



John really use any eyewitness testimony when they wrote the Gospels? Were any of these four gospel writers eyewitnesses themselves?

Do we have eyewitness testimony in the gospels?

“Even though we might desperately want to know the identities of the authors of the earliest Gospels, we simply don’t have sufficient evidence. The books were written anonymously and evidently not by eyewitnesses”—Bart D. Ehrman

The Gospels were not written by eyewitnesses, nor did they include any eyewitness testimony, so says the popular agnostic Bible scholar, who has quite a following. While such claims were rare prior to the 1800’s, they have been increasing, and ever more so in recent times.

How do you know you were born? Yes, you’re alive now, and you’ve been told everyone is born. Superman is supposed to be from the planet Krypton. Maybe that’s how you arrived on earth. Such an idea has about as much credibility as Ehrman’s claims.

Do you remember being born? True, your parents said you were, hospital staff said you were. How do you know they’re not lying? How about your birth certificate? Documents have been known to be falsified.

How about photos said to be taken on the day you were born? How do you know that’s you? Photos can be doctored.

The point is that by using the same standard Ehrman is using regarding the Gospels, you can’t prove that any event from the distant past occurred. However, each witness testimony increases the probability that certain events did occur. And the most valuable testimony comes from eyewitnesses—from people present when the past event occurred.

There are several articles on this website that discuss the evidence for the eyewitness testimony in the New Testament.

Gospel writer Luke says that he used eyewitness testimony (**Luke 1:1-3**). Gospel writer John says he himself was an eyewitness to many things he recorded. **“The one who saw this is an eyewitness” (John 19:35 GWT). “This disciple was an eyewitness of these things and wrote them down” (John 21:24 GWT).** *The Muratorian Fragment* of about 160-170 CE confirms these two claims by Luke and John.

The apostle Matthew was an eyewitness to much of what he recorded (**Matthew 9:9; Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27-32**). Many early church writers identified Matthew as the writer of the first gospel. Papias of Hierapolis in the early 2nd century said that Gospel writer Mark recorded the apostle Peter’s eyewitness testimony (**1 Peter 5:13**), and that the apostle Matthew wrote the gospel that bears his name. A few years later, Irenaeus of Lyons linked each of the four gospels to an eyewitness of Jesus Christ. In the mid 2nd century, Justin Martyr referred to a quote from **Mark 3:16,17** as “the recollections of Peter.”

“He appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep”—1 Corinthians 15:6 NIV

Paul wrote to the Corinthians over twenty years after Jesus’ death. By this time, Matthew may have been written, and Luke would be written within the next few years. Most scholars admit that the four Gospels were written between 40 and 100 CE, which is well within the lifetime of eyewitnesses of Jesus. There is more than sufficient testimony that the Gospel writers used eyewitnesses as sources available for anyone who wishes to check. There are many articles about this subject on the internet, as well as some on this site, to view. On this site, put the word **“eyewitness”** in the search bar, and several articles will appear.

The proven eyewitness testimony in the four Gospels are more evidence of the Bible’s authenticity as the infallible word of God (**John 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:16,17; 1 Peter 1:24,25**).