

# Fragments of Truth (Faithlife Films)

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## Key Points Summary

### Overview

Fragments of Truth is a documentary hosted by Dr. Craig Evans, featuring visits to manuscript libraries and interviews with top scholars in New Testament textual criticism. The film argues for the reliability of the New Testament text, based on early manuscript evidence and scholarly insights.

### Purpose and Message

- The Bible we read today closely reflects the original writings of the apostles.
- Challenges skepticism about the textual reliability of the New Testament.
- Emphasizes textual stability through centuries of manuscript transmission.

### Manuscript Evidence

- The New Testament has more ancient manuscript evidence than any other ancient work.
- Features early manuscripts such as P52, P66, P75, and Codex Sinaiticus.
- Emphasizes early dating—within 100–150 years of the originals.

### Transmission and Preservation

- Some autographs may have circulated for over a century.
- Papyrus manuscripts often survived 150–400 years.
- Early church cross-checked and preserved accurate transmission.

### Textual Variants

- Over 99% of variants are insignificant (spelling, grammar).
- Acknowledges longer ending of Mark and John 7–8 as later additions.
- Textual criticism helps recover the original wording with high confidence.

### Scholarly Insights

- Interviews with scholars like Daniel B. Wallace, Peter J. Williams, Simon Gathercole, and others.
- Discuss topics like manuscript dating, transmission, and variant readings.

### Apologetic Emphasis

- Presents a Christian response to textual skepticism.
- Aims to build trust in Scripture among believers.
- Does not include dissenting views (Bart Ehrman is referenced, not interviewed).

## **Glossary of Terms**

**Autograph:** The original handwritten document of a biblical text.

**Codex:** An ancient book format replacing the scroll; favored by early Christians.

**Papyrus:** A plant-based writing material used for early manuscripts.

**Paleography:** The study of ancient handwriting used to date manuscripts.

**Textual Criticism:** The study of manuscript differences to reconstruct the original text.

**Manuscript:** A handwritten copy of a biblical text in Greek, Latin, or other languages.

**Variant:** A difference in wording between manuscript copies.

**P52, P66, P75:** Early papyrus fragments of the New Testament dated between the 2nd–3rd centuries.

**Codex Sinaiticus / Vaticanus / Bezae:** Important early Greek codices of the Bible.

**Scribal Errors:** Mistakes made by copyists, often detectable and correctable.

**Critical Text:** The scholarly reconstruction of the NT text based on manuscript evidence.

**Interpolation:** A later addition to the text not found in early manuscripts.

**Textus Receptus:** The Greek NT text used in the Reformation era, basis for the KJV.

**Alexandrian Text-Type:** A family of early manuscripts considered close to the originals.