

Sunday Praise and Worship Service

† Order of Service



BG: Why should the Gospels be considered reliable sources on which to build the case for Christ?

Lee Strobel: The new edition of *The Case for Christ* includes a powerful quote from Dr. Craig A. Evans, who's written or edited 50 books and lectured at Cambridge, Oxford, Yale, and other universities. In fact, he's now a colleague of mine at Houston Baptist University. He told me: "There's every reason to conclude that the Gospels have fairly and accurately reported the essential elements of Jesus' teachings, life, death, and resurrection. They're early enough, they're rooted into the right streams that go back to Jesus and the original people, there's continuity, there's proximity, there's verification of certain distinct points with archaeology and other documents, and then there's the inner logic."

I agree on each point. And we even have material earlier than the Gospels, such as writings by the apostle Paul and early creeds and hymns of the church, including 1 Corinthians 15:3 and following, which is the earliest report of Jesus rising from the dead and appearing alive to named eyewitnesses and groups of eyewitnesses.

BG: You say in *The Case for Christ* that it would have taken more faith for you to maintain your atheism than become a Christian. Explain that.

Lee Strobel: I picture the evidence for the deity of Jesus to be like the fast-moving current in a river. To deny the data would be like swimming upstream against the current. That doesn't make sense. What's logical, based on the strength of the case for Christ, is to swim in the same direction the evidence is pointing by putting your trust in Jesus as your forgiver and leader.

BG: Do you ever wrestle with doubt today?

Lee Strobel: Of course, there are always going to be some unsettled areas, but for me the overall evidence for Christianity chases away any real doubt that it's true. Besides, now I've been following Jesus for 35 years. He's guided me, comforted me, encouraged me, challenged me, befriended me, and been my constant companion since November 8, 1981. There's no way you could convince me today that he's not real. He's my forgiver, my leader, and my friend.

<https://www.biblegateway.com/blog/2016/09/the-case-for-christ-an-interview-with-lee-strobel/>

Lee Strobel was the award-winning legal editor of the *Chicago Tribune* and is the bestselling author of *The Case for Christ*, *The Case for Faith*, *The Case for a Creator*, and *The Case for Grace*. With a journalism degree from the University of Missouri and a Master of Studies in Law degree from Yale, Lee has won four Gold Medallions for publishing excellence and coauthored the Christian Book of the Year, *Experiencing the Passion of Jesus*. He serves as Professor of Christian Thought at Houston Baptist University. Visit Lee's website at leestrobel.com

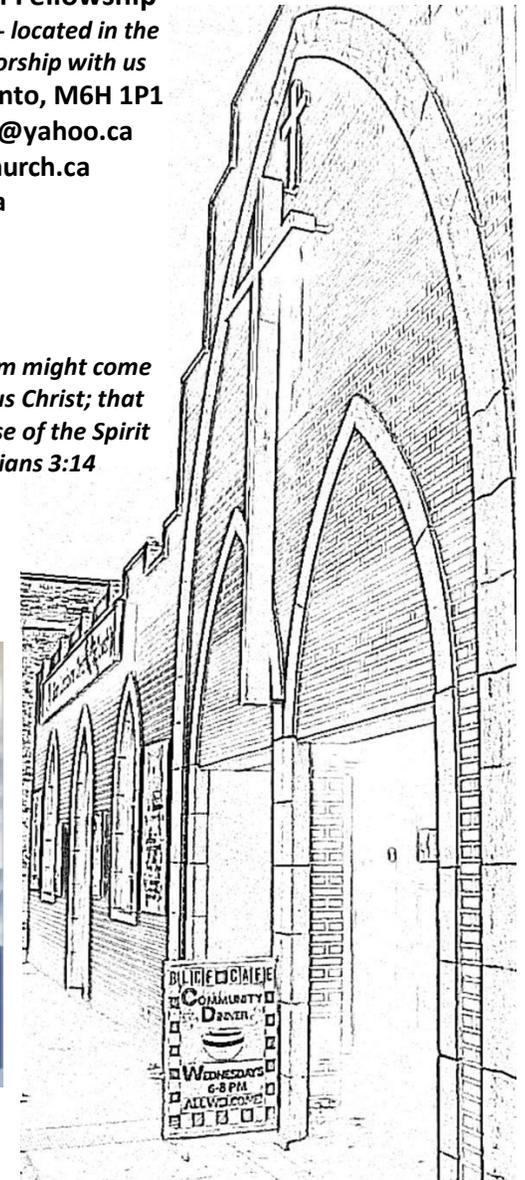
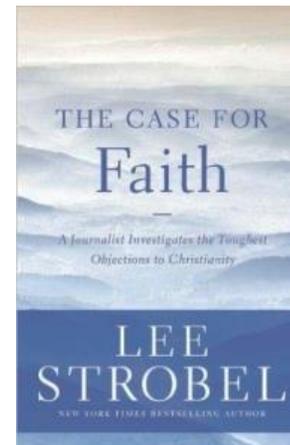
Bloor Lansdowne Christian Fellowship

11AM † November 27, 2016

Bloor Lansdowne Christian Fellowship
An Evangelical Church of Christ - located in the
heart of Toronto: Come and worship with us
1307 Bloor Street West, Toronto, M6H 1P1
416-535-9578 ~ blcfchurch@yahoo.ca
Web Page: www.blcfchurch.ca
Twitter: @blcfca



*That the blessing of Abraham might come
on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that
we might receive the promise of the Spirit
through faith.* – Galatians 3:14



- ❖ Sunday ~ 11:00 AM: Praise and Worship Service
- ❖ Wednesday ~ 11:30 AM Prayer and Bible Study
- ❖ Wednesday ~ 6-8 PM: BLCF Café Community Dinner
- ❖ BLCF Online: bloorlansdownechristianfellowship.wordpress.com

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Announcements and Call to Worship; Prayer

Lighting First Advent Candle: 'Prophecy Candle' or 'Candle Of Hope' - Romans 15:12-13

Presenting Lee Strobel's: 'The Case For Faith, The Film'

Lee Strobel Interview

Bible Gateway interviewed Lee about *The Case for Christ*, which, along with its ancillary resources, has 10 million copies in print. The nonfiction book reads like a captivating, fast-paced novel. It's a riveting quest for the truth about history's most compelling figure.

BG: You wrote *The Case for Christ* in 1998. Why did you write it and how have people reacted to it over the years?

Lee Strobel: My wife encouraged me to write a book about my spiritual journey from atheism to faith and the evidence that convinced me Jesus is the unique Son of God. So I went out and retraced and expanded on that journey with fresh interviews with leading scholars and experts on everything from the reliability of the Gospels to the resurrection.

Frankly, I was skeptical anyone would publish it. At that time, books on apologetics—or evidence for the faith—weren't very popular, despite the biblical teaching that Christians should be ready to explain why they believe what they believe. [First Peter 3:15](#) says: "...Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect." And [Jude 3](#) says: "Contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints."

But Zondervan decided to publish the book, and we were stunned at the response. Today, more than five million people have read it. It's especially gratifying that young folks—those 18 through 24—reacted so positively to the evidence. That's why we ended up doing [student](#) and [children's](#) editions. I've been so encouraged by the stories I've received of how God has used the book to lead people to faith in Christ. For instance, one California man prayed for his skeptical brother, a successful attorney, for 48 years and 348 days. Finally, he gave him a copy of *The Case for Christ* and his brother—on his deathbed from cancer—prayed to receive God's grace. Those kinds of stories fire me up! In fact, our [new updated and expanded edition](#) includes a new chapter that features several wonderful stories like this.

Continued...

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BG: What was the strongest criticism you received for your book and how did you respond?

Lee Strobel: I've actually been encouraged that most of the criticism of the book has been pretty weak and easily answered. One critic called the scholars I interviewed "alleged experts," as if Bruce Metzger, William Lane Craig, D. A. Carson, Ben Witherington III, Craig Blomberg, Edwin Yamauchi, J. P. Moreland, and the others—with doctorates from Cambridge, Princeton, Brandeis, and elsewhere, and with hundreds of scholarly publications—are somehow underqualified.

Some took me to task because I didn't interview any skeptics for the book, but I think they misunderstand my approach. I was standing in the shoes of the skeptic. As the subtitle says, this was "a journalist's personal investigation of the evidence for Jesus." I was asking the questions I had when I was an atheist. Obviously, you can tell from the footnotes and my questions that I had digested the writings of skeptical scholars. Then I confronted Christian experts with what I considered to be the skeptics' most potent objections—which also were the ones I personally wrestled with—to see if they could offer cogent and convincing answers. Finally, I reported their answers and left it to readers to reach their own verdict.

BG: How has your faith changed since first writing this book?

Lee Strobel: It's deeper and more resilient. I find the evidence for the deity of Jesus and the reliability of the Bible to be powerful and persuasive, and that evidence has only gotten stronger over the years. For instance, in this [new edition of the book](#) I write about a recent archaeological discovery of a first-century Jewish house in Nazareth. This has now decimated the atheists' claim that Nazareth didn't exist during Jesus' time. Interestingly, that house may very well have been the one Jesus grew up in, although we'll never know that for sure.

BG: What was the most difficult question you asked while writing this book? Did you find the answer surprising?

Lee Strobel: The key issue is whether Jesus really did return from the dead and thus authenticate his claim to being the unique Son of God. As a skeptic, I was shocked to find that the historical evidence for the resurrection is so solid. We have, for instance, a report of the resurrection that goes back to within months of the death of Jesus, which is like a news flash in ancient history. This is historical gold! Whereas much of what we know from ancient history is derived from one or two sources, we have no fewer than nine ancient sources, inside and outside the New Testament, corroborating the disciples' conviction that they encountered the resurrected Jesus. That's an avalanche of data. I was thoroughly stunned by the quantity and quality of the evidence for Christ.

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