


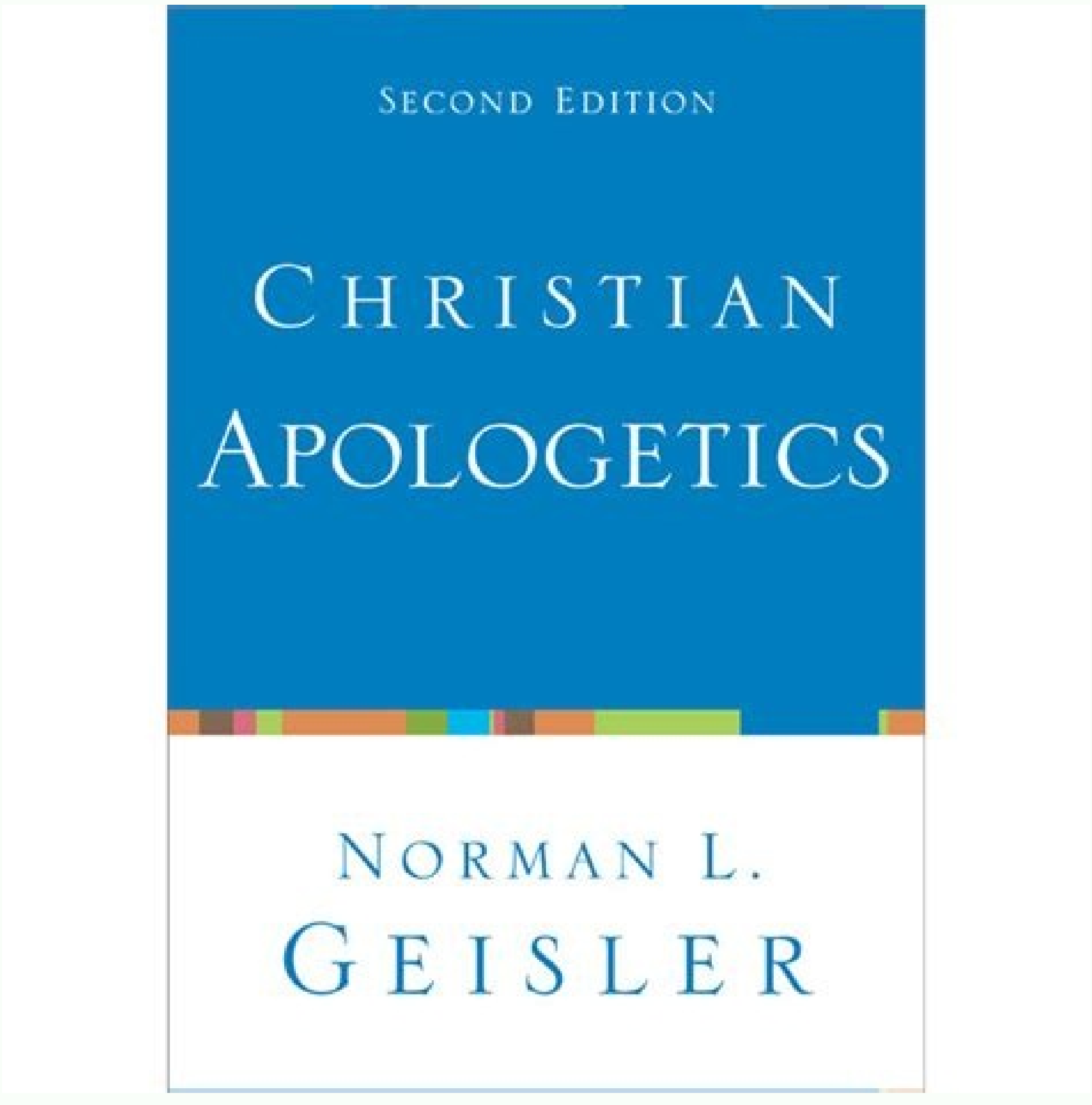
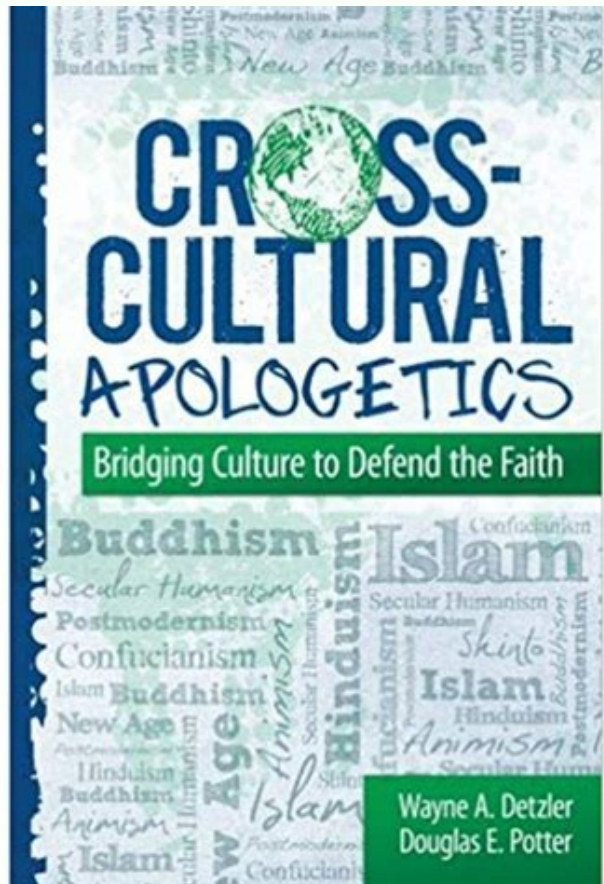
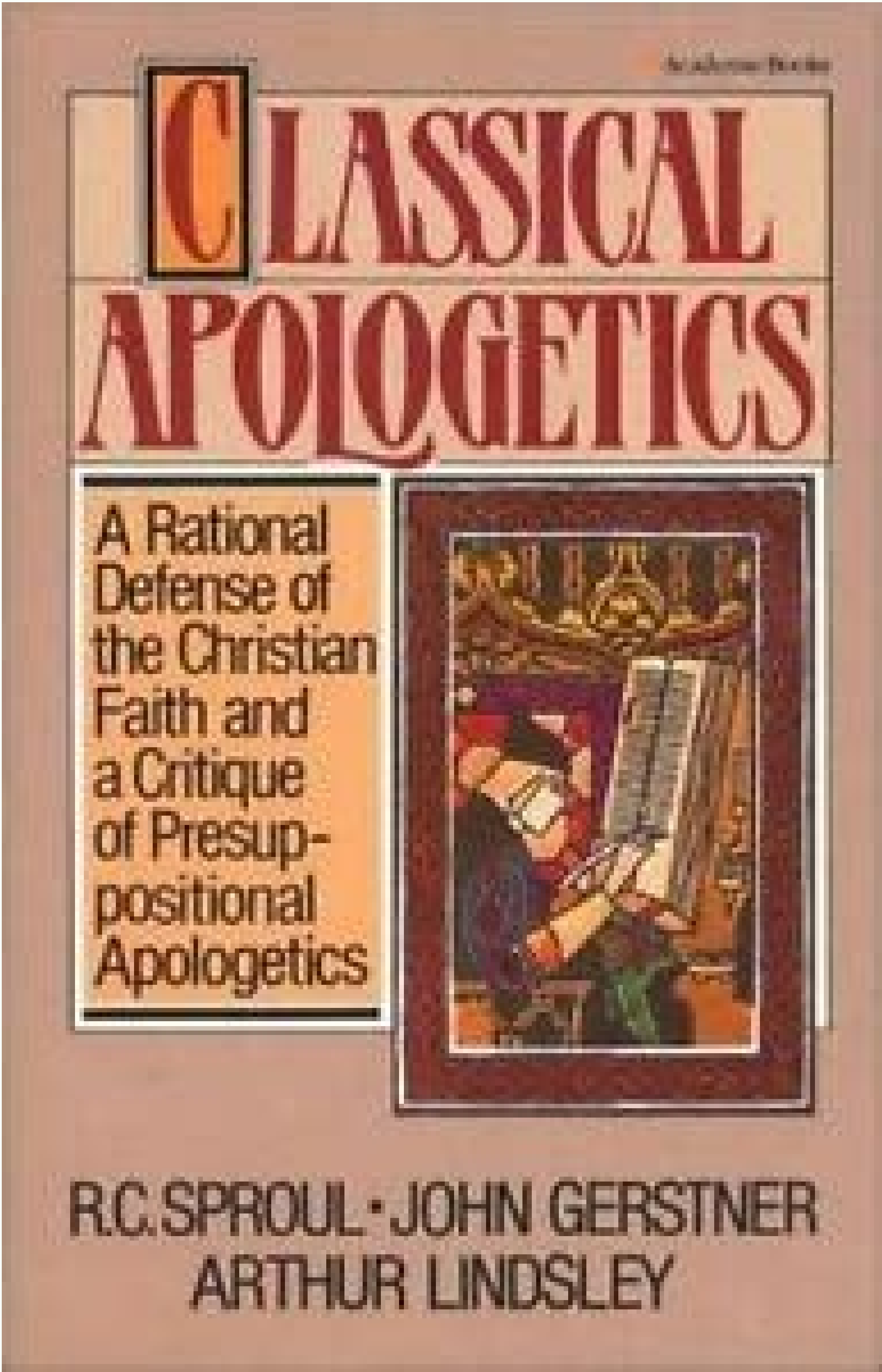
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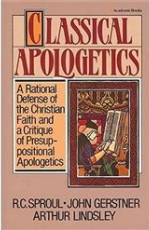
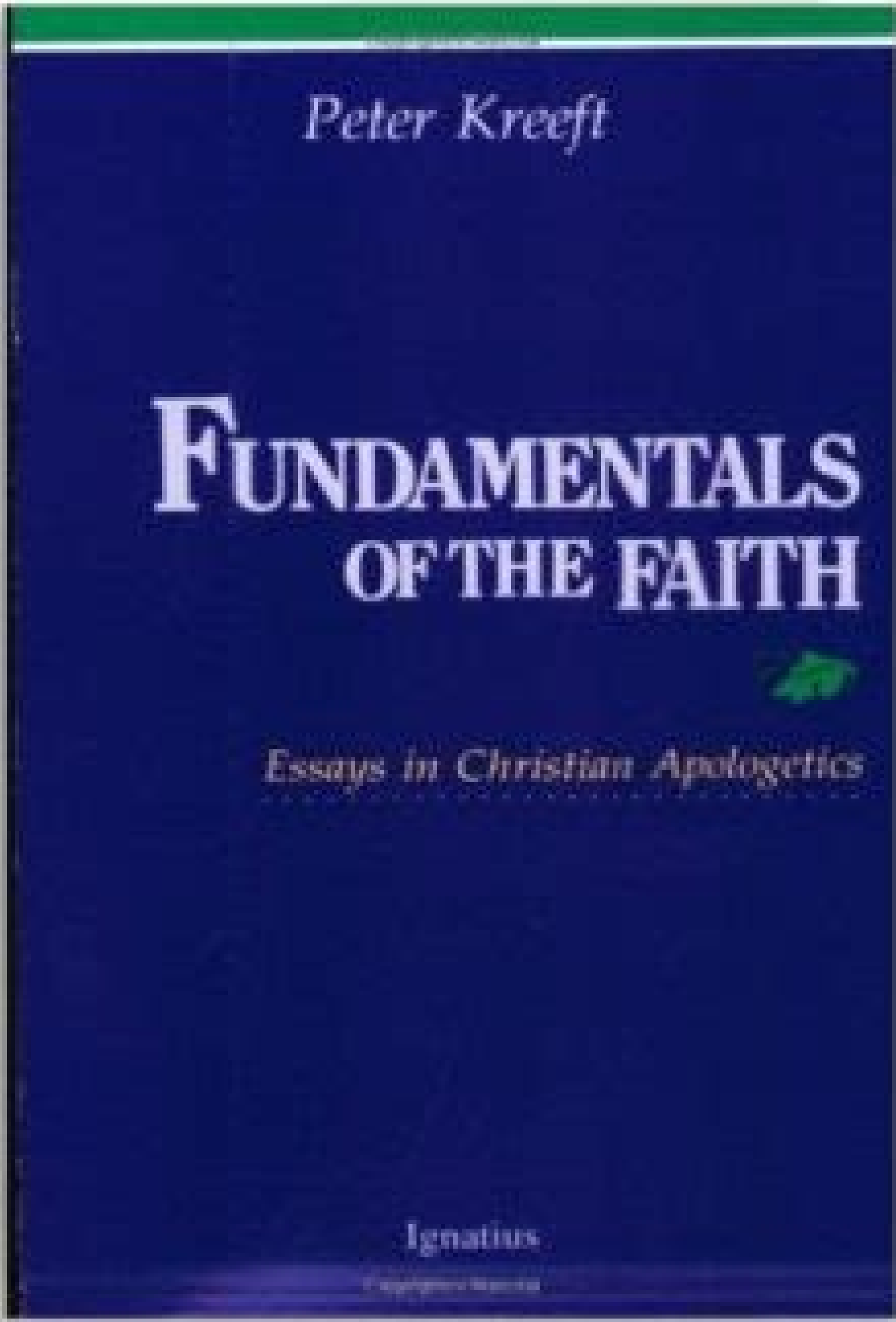
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In fact, the Apostle Paul said “...if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile” (1 Cor. British theologian and scholar N. If the early Christians believed that Israel’s god had raised Jesus from the dead, they would believe that he had been vindicated as Messiah despite his shameful death.<sup>21</sup> Only the actual resurrection of Jesus can account for the early church’s belief that Jesus was the Messiah. A day after the Supreme Court draft leak that previews a sea-change in America’s governmental stance on abortion, we thought it might be the right time to revisit this debate on abortion hosted by Ratio Christi at Wayne State U. 155.7 Josh McDowell, *The New Evidence that Demands a Verdict* (Nashville, TN: Thomas NelsonPublishers, 1999), p. Only their belief that Jesus was the Messiah can explain the rise of the early church. So here, Christ was not only speaking the unspeakable title of God (YHWH), but He was using it to refer to Himself. This is what drove the rapid growth of the early church, as noted by Wright: Why did early Christianity begin, and why did it take this shape? Paul (formerly Saul) was previously a skeptic who violently opposed Christianity—pursuing Christians to their death and seeking to destroy the faith (Acts 22:4, Gal. What do you think?” “He is worthy of death,” they answered. However, a case can be made for the resurrection based on an appeal to data so strongly evidenced historically that nearly every scholar regards them as reliable facts.<sup>10</sup> First, it is almost universally agreed upon among historians that Jesus died by the torturous death of crucifixion. Atheistic New Testament scholar Gerd Lüdemann said, “It may be taken as historically certain that Peter and the disciples had experiences after Jesus’ death in which Jesus appeared to them as the risen Christ.”<sup>13</sup> Because of this belief they both claimed that he rose from the dead, and they went from being fearful of their experiences everywhere they went. Theologian H.D.A. Major said: Had the crucifixion of Jesus ended his disciples’ experience of Him, it is hard to see how the Christian church could have come into existence. When Christ was in the grave, they ran and hid. This skepticism is due to a naturalistic bias—an underlying view of the world that rejects the supernatural. Out of reverence for God, the Jews never spoke this word. Jesus agreed to their statements knowing full well what the penalty would be for admitting to such a thing. . Fourth, the skeptical half-brother of Jesus became a believer.<sup>49</sup>, citing John Dominic Crossan, *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography* (San Francisco,CA: Harper Collins, 1991), p. If removed from any sort of context, this statement is true. Third, Jesus spoke and acted as if he was God. In addition, he made extreme claims to be equal with God, one with God, Messiah, and Son of God. A counterfeit story of the empty tomb would almost certainly involve men as the primary witnesses, as Habermas and Licona explain: If the account of the empty tomb had been invented, it would most likely not have listed the women as the primary witnesses, since in that day a woman’s testimony was not nearly as credible as a man’s. 168.8 Geisler, p. However, if Jesus did rise from the dead, he truly is Lord. Therefore, He probably did not use the Greek words “ego eimi” for “I AM.” Rather, He would have used the Hebrew “YHWH.” This was the title for the eternal God. In the New Testament the Greek word for Lord is kurios: a supreme master. I. When we speak of Lordship in this paper, we refer to the Biblical understanding of Lord as being one with God and absolute master of all. 255.20 Wright, p. Yet this same persecutor claims to have seen the risen Jesus. This is Jesus’ preferred way of referring to himself, and it occurs in all four Gospels. “But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.” Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, “He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? During his ministry, Jesus himself made the claims of divinity. Properly understood, this was probably Christ’s most unambiguous claim to deity.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, Jesus regularly called God his father (John 10:30). Ehrman (College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, Massachusetts,March 28, 2006).3 N. This is evidenced by the Gospels themselves, ancient creeds and oral traditions, the writings of the Apostle Paul, and the writings of the church fathers such as Irenaeus, Tertullian, Polycarp, and others.<sup>14</sup> Third, the church persecutor Paul was suddenly changed. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003),p. Most people would consider Jesus to be the greatest figure in history. Christian philosopher Phil Fernandes elaborates: Christ probably spoke these words in Aramaic (the common language of the Hebrews of his day). Obviously the Jews understood his meaning and tried to stone him for blasphemy. 49.13 Ibid., p. This paper will make a concise case for the Lordship of Jesus Christ based upon the historicity of the resurrection. Second, Jesus referred to himself as Son of Man. A Historical Approach to the Resurrection (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1995), p. Critical Jesus Seminar scholar John Dominic Crossan admits, “That he was crucified is as sure as anything historical can ever be.”<sup>11</sup> This is attested to by multiple sources, including Josephus, Tacitus, Lucian of Samosata, Mara Bar-Serapion, and the Jewish Talmud.<sup>12</sup> Second, Jesus’ disciples believed that he rose and appeared to them. The lives of the disciples were, undeniably, completely transformed. The stumbling block for the unbeliever is not any lack of historical evidence. 0%(1)0% found this document useful (1 vote)426K views7,794 pages, active by Brian Auten Christianity makes two astounding claims. However, something happened that changed his opinion of Jesus. 68.17 Ibid.18 Ibid., p. First, Jesus referred to himself as the Son of God. (NIV) The reason that Jesus was sent to the cross to be executed was for the charge of blasphemy—making himself out to be God. Second, it claims that if Jesus was not raised from the dead, then Christianity is false. 612.10 Habermas and Licona, p. His resurrection took place not without historical context, but as the consummation of an extraordinary ministry in which he not only claimed he was God’s Son, but he predicted his own death and resurrection. The proper name of God used by the Hebrews was Jehovah (YHWH), which is rendered LORD in the Old Testament. However, within its historical context, the resurrection proves a great deal. When he rose, they were transformed. 80.14 Ibid., pp. Wright points out the importance of taking all the events surrounding the resurrection into account: This neither Jesus’ life, deeds and teachings on the one hand, nor his resurrection on the other, could by themselves have had the effect of making people say at once, ‘He really was and is the Messiah.’ But put them together – which is what the early Christians did . From these five facts, one can reasonably come to the conclusion that God raised Jesus from the dead. And to this the historian has to say: yes, this belief would produce that result. 708.6 Phil Fernandes, No Other Gods (Bremerton, WA: IBD Press, 1998), p. Moreover, his belief was so strong that he later died a martyr for the faith, as attested to by Christian and non-Christian sources.<sup>16</sup> Fifth, the empty tomb of Jesus is further evidence of Jesus’ resurrection. On the third day he will be raised to life!” Had Jesus stayed in the grave, his followers would have no reason to call him Messiah, as Wright again concludes : ...the early Christians [speak] with one voice: we believe that Jesus was and is the Messiah because he was raised bodily from the dead. He was not a typical person. For if God exists, there is no reason why the Author of life could not raise the dead. In the scripture cited above, Jesus refers to himself not only as the Son of God, but as the Son of Man. 73.19 McDowell, p. In a very clear way, Jesus identified himself to be God. He forgave sins in Luke 7:48 and Matthew 9:2, And Jesus was just the sort of person we might expect God to raise.<sup>4</sup> The Self-identity of Jesus It is important to recognize the fact that the identity of Jesus as Son of God and Messiah was not something attributed to him after his time on earth. 48.11 Ibid., p. His life and death fulfilled numerous intersecting Messianic prophecies. Like the former persecutor Paul and the former skeptic James, the disciples all were willing to go to their deaths defending the truth of the resurrection. The fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy also places the death and resurrection of Jesus at the heart of a very significant religio-historical context. However, it must be noted that this bias is not scientific or historical, but based upon philosophical presuppositions that the historian brings to the subject. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. The Fulfillment of Prophecy The Old Testament contains over three hundred references to the Messiah that were fulfilled in Jesus.<sup>7</sup> In Isaiah 53 alone, there can be found twelve specific prophetic aspects fulfilled by Jesus: 1) was rejected; 2) was a man of sorrow; 3) lived a life of suffering; 4) was despised by others; 5) carried our sorrow; 6) was smitten and afflicted by God; 7) was pierced for our transgressions; 8) was wounded for our sins; 9) suffered like a lamb; 10) died with the wicked; 11) was sinless; and 12) prayed for others.<sup>8</sup> Predictions elsewhere about Christ’s death include the piercing of his hands and feet (Ps. 22:16); the piercing of his side (Zech. If he rose from the dead, his claims as the Son of God have been authenticated, and therefore he is Lord. It has been said that liars don’t make good martyrs. The Rise of Christianity One of the most powerful testimonies to the truth of the resurrection is the rise of Christianity. (emphasis added, NIV) When Jesus used this title, it was clear both to himself and to his listeners that he was referring to himself as the Son of Man spoken of in Daniel’s vision. Look, now you have heard the blasphemy. 145.12 Ibid., p. However, despite the New Testament’s over five thousand manuscripts, its very early authorship, its astounding accuracy, and its overall historical reliability, some scholars still doubt its report of miracles. The Historical Context of the ResurrectionOne could claim that an event like the resurrection of Jesus doesn’t prove anything. A hypothesis must adequately account for all the known facts in order to be considered plausible. 15:17 NIV). His moral teachings are unparalleled in their depth and simplicity. Thus, the empty tomb appears to be historically credible in light of the principle of embarrassment.<sup>18</sup> Historians often use the method of abduction (inference to the best explanation) to create a historical hypothesis. The thesis is this: if Jesus actually rose from the dead, then he is Lord. No other religion bases its entire truth upon the veracity of an actual historical event. Rather, the stumbling block is this: if Jesus is Lord, he is Lord of all men. He worked miracles and healed the sick. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. Paul freely admitted that if the resurrection of Jesus from the dead was not an actual historical event, then the Christian faith is pointless. He even accepted others’ statements of his deity and also their worship (Matthew 14:33, 28:17). Finally, the fact that women were the primary witnesses to the empty tomb strengthens the case for an authentic empty tomb. He has had an undeniable effect upon the world like no other person in history; a crucified messiah was no messiah at all.<sup>19</sup> In fact, the disciples based their lives on the truthfulness of the resurrection. 563.22 Wright, p. and the result is clear.<sup>3</sup> Resurrection historians Gary Habermas and Michael Licona also stress the significance of the resurrection in its context: The context of Jesus’ life and claims cannot be ignored. “If Jesus was the Messiah, he was also the lord of the whole world.”<sup>22</sup> ConclusionThis paper has presented a case for the Lordship of Jesus based upon his resurrection. 611.9 Ibid., p. 1 Easton’s Bible Dictionary, Matthew George Easton, www.eastonsbibledictionary.com.<sup>2</sup> William Lane Craig, *Is There Historical Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus?*A Debatebetween William Lane Craig and Bart D. The title “Son of Man” is significant in that it refers to a Messianic prophecy in Daniel 7:13-14: In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. Consider John 8:58-59: “I tell you the truth,” Jesus answered, ‘before Abraham was born, I am!’ At this, they picked up stones to stone him. .” Here Jesus uses the title that God assigned himself when He spoke to Moses. Without any historical context, a resurrection could be reasonably considered an anomaly of some sort—dismissed with skepticism. The church was founded on faith in the Messiahship of Jesus. In addition, any talk of the resurrection of Jesus could have been quickly silenced in Jerusalem simply by producing his dead body, but no corpse was produced. The New Testament records that James, Jesus’ half-brother, was a skeptic during the time of Jesus’ ministry. They will condemn him to death and will turn him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. The Historicity of the ResurrectionThe New Testament Gospels give a very straightforward account of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. 65.16 Ibid., p. The Jewish opposition asserted from the beginning that the disciples stole the body—a tacit admission that the tomb was empty. This historical hypothesis accounts for these five facts (not to mention the further New Testament testimony to the resurrection), and the subsequent rise of Christianity. During his trial in Matthew 26:63-66, he answered clearly: The high priest said to him, “I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.” “Yes, it is as you say,” Jesus replied. First, it claims that its central figure, Jesus Christ, was raised from the dead. 171.5 Norman Geisler, *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics* (Grand Rapids, MI: BakerPublishing Group, 1999), p. They not only died for what they believed to be true (as many people have died for what they believed), they died for what they knew to be true. Consequently, Paul changes from a killer of believers to Christianity’s most influential proclaimer. 614.21 Wright, p. He later became a believer, and is identified as a leader of the Jerusalem church. It was clear to those who worshiped him, and clear to those who crucified him. The facts surrounding Jesus’ death and post-mortem appearances, coupled with the radically changed lives of hostile skeptics and unbelievers all point towards the historical veracity of an actual resurrection from the dead. He declared himself the only way to God in John 14:6. 563. T. 224.4 Gary Habermas and Michael Licona, *The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2004), p. Wayne State University: Abortion debate sponsored by Ratio Christi (RatioChristi.org/WSU) and the Wayne State University Dean of Students Office (DOSO.Wayne.edu) on the topic: “Abortion: Is this a Reproductive Right or a Moral Wrong?” Moderated by Detroit pastor Christopher Brooks, a national radio host and Dean of Moody Theological Seminary-Michigan. 1:13). 50-62.15 Ibid., p. If Jesus were no particular person living in no particular time in history, who made no claims, taught and influenced no one, made no predictions, died uneventfully—and then rose from the dead—what could be made of it? Nothing else will do. But they had no expectation of a Messiah that would die. The answer is: because the early Christians believed that something had happened to Jesus after his death, something to which the stories in the four canonical gospels are as close as we are likely to get.<sup>20</sup> While Jesus was alive, his followers believed he was the Messiah. Indeed, this is exactly what Jesus had predicted in Matthew 20:17-19: Now as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside and said to them, “We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. However, when Jesus rose from the dead, this was undeniable proof to them that Jesus was who he said he was. By all accounts, Jesus lived a faultless life on earth. The resurrection of Jesus is one of the most substantiated events in history, and entire books have been written detailing Christ’s fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. This is the kind of context that makes the historical account of a resurrection considerably meaningful. Jesus even predicted his own death—and moreover—his own resurrection after three days. 60, citing Gerd Lüdemann, *What Really Happened to Jesus?* It appears thirty times in Matthew, fourteen in Mark, twenty-five in Luke, and thirteen in John. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. It denotes one with absolute control. This is supported by Luke, Clement of Rome, Polycarp, Tertullian, Dionysius of Corinth, Origen, and Paul’s own testimony.<sup>15</sup> Again, this is a fact that is universally agreed to by scholars. Indeed, it has been shown that if the resurrection was not genuine, there is no plausible explanation for the subsequent rapid rise and growth of Christianity. 12:10); and the casting of lots for his garments (Ps. 22:18).<sup>9</sup> The fact that these prophecies (not to mention over two hundred others) were written hundreds of years before Jesus lived, yet were fulfilled with such accuracy, suggests a divine author. Habermas has concluded that roughly seventy-five percent of critical scholars agree upon this point.<sup>17</sup> The empty tomb is also confirmed by the earliest enemies of Christianity. All alternative theories have failed to match the explanatory power and scope of this simple hypothesis. William Lane Craig pointed out that “a miracle apart from the religio-historical context is inherently ambiguous.”<sup>2</sup> However, the resurrection of Jesus is by no means without context. There would be no significant context for such an event, rendering it utterly meaningless and lacking any reason to be taken as true.

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