke 1:1-4

1 Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,

2 even as they were delivered unto us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word,

3 it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,

4 that thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed.

*Notice the emphasis on the witnesses to the tangible evidence.*

Luke 1:27-20

17 And he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

18 And Zacharias said unto the angel, “Whereby shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.”

19 And the angel answering said unto him, “I am Gabriel who stands in the presence of God, and am sent to speak unto thee and to show thee these glad tidings.

20 And behold, thou shalt be dumb and not able to speak until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words which shall be fulfilled in their season.”

*Zacharias is morally culpable for failing to believe in the truthfulness of Gabriel, given that the angel stands before his eyes.*

Luke 1:37-38

37 For with God nothing shall be impossible.”

38 And Mary said, “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.” And the angel departed from her.

*Mary shows the correct reaction to a miraculous message from God. She hears and believes.*

Luke 5:24

24 But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power upon earth to forgive sins," He said unto the one sick with the palsy, "I say unto thee, arise and take up thy couch and go into thine house."

*Echoing Mark 2:10-11, we see an emphasis on visible, miraculous evidence of Jesus' identity.*

Luke 6:8

8 But He knew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, "Rise up and stand forth in the midst." And he arose and stood forth.

*Though at other times (Mark 8:11-12) Jesus refuses to give evidence to those who have set themselves against understanding, here Jesus directly confronts their unbelief by presenting evidence.*

Luke 6:19

19 And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for there went virtue out of Him and healed them all.

*Great numbers of people witnessed Jesus' miracles.*

Luke 7:22

22 Then Jesus answering said unto them, "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard: how the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached.

*Jesus builds up the faith of John the Baptist by reminding him of the miraculous evidence for his own identity.*

Luke 7:30

30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized by him.

*Those who choose ahead of time to ignore evidence will not be turned by more of it.*

Luke 9:1-2

1 Then He called His twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils and to cure diseases.

2 And He sent them to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

*Jesus gives miraculous power to the disciples in order to validate their message by visible evidence.*

Luke 9:41

41 And Jesus answering said, “O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and suffer you? Bring thy son hither.”

*In light of his past miracles, Jesus calls the people (even his own disciples) perverse, because they do not yet choose to believe.*

Luke 10:9

9 And heal the sick that are therein and say unto them, ‘The Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.’

*People will know the Kingdom of God is near because of the evidence of miracles.*

Luke 11:15-16

15 But some of them said, “He casteth out devils through Beelzebub, the chief of the devils.”

16 And others, testing Him, sought from Him a sign from Heaven.

*Clearly these doubters have no intention to believe.*

Luke 11:29

29 And when the people were gathered thick together, He began to say, “This is an evil generation. They seek a sign, and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonah the prophet.

*Jesus wastes no time giving evidence to those who, against the evidence, choose not to believe. But even they will know of his resurrection.*



Luke 12:54-57

54 And He said also to the people, “When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, ‘There cometh a shower’; and so it is.

55 And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, ‘There will be heat’; and it cometh to pass.

56 Ye hypocrites! Ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how is it that ye do not discern this time?

57 “Yea, and why even for yourselves judge ye not what is right?

*Jesus points to the moral culpability of the skeptics. He says they are able to judge for themselves. They are able to have knowledge of matters of fact. Should they not grasp Jesus’ identity by reason and observation?*

Luke 16:31

31 And Abraham said unto him, ‘If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.’”

*Tragically, these men consider any evidence to be insufficient.*

Luke 21:29-30

29 And He spoke to them a parable: “Behold the fig tree and all the trees.

30 When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand.

*Jesus points to man’s rational faculty, and the moral responsibility it carries.*

Luke 23:47

47 Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, “Certainly this was a righteous man!”

*The centurion saw facts and believed.*

Luke 24:35-37

25 Then He said unto them, “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!

26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?"

27 And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

*Again, Jesus considers men morally culpable for not choosing to believe the conclusion supported by the evidence.*

Luke 24:39-43

39 Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me to have."

40 And when He had thus spoken, He showed them His hands and His feet.

41 And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, He said unto them, "Have ye here any meat?"

42 And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and of a honeycomb.

43 And He took it and ate before them.

*Jesus gives abundant physical evidence that he is alive.*

## The Gospel of John

John 1:32-37

32 And John bore record, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven like a dove, and It abode upon Him.

33 And I knew Him not. But He that sent me to baptize with water, the Same said unto me, 'Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on Him, the Same is He that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.'

34 And I saw and bore record that this is the Son of God."

35 Again the next day John stood with two of his disciples,

36 and looking upon Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

*John believes because he has seen evidence. The disciples believe because of John's testimony.*

John 1:47-50

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!"

48 Nathanael said unto Him, "How knowest Thou me?" Jesus answered and said unto him, "Before Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee."

49 Nathanael answered and said unto Him, "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel."

50 Jesus answered and said unto him, "Because I said unto thee, 'I saw thee under the fig tree,' believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these."

*Nathanael believes immediately. His reason is not clear in the passage. Perhaps he was at that very moment praying for the Messiah to come, and praying to be considered worthy to follow him. However it came to be, he recognized Jesus' identity, and believed.*

John 3:2

2 The same came to Jesus by night and said unto Him, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, unless God be with him."

*Nicodemus and the other religious leaders know that only a man of God can give the miraculous evidence Jesus has given. They have seen it. They are refusing to believe the evidence.*

John 3:10-11

10 Jesus answered and said unto him, “Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?”

11 Verily, verily I say unto thee, we speak what we know and testify what we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

*A witness must testify to what he knows and what he has seen. Notice the close connection between seeing and knowing.*

John 4:41-42

41 And many more believed because of His own word,

42 and said unto the woman, “Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard Him ourselves and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.”

*Jesus’ very words convince people, for he has both knowledge and truth beyond what they have witnessed in a mere man.*

John 4:47-53

47 When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto Him and besought Him that He would come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.

48 Then Jesus said unto him, “Unless ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.”

49 The nobleman said unto Him, “Sir, come down ere my child die!”

50 Jesus said unto him, “Go thy way; thy son liveth.” And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.

51 And as he was going down, his servants met him and told him, saying, “Thy son liveth!”

52 Then he inquired of them the hour when he began to be healed. And they said unto him, “Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.”

53 So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus had said unto him, “Thy son liveth.” And he himself believed, and his whole house.

*It seems that in verse 48 Jesus refers to the man's belief in Jesus' identity. It is the miracle that convinces the man of that. But before believing in Jesus' identity the man at least believes in the miracle when Jesus says, "Thy son liveth." Why does the man believe? Likely, he has seen or heard about Jesus' other miracles. We can thus reconstruct the order: a miracle witnessed, a miracle asked and fulfilled, full belief.*

John 5:36

36 But I have greater witness than that of John; for the works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of Me that the Father hath sent Me.

*Jesus says the evidence of his miracles is even better than John's testimony.*

John 6:19-20

19 So when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing nigh unto the boat; and they were afraid.

20 But He said unto them, "It is I; be not afraid."

*John records an instance of a great miracle establishing Jesus' identity.*

John 6:26

26 Jesus answered them and said, "Verily, verily I say unto you, ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye ate of the loaves and were filled.

*Jesus desired the people to see his miracles and believe in his identity. But instead they focused on an immediate material benefit.*

John 6:29

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, "This is the work of God: that ye believe in Him whom He hath sent."

*In light of all the above verses, what can "believe" mean except "believe based on observed evidence"?*

John 7:17

17 If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be from God, or whether

I speak from Myself.

*If a man decides ahead of time that God's will is not supreme, God will not necessarily reveal himself.*

John 7:31

31 And many of the people believed in Him and said, "When Jesus cometh, will He do more miracles than these which this man hath done?"

*Again, miracles establish Jesus' identity.*

John 7:48

48 Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed in him?

*Notice the fallacious appeal to authority, as against the facts of the case.*

John 8:43-46

43 Why do ye not understand My speech? Even because ye cannot hear My Word!

44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar and the father of it.

45 And because I tell you the truth, ye believe Me not.

46 Which of you convicteth Me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe Me?

*Men cannot hear the Word of Jesus if they have no allegiance to truth (See also John 18:37).*

John 9:25

25 He answered and said, "Whether he be a sinner or not, I know not. One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see."

*The man knows what he knows.*

John 9:27

27 He answered them, "I have told you already, and ye did not hear. Why would ye hear it again? Will ye also be his disciples?"

*The man does not yet fully grasp the dishonesty of the religious leaders.*

John 9:30-33

30 The man answered and said unto them, "Why, herein is a marvelous thing: that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.

31 Now we know that God heareth not sinners, but if any man be a worshiper of God and doeth His will, him He heareth.

32 Since the world began it was not heard that any man opened the eyes of one who was born blind.

33 If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

*The man reaches a reasoned conclusion, based on observed facts.*

John 9:35-38

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out. And when He had found him, He said unto him, "Dost thou believe in the Son of God?"

36 He answered and said, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe in him?"

37 And Jesus said unto him, "Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee."

38 And he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshiped Him.

*As Jesus gives the facts their full interpretation, the man has no difficulty believing Jesus is the Son of God.*

John 10:2

21 Others said, "These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?"

*These more honest men know how to reason about facts.*

John 10:32

32 Jesus answered them, “Many good works have I shown you from My Father. For which of those works do ye stone Me?”

*Jesus again appeals to his miracles as evidence.*

John 10:37-38

37 If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not.

38 But if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe the works, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.”

*Here is another appeal to evidence of his miracles.*

John 10:41-42

41 And many resorted unto Him and said that John did no miracle, but all things that John spoke of this Man were true.

42 And many believed in Him there.

*The evidence of miracles leads to faith.*

John 11:15

15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent that ye may believe. Nevertheless let us go unto him.”

*Jesus states his desire to present evidence leading to belief.*

John 11:41-43

41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, “Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me.

42 And I knew that Thou hearest Me always, but because of the people who stand by I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me.”

43 And when He thus had spoken, He cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth!”

*Jesus prays and works a miracle in the sight of men and states that his intention is that they will*



*believe.*

John 11:47

47 Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council and said, “What shall we do? For this man doeth many miracles.

*For the benefit of the reader, John notes that even the opposition recognizes the miracles.*

John 12:10-11

10 But the chief priests consulted, that they might put Lazarus also to death,

11 because by reason of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.

*Rightly, the miracle is the reason for people’s belief.*

John 12:17-18

17 The people therefore who were with Him, when He called Lazarus out of his grave and raised him from the dead, bore record.

18 For this cause the people also met Him, for they heard that He had done this miracle.

*Jesus’ cause is advanced by the spread of news about his miracle.*

John 12:28-30

28 Father, glorify Thy name.” Then there came a voice from Heaven, saying, “I Have Both Glorified It, And Will Glorify It Again.”

29 The people therefore who stood by and heard it said that it thundered. Others said, “An angel spoke to him.”

30 Jesus answered and said, “This voice came not because of Me, but for your sakes.

*God gives an audible sign to the people, for their sakes, so they may believe.*

John 12:37-38

37 But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not in Him,

38 that the saying of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: “Lord, who hath believed our report? And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?”

*John’s comment indicates that we would expect people to believe based upon the miracles Jesus was working.*

John 12:41

41 These things said Isaiah when he saw His glory and spoke of Him.

*The prophets also spoke of the evidence they saw.*

John 13:19

19 Now I tell you before it come that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am He.

*Jesus gives his purpose: that the disciples will see the facts and then believe.*

John 13:34-35

34 A new commandment I give unto you: that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

35 By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples: if ye have love one for another.”

*Men will know his disciples by their actions. This verse speaks about evidence of discipleship, not evidence of Jesus’ identity. By establishing the first, we clear the way for establishing the second.*

John 14:9

9 Jesus said unto him, “Have I been so long a time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, ‘Show us the Father’?”

*Jesus believes Philip ought to have recognized him as divine by this point, based on what he has seen.*

John 14:11

11 Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; or else believe Me for the very works' sake.

*Jesus gives his works as evidence.*

John 14:29

29 And now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

*Echoing John 13:19, Jesus gives his purpose: that the disciples will see the facts and then believe.*

John 15:24-27

24 If I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they would not have had sin; but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father.

25 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law: 'They hated Me without a cause.'

26 "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth who proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me.

27 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with Me from the beginning.  
*The people are culpable for their unbelief because the evidence is so tangible. The disciples are told to bear witness because they have seen the facts.*

John 16:28-30

28 I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father."

29 His disciples said unto Him, "Lo, now speakest Thou plainly and speakest no proverb.

30 Now are we sure that Thou knowest all things and needest not that any man should ask Thee. By this we believe that Thou camest forth from God."

*Having seen a great deal of evidence, and having heard Christ's claim, the disciples conclude that Jesus knows all things and is sent of God.*

John 17:25

25 “O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee, but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me.

*The disciple’s knowing consisted of believing the facts as they observed and as Jesus explained to them. Surely, their knowing was not an action apart from evidence, for they would hardly believe even in the face of evidence.*

John 18:37

37 Pilate therefore said unto Him, “Art thou a king then?” Jesus answered, “Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice.”

*Those who do not hear Jesus’ voice do not hear it because they are not “of the truth”—meaning they have not chosen to commit to the truth at whatever cost (See also: John 8:43-46).*

John 19:35-37

35 And he that saw it bore record, and his record is true, and he knoweth that he saith truly, that ye might believe.

36 For these things were done, that the Scripture should be fulfilled: “A bone of Him shall not be broken.”

37 And again another Scripture saith, “They shall look on Him whom they pierced.”

*John emphasizes his own role as an eye-witness.*

John 20:8

8 Then the other disciple, who came first to the sepulcher, went in also; and he saw, and believed.

*The disciples see evidence and then they believe.*

John 20:20

20 And when He had so said, He showed unto them His hands and His side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord.

*Jesus emphasizes the physical evidence of his identity and his resurrection.*

John 20:24-31

24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said unto them, "Unless I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe."

26 And after eight days the disciples were again within, and Thomas was with them. Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be unto you."

27 Then said He to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger and behold My hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing."

28 And Thomas answered and said unto Him, "My Lord and my God!"

29 Jesus said unto him, "Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed. Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed."

30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book.

31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, ye might have life through His name.

*Jesus mildly corrects Thomas because he is so slow to believe. Jesus mentions that more will believe, based on the testimony of the disciples. It is a blessing to have the softness of heart to be able to believe based on testimony rather than personal observation. John ends the scene by saying Jesus did even more signs before his disciples, so John cannot be condemning evidence. In fact, he concludes this passage by stating that the very purpose of his book is to present his testimony of the evidence he observed, so that people will believe.*

## **The Acts of the Apostles**

Acts 1:1-3

1 In the former treatise, O Theophilus, I have given an account of all that Jesus began both to do and teach

2 until the day in which He was taken up, after He had given commandments through the Holy Ghost unto the apostles, whom He had chosen.

3 To these also He showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen by them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.

*As in his introduction to his first book, Luke says his purpose is relay the facts and the evidence, which he calls infallible proofs.*

Acts 1:8-9

8 But ye shall receive power after the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

9 And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

*The disciples are commanded to be witnesses to what they have seen.*

Acts 2:2-4

2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

*The disciples know the Holy Ghost's presence by visible signs.*

Acts 2:36-43

36 “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

38 Then Peter said unto them, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all who are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”

40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, “Save yourselves from this untoward generation.”

41 Then those who gladly received his words were baptized, and that same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread and in prayers.

43 And fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

*All are to assuredly know Jesus’ identity, based on the observed facts. In verse 43 more miracles confirm the reliability of the apostle’s message.*

Acts 3:6-8

6 Then Peter said, “Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have, I give thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.”

7 And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

8 And leaping up, he stood and walked and entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God.

*Another miracle validates the disciples’ work.*

Acts 3:16

16 And His name, through faith in His name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know. Yea, the faith which is by Him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

*Many witness the miracle, even those hostile to Jesus.*

Acts 4:14-17

14 And beholding the man who was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it.

15 But when they had commanded them to go outside the council, they conferred among themselves,

16 saying, "What shall we do to these men? For indeed, that a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all those who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it.

17 But so that it spread no further among the people, let us strictly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name."

*The religious leaders admit the reality of the miracle.*

Acts 4:19-20

19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye;

20 for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

*Peter's mission is to speak about what he knows: what he has seen and heard.*

Acts 4:29-30

29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto Thy servants that with all boldness they may speak Thy Word,

30 by stretching forth Thine hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of Thy holy child Jesus."

*Signs and wonders validate the message.*

Acts 5:12

12 And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people, and they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch.

*Again there are signs and wonders.*



Acts 5:14-16

14 And more believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women,

15 insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.

16 There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks and those who were vexed with unclean spirits; and they were healed, every one.

*The miracles continue, and at the same time many more believers are added to the Lord.*

Acts 5:32

32 And we are His witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to those who obey Him.”

*The disciples identify themselves primarily as witnesses of the resurrection of Christ.*

Acts 5:38-39

38 And now I say unto you, refrain from these men and let them alone, for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought;

39 but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, lest it may happen ye be found even to fight against God.”

*If the disciples were lying, their cause will come to nought. Gamaliel rightly observes that these claims are so extraordinary that they could not be believed except if there be compelling evidence from God himself.*

Acts 6:8

8 And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.

*The miracles continue.*

Acts 9:22

22 But Saul increased the more in strength and confounded the Jews who dwelt in Damascus, proving that Jesus is the very Christ.

*Saul's mission is to prove that Jesus is the Christ. He does so by reasoning and giving evidence.*

Acts 9:34-35

34 And Peter said unto him, “Aeneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole: arise, and make thy bed.”  
And he arose immediately.

35 And all who dwelt in Lydda and Sharon saw him, and turned to the Lord.

*The people of Lydda and Sharon believe upon seeing a miracle.*

Acts 9:41-42

41 And he gave her his hand and lifted her up; and calling in the saints and widows, he presented her alive.

42 And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.

*The people of Joppa believe upon seeing a miracle.*

Acts 10:37-44

37 that Word, I say, ye know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached:

38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

39 And we are witnesses of all things which He did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem — He whom they hanged on a tree and slew.

40 Him God raised up the third day and showed Him openly,

41 not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead.

42 And He commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be the Judge of the quick and dead.

43 To Him all the prophets bear witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.”

44 While Peter was yet speaking these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all those who heard the Word.

*The people believe and the Holy Ghost falls on them as they hear Peter’s words. His words are about evidence people knew for themselves (v. 37-38) and witnessed (v. 39-41).*

Acts 13:12

12 Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

*Having seen evidence, the deputy believes.*

Acts 14:3

3 A long time therefore they tarried among them, speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of His grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

*There are more signs and wonders.*

Acts 14:27

27 And when they had come and had gathered the church together, they recounted all that God had done with them, and how He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.

*The door of faith is opened to the Gentiles by the preaching and miracles of the disciples.*

Acts 16:14

14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God, heard us; and the Lord opened her heart to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul.

*Lydia believes upon hearing Paul's reasoning.*

Acts 16:30-34

30 and brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

31 And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."

32 And they spoke unto him the Word of the Lord, and to all who were in his house.

33 And he took them that same hour of the night and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

*The jailor and his family believe because he has seen a miracle and heard it explained.*

Acts 17:2-3

2 And Paul, as was his custom, went in unto them, and for three Sabbath days reasoned with them from the Scriptures,

3 expounding and alleging that it was necessary for Christ to have suffered and risen again from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ."

*Paul has a custom of reasoning from Scriptures in order to demonstrate his claims.*

Acts 17:11

11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind and searched the Scriptures daily to see whether those things were so.

*Luke commends the Bereans for comparing his words to Scripture. While the Thessalonians did receive Paul's Word, the Bereans received it with "readiness of mind"—meaning they worked to make sure there were no contradictions. The Bereans were following the law of non-contradiction; they were thinking critically. Reasoning was their nobility.*

Acts 17:26-27

26 And He hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation,

27 that they should seek the Lord, if perhaps they might feel after Him and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us.

*Perhaps all people are able to seek the Lord to some degree, based only on reasoning about the natural order of the world.*

Acts 17:30-31

30 The times of this ignorance God overlooked, but now He commandeth all men everywhere to repent,

31 because He hath appointed a Day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained. Of this He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead."

*Men are given assurance of the faith: that Jesus was raised from the dead.*

Acts 18:4

4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.

*Paul's method is to use reason and persuasion.*

Acts 18:19

19 And he came to Ephesus and left them there, but he himself entered into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews.

*Again, Paul reasons. What does this reasoning consist of? We may suppose that he pointed to God's plan as shown in the Old Testament and to the fulfillment of that plan in the observed facts about Jesus.*

Acts 18:27-28

27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him. And when he had come, he helped them much who had believed through grace;

28 for he mightily refuted the Jews (and that publicly), showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

*To show by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ, Paul would have needed to speak of the key facts of Jesus' life, as reported by the disciples—especially the miracles, and the prophecies which Jesus fulfilled.*

Acts 19:11-12

11 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul,

12 so that handkerchiefs or aprons from his body were brought unto the sick, and the diseases departed from them and the evil spirits went out of them.

*Paul works many miracles and the message is further validated.*

Acts 20:12

12 And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted.

*In front of many witnesses, Paul can even raise a man from the dead.*

Acts 24:25

25 And as Paul reasoned about righteousness, temperance, and the Judgment to come, Felix trembled and answered, "Go thy way for this time. When I have a convenient occasion I will call for thee."

*Paul reasons with Felix until the man trembles out of fear and evasion.*

Acts 26:8

8 Why should it be thought an incredible thing by you that God should raise the dead?

*Paul reasons again.*

Acts 26:25-28

25 But Paul said, "I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.

26 For the king himself knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely; for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him, for this thing was not done in a corner.

27 King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest."

28 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, "Thou almost persuadest me to be a Christian."

*Paul attempts to persuade by reference to the facts all have known and observed. The things were not hidden from Festus or done in a corner. Paul appeals to Festus' own knowledge, but Festus does not choose to believe.*

Acts 28:5-6

5 And he shook off the beast into the fire and felt no harm.

6 Now they were expecting that he should have swollen or suddenly fallen down dead; but after watching a great while and seeing no harm come to him, they changed their minds and said that he was a god.

*The people listen to Paul because they have seen a miracle.*

Acts 28:23

23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging, to whom he expounded and testified the Kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses and out of the Prophets, from morning until evening.

*To the last, Paul reasoned with others, persuading them that the observed details of the life of Jesus showed him to be the Messiah prophesied in Scripture.*

Thank you for reading!

For questions or feedback please contact me at [ifwewilllive@gmail.com](mailto:ifwewilllive@gmail.com).

If you would like more information about faith and reason, I have the following resources:

John Locke on Faith

<http://ifwewilllive.com/2014/07/john-locke-on-faith/>

Why Did the Disciples Believe in Jesus?

<http://ifwewilllive.com/2014/07/why-did-the-disciples-believe-in-jesus/>

Understanding and Then Faith

<http://ifwewilllive.com/2014/07/understanding-and-then-faith/>

Knowledge in the Bible

<http://ifwewilllive.com/2014/08/knowledge-in-the-bible/>

Why Believe the Bible?

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Reason Vs. Revelation?

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