

Chapter 3  
Shroud of Turin  
Scientific Research on Religious Relics

*In this assignment, students will reflect on the intersection of faith and science. You will need to divide the class into two reading groups. Each group will read a different study conducted on the authenticity of the Shroud of Turin. As students read their assigned study, they will write down one main argument which they find compelling evidence in support of the Shroud of Turin. They will then discuss the article and their findings with a classmate from the other reading group. At the conclusion of this exercise, students will reflect on the question, “Do you think we should use scientific means to test the authenticity of items of faith? Why or why not?”*

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The Shroud of Turin is a widely studied artifact and its authenticity the subject of much debate. As a class, you will learn about two of the most popular studies which have been conducted on the Shroud of Turin. You will be assigned one of two reading groups. Each group will complete a series of tasks to learn about their study and share that information with a classmate.

When these tasks are completed, you will reflect on what you think about conducting scientific research on religious relics. Doing research of this kind can be controversial. Many believe that we should not be testing items of faith, that it could be seen as testing God. Still others will say that God gave us the use of faith and of reason, and it is a good thing to use both of these gifts. What do you think?

- Reading Group 1 Website: [A Summary of STURP's Conclusions](#)
- Reading Group 2 Website: [New evidence supporting Shroud of Turin is too strong to ignore, says journalist](#)

*Do all of the following:*

1. Read your assigned article on the Shroud of Turin.
2. Write down one main argument from your reading which proves the authenticity of the Shroud of Turin.
3. Summarize the study you read for someone in the other group.
4. Reflect and write your answer to these questions: Do you think we should use scientific means to test the authenticity of relics? Why or why not?