



On A Case For Faith

By

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You may be familiar with Lee Strobel's book *The Case for Faith*. It was published three years ago (Zondervan, 2014). While I am also a career journalist and former atheist and will recommend Lee's book to you, this *Teaching Notes* is not about his book.

I wrote this Bible study about 45 years ago (1976) and titled it "A Case for Faith" to address how the Apostle John presented his case for faith in Jesus Christ in his Gospel account. I had been saved for about five years by that time and was amazed at the perfection of God's Word and the Gospel of Christ. I still am.

[These notes are from a Bible study taught 45 years ago. The notes are in outline form.]

A Case For Faith

Please turn in your Bible to John 20.

John's Gospel account was written about 20 years after the Synoptic Gospels. The word "synoptic" comes from the Greek word σύνοψις and Latin *synopticus*. The Greek word comes from σύν (together) and οψις (seeing) and carries the idea of "seeing all together." The Synoptic Gospels are Matthew, Mark and Luke. Each shares some of the same information about Christ's life and ministry.

John's Gospel is different. While John's Gospel supplements the Synoptics, 92% of the content in the fourth Gospel is unique to itself and is not found in the other Gospels. By comparison, Matthew has 42%, Luke 59%, and Mark 7% unique to their Gospels. John omits much that the Synoptics record and records much that they omit. For example, there are 35 miracles of Christ

recorded in the Gospels. John lists only eight of those miracles and six of them are unique to his account.

There are 12 discourses of Christ which are entirely unique to John's Gospel. Probably the best known is the discourse with Nicodemus about spiritual and external life. No other Gospel writer even mentions the existence of a Nicodemus, but John brings his name up three different times: first when Nicodemus met Jesus, later when Nicodemus stood up for Christ's right to be heard, and third when Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea took the dead body of the crucified Christ and buried Him. Nicodemus had an important part in the life of Christ, but only John records it.

Other discourses found only in John's Gospel are –

- Christ's conversation with the Samaritan woman
- Christ's discussion with the Jews on the source of eternal life and its witness as found in chapter 5
- Christ's teaching in chapter 7 at the Feast of Tabernacles on the source of truth
- Christ's talk with the people that He was the Light of the word and True object of faith found in chapter 8
- Christ's teaching to the Pharisees in chapter 10 that He was the Good Shepherd
- Christ's dialogue with the Jews on His unity with the Godhead also found in chapter 10
- Christ's discourse with the crowd that He was the world's Redeemer found in chapter 12
- Christ's upper room teaching, discourse and prayer found in chapters 13 – 17

Let's look for a moment at John 20:30-31 to see John's summary for his "Case for Faith" –

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

Next, let's observe how John presented this unique Case for Faith at the beginning of his Gospel account –

Opening Statement – "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. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in

darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.”

John 1:1-5

Exhibit A – “There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” John 1:6-13

Exhibit B – “Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou? He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother.” John 1:35-40

Exhibit C – “He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.” John 1:41-42

Exhibit D – “The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him,

Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.” John 1:43-49

Now, back to John 20 – “And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: 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.”

I might explain what John said this way – ‘There are many other exhibits that I could bring before you today, but these are enough to demonstrate beyond a shadow of a doubt that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and believing in Him brings life, for there is true and everlasting life in His name.’

John's Case for Faith

- In the discourses that Jesus had with the general public, He pointed them to the fact that He was **ultimate reality**.
- In the discourses that Jesus had with His disciples in private, He pointed them to the fact that He was **eternal sufficiency**.
- To the world our message is that Jesus is ***ultimate reality***.
- In our own lives as God's children we need to constantly remember that Jesus is our ***eternal sufficiency***.

[Thank you for reading these teaching notes from 45 years ago. My prayer is they will be a blessing to you and your ministry.]