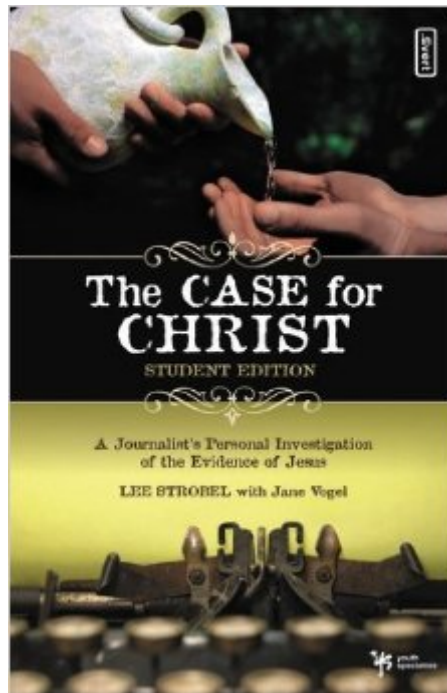


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The Case For Christ: A Journalist's Personal Investigation Of The Evidence For Jesus (Student Edition)



Synopsis

There's little question that he actually lived. But miracles? Rising from the dead? Some of the stories you hear about him sound like just that--stories. A reasonable person would never believe them, let alone the claim that he's the only way to God! But a reasonable person would also make sure that he or she understood the facts before jumping to conclusions. That's why Lee Strobel--an award-winning legal journalist with a knack for asking tough questions--decided to investigate Jesus for himself. An atheist, Strobel felt certain his findings would bring Christianity's claims about Jesus tumbling down like a house of cards. He was in for the surprise of his life. Join him as he retraces his journey from skepticism to faith. You'll consult expert testimony as you sift through the truths that history, science, psychiatry, literature, and religion reveal. Like Strobel, you'll be amazed at the evidence--how much there is, how strong it is, and what it says. The facts are in. What will your verdict be in The Case for Christ?

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Customer Reviews

This book offers a "Cliff Notes" like approach in that it condenses the work of many leading Christian scholars into an easy to read format. It is a case FOR Christ, not a true courtroom "hear both sides of the issue" book. Some other reviewers disliked the lack of 2-sided arguments (there are no interviews w/leading atheists and/or Jesus Seminar thinkers). Being that the title is the case FOR Christ, I did not hold this expectation and was not bothered by this. However, as a staunch skeptic who was not raised with a Christian background, I supplied much of the case AGAINST Christ in my own head. WHAT I LIKED: The book presents a good introduction of Christian scholarship and

answers to common objections regarding the historicity of the Gospels--objections which already existed in my own mind. Suggestions for further reading (primary sources by the interview subjects) are included for those who desire a more thorough scholarly approach.

WHAT I DID NOT LIKE: I felt the "re-creation" of Strobel's own search was un-necessary and a bit contrived, as were the comments he interjected when he was interviewing his subjects. Perhaps that is a carry over from his journalism days. I would have preferred a more straightforward interview, but this matter of taste is small and overall I found the book worthwhile despite these stylistic objections.

HOW IT AFFECTED ME: I came to this book as a very skeptical, non-practicing agnostic Jew (who was raised w/a religious education), fresh from my reading CS Lewis' Mere Christianity (which I highly recommend). Book 1 of Lewis, with his logic/philosophy helped me see that the existence of God logically made sense, but I did not yet know *which* version of a monotheistic God was correct--the rest of his book didn't resonate for me on the first reading as it dealt specifically w/Christianity. Strobel's book answered my questions regarding history/fact as it related to the New Testament.

Was The Case for Christ "made" for me in this book? Partially, yes. And partially by Lewis too, which I reread after reading Strobel. My ultimate conversion came through study of these and other sources, which led me to literally ask God to show himself to me in a way that I would be sure that it was indeed God. I mention this because I believe that for a stubborn skeptic like me, no single source (with the possible exception of the Bible, LOL) would have been able to convince me on its own. Rather, it was a combination of sources/experiences that did so. These included reading the above mentioned books, attending a few church services even while I was still very skeptical, opening myself to the possibility that I had been mistaken in my belief that God didn't matter (if there was even a God to begin with) and literally asking God to let me know him if He was indeed real. Ultimately, the proof came in a manner that goes beyond scientific verification or re-creation. Critics of Christianity and of this and other apologetic works make a good point when they claim God cannot be proved scientifically. I agree. God is beyond science. Scientific or logical methods such as textual criticism, formal logic, archaeology, and so on, can help close the gap in accepting the possibility of God's realness, but ultimately, the gap, at least for me, was completely and finally bridged not by book or proof, but by an experience that cannot be tested scientifically nor recreated in a lab. Skeptics, atheists or agnostics who deep down are married to their viewpoints--no matter what--will likely not budge, and may label the non-testability of my "proof experience" as suspect. I don't begrudge that and would have said the same thing. It had to have it happen to me first-hand before I would believe, and I was able to keep God at bay for years due to my own certainty that this God-stuff was for dummies. I was smart and logical and would have none of that God nonsense.

So, this experience came as a big surprise--one that in retrospect was very welcome. Your mileage in reading this book will vary. If you want to learn something, you can. If you are dead set against learning anything new that might be different from what you already know that you know, it is almost guaranteed that this book will have nothing to offer you. I realize that God's allowing us to come to Him only through our own free will sounds like a cop out and is criticized by non-believers as an all too convenient excuse, but as a former non-believer myself (who was proud of it and who ridiculed that free will stuff too), I say, so be it.

Like many American Christians, I was brought to church most Sundays and endured countless sermons and lessons. Despite this seemingly rich education on Christian principles, I never was exposed to a lesson or class on the existence of God; God's existence was assumed as fact. As I matured into my twenties and went to college, the existence of God was no longer taken for granted. I encountered many agnostics and atheists among my many college professors. The net result of their influence was to question my faith in the existence of God. I never lost my faith, but I found it was a faith that could not withstand scrutiny. Reading Lee Strobel's "The Case For Christ" began in me my search for the certainty of my faith. Strobel's book is an excellent place to start. He presents interviews with several Christian apologetics that involve issues related to the veracity of the Biblical account of Christ, the Son of God. The issues are as follows: The trustworthiness of the Gospel accounts. Historical evidences for Christ outside of the Bible. Archaeology and the Life of Christ. The "Jesus Seminar" account of the life of Christ. Did Jesus claim to be equal with God? Is Jesus the promised scripture's Messiah? Did Jesus really die on the cross? Did Jesus really rise from the dead? Mr. Strobel investigates each issue thoroughly. He approaches the issues as a skeptic who wants to be convinced of the truth. Apparently, Strobel was once a skeptic himself and his investigative journalism convinced him of the truth of his childhood faith in Christ. The only weakness I could find in the book is the lack of rebuttal from those individuals who do not believe in the deity of Jesus. Strobel claims to be the main rebuttal witness, as he assumes the skeptical viewpoint, but he is writing from the position of a believer, and his rebuttals are perhaps not as forceful as a "true" unbeliever. If you have questions like I did, (and as did Strobel), then this is a good starting point for your journey. There are other books that go into complete detail on all the issues raised here, and you may want to purchase these as well. But this is a very good starting point for answering those nagging doubts about your faith in Christianity and one's faith in the person of Jesus. Most highly recommended. Jim "Konedog" Koenig

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