

RATIO CHRISTI



Campus Action!

What does ministry at RC IUPUI really look like? Our CD Will Hoyler put together a short video of IUPUI students, faculty, and RC staff explaining the impact RC is having in the lives of believers and non-believers. **Please check out this video at the link provided** and pass it along to anyone who might be interested in learning more about RC: [Ratio Christi at IUPUI - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vhTDtgiwg2s) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vhTDtgiwg2s>)

Here were some of our major semester goals and a report of the happenings:

RC IUPUI GOAL	RC IUPUI REPORT
Build student core leadership	Achieved: we have three strong candidates for future student leadership
Rebuild after the covid campus ban	We've re-established ourselves on campus. We have meetings with students on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays
Continue staff Bible study	Achieved: I've been teaching the "servant" passages from Isaiah.
Grow the group	In process

- This semester we've held meetings on issues such as wrestling with doubt, trustworthiness and canonicity of the Bible, the problem of evil and suffering, and the afterlife. Upcoming topics include The Bible and LGBTQ, and God and Time.
- At IUPUI, Bob and I have been teaching this semester. Will has overseen our social media and outreach on campus.
- In October, our Purdue RC chapter, in partnership with Compassion International, held a campus outreach entitled "Is Christianity Good or Bad for the World?" RC President, Dr. Corey Miller, was the keynote speaker giving the historical and philosophical evidence why Christianity is good for the world. Compassion International provided a speaker testimonial demonstrating the proof in the pudding.



Ministry Beyond the Campus

God continues to pass me the mic! I've been on the radio a few times since the last newsletter. I was, again, a guest on The Bott Radio Network's show "Life and Faith Indiana" which can be heard here: *Fort Wayne – WFCV AM 1090 / FM 93.7 / FM 100.1 / Terre Haute – WMCV FM 96.3*. They've asked me to appear regularly on the show once per quarter to do 30 minutes of apologetics! Our ministry is reaching well beyond the campus! Here is the link so you may listen to the latest program on the exclusivity of Christ: <https://youtu.be/OLOrstlVB5o> Please feel free to share it with anyone you think may benefit! I'll let you know the next time I'm on the air so you may listen live if preferred.

- Church Partnerships
 - Speaking engagements! Just last week I had 9 different presentations in 5 days several of which were church related! We had a great time teaching at Emmanuel Community Church on the issue of tactics for spiritual dialogue. At the Grace Fellowship Church men's retreat, I gave a series of 5 presentations titled "Divine Fingerprints." We looked at evidence from God's world, God's word, and God's way (of salvation) which bear the fingerprints of God. *I truly enjoyed this series and hope I can present it to other churches in the future.*
 - Holy Cross Lutheran Church held their annual "College Sunday" in which they honor, encourage, and pray for college students. We had the pleasure of participating by tabling and engaging with the congregation about RC.
- I'm enjoying teaching the weekly Apologetics class at the Great Commission Academy high school co-op. The students are engaged and getting equipped.



Prayers/Praises

- Giving Tuesday – If the Lord is moving your heart to support this ministry, please keep me in mind this coming "Giving Tuesday."
- Prayer – Strength for students and staff to finish the semester strong
- Praise – I've added some additional partners to our team in recent days.
- Praise – At IUPUI, we have an interesting mix of believing and nonbelieving students.
- Prayer – Please continue to pray for Bobby, an atheist student, who is studying evidence for the resurrection. God is stirring his heart.

In the midst of this holiday season, I hope you'll remember the words of the apostle Paul, "Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever, is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things." (Phil. 4:8) I will dwell on the blessing of serving alongside you to the glory of our great God!

Andy Foland

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THE APOLOGIST'S CORNER

We are getting **A.R.M.E.D.** with reasons that demonstrate the reliability of the New Testament (N.T.) Thus far we've seen **A**rchaeology confirm the N.T. We've also seen that the N. T. writers had excellent knowledge of the **R**egions about which they wrote. This time we will consider **M**anuscript **E**vidence.



A = Archaeology
R = Regional Accuracy
M = Manuscript Evidence
E = Extrabiblical Corroboration
D = Determined by God

Critics are fond of pointing out that we don't have the original manuscripts of the Bible. We have only the copies. Critics further highlight that our copies have many variants. Liberal New Testament scholar Bart Ehrman says, "...these copies all differ from one another, in many thousands of places." (Ehrman, *Misquoting Jesus*) Thus, the various copies of Mark, for example, have differences among them that critics will appeal to, suggesting the copies are unreliable. Not unlike "the telephone game" the message *may* have been drastically altered over many hundreds of years of copying.

What about these critical claims? First, is it true we do not possess the originals? Yes, it is. But we don't possess the originals of any major ancient book biblical or not. The fact is ancient documents tend to wear and need to be replaced by copies. So the fact that we lack originals is the norm among ancient documents, not the exception. This does not cause us to doubt the reliability of other ancient writings for which we lack originals such as those of Aristotle, Plato, Tacitus, Pliny the Younger, etc....

But can we trust the N.T. copies? After all, "thousands" of variants sound like a big deal. The truth is that there are thousands of variants among the New Testament manuscripts, in large part, because we have many thousands of manuscript copies: over 5,800 Greek N.T. manuscripts plus 5,000-10,000 in Latin, Syriac and other languages. We have far more

copies of the NT than any other book from the ancient world. When copying, scribes were bound to make mistakes. *The question is, do the mistakes prevent us from reconstructing what the originals likely said?* No! Why not? First, the overwhelming number of variants are obvious slips of the pen such as misspelled words, flipping word order, or accidentally skipping a line. Second, with so many copies to compare, scholars are able to reconstruct the original to a high degree of accuracy. If part of a text is in question, several other texts can be checked to compare. Third, the copying of texts down through the centuries has proven to be quite trustworthy. Scholar Marice A. Robinson did a study in which he compared 30 randomly selected manuscripts from the second and third century which were compared with later manuscripts (from the Byzantine Textform.) Results showed a 92.2% average stability in the texts. He concluded, "...the text as a whole remains remarkably consistent – not merely between the early papyri and the text of the fourth century manuscripts, but between the early papyri and the text found in manuscripts dating more than 1,000 years later."

Because scribes were able to carefully, though not perfectly, copy texts, and because copies can be studied alongside each other, comparing NT transmission of the text to the telephone game (which involves whispering, not careful passing of information) are totally unwarranted.

Norman L. Geisler offered an illustration that puts the debate in perspective. He asks us to consider that we receive 3 letters from the lawyers of our recently deceased long lost aunt. The letters read as follows:

Letter 1: "Congratulations, you just inherited one mi#lion dollars."

Letter 2: "Congradulations, you just inheritted one million dollars."

Letter 3: "Congratulations, yo# just inherited 1 million dollars."

Now, notice all the variants (in red) between these three letters. Geisler asks, "Nevertheless, do you understand the message?" In other words, are you going to go collect your money or decry variants preclude you from understanding? The point is that despite the variants, we can reconstruct the intended message. In a similar way, N.T. scholars can reconstruct the originals and the meaning of the N.T. is clear in the overwhelming number of cases. So, are you going to collect your salvation?!

The bottom line is that less than 8% of the N.T. text is in question by scholarship and **none** of the questionable texts affect major church doctrine. Arguably the greatest textual scholar of the 20th century, Bruce Metzger, went so far as to claim that our N.T. today is 99% accurate to the originals. John Warwick Montgomery summarizes the situation well: "...to be skeptical of the resultant text of the New Testament books is to allow all of classical antiquity to slip into obscurity, for no documents of the ancient period are as well attested bibliographically as the New Testament." (John Warwick Montgomery, *History and Christianity*, 29)