

CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES Lesson 1

The Question of Truth

Teacher: John M Brown, Flatwoods church of Christ, Sunday Bible Class

I. AN INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES

A. Is Christianity reasonable? Logical? Verifiable?

1. Christianity is an historical religion based on historic facts (in contrast to mythology, superstition, supposition, tradition, etc.)
2. Consider the virgin birth, the death of Christ, the resurrection of Christ, the miracles of the Bible, etc. -did these events actually occur or not?
3. Is it right to test, check, evaluate, prove? YES! See John 7:16-17; Acts 17:11; 1 John 4:1
4. There are several ways to KNOW or ASCERTAIN something:
 - a. The human senses (*feeling, seeing, hearing, smelling*);
 - b. Verification by accepted standards (*study, research, testing*);
 - c. Eyewitness and testimony (*facts brought to us by the observations of others*);
 - d. Memory (*there are things about which we are sure because of memory*);
 - e. Intuition, reasoning, and logic (*the process by which the mind of man evaluates information and reaches certain correct conclusions*).

B. Contemporary concerns:

1. What is relativism? *The belief that there is no such thing as absolute truth; that "truth" is only what each individual perceives it to be.*
 - a. Is truth relative?
 - b. If someone were to say, "There is no such thing as absolute truth," then we could ask, "Is that statement absolutely true?" – There is a contradiction here!
2. What is agnosticism? *The belief the one cannot whether there is a God or not.*
3. What is atheism? *The belief that there is no God," the atheist cannot know that there is no God; he must believe that" Unless one had all knowledge or was everywhere present, he couldn't possibly know that God doesn't exist"*
4. What is skepticism? *The belief that all things held to be true are questionable or doubtful; that nothing can be absolutely known for sure; thus all religious beliefs are unsure; nothing is certain.*
5. What is pantheism? *The belief that God is in all, and all is God; God is the world; and the material world is but an illusion; man's true self is God; this is the view of the New Age Movement, as well as certain forms of Hinduism and Zen Buddhism.*

6. What is theism? *The belief that God is an eternal, personal being, really existent; that the world is a created reality; that absolute truth exists and can be known; that there are moral standards determined by the laws of the Creator to which man is subject.*
7. What is subjectivism? *The belief that all knowledge is subjective and relative, not absolute or objective.*
8. What is a “world view”? *The philosophical system or thought process by which man views the world, himself, his fellows, his life, and ultimately, God.*

II. CHRISTIANITY AND OBJECTIVE TRUTH:

A. The Bible and truth:

1. Does the Bible teach that there is such a thing as absolute truth? YES!
 - a. Psalm 100:5
 - b. Ephesians 4:15
 - c. Philippians 4:8
 - d. Colossians 2:3-8
 - e. John 14:6
2. Can truth be known? YES!
 - a. Proverbs 22:17-21
 - b. John 8:31-32
 - c. 2 Peter 1:12
3. What can we KNOW?
 - a. That our Redeemer lives: Job 19:25
 - b. That God is: Psalm 46:10
 - c. That Christ’s doctrine is of the Father: John 7:17
 - d. That Christ loves us: Ephesians 3: 19
 - e. *And many, many other things!*
4. Should we have knowledge of the things of God? YES!
 - a. Habakkuk 2:14
 - b. Ephesians 4:17-18
 - c. Colossians 2:3
 - d. 2 Peter 1:5
 - e. 2 Peter 3:18

B. Notice how “KNOW” and “BELIEF” are used together:

1. John 8:24, 28
2. John 10:37-38
3. John 17:21-23

<p>CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES Lesson 2 <i>Is Christianity Verifiable?</i></p>
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I. IS CHRISTIANITY VERIFIABLE?

A. Do we have evidence that what we believe as Christians is true? That the Bible is an accurate record?

B. Consider the importance and certainty of EYEWITNESSES:

1. Luke 1:1-4

- a. “*declaration*” = “a narrative; an account with fullness of detail”
- b. “*of those things*” – actual events, happenings; actual things that have taken place.
- c. “*most surely believed among us*” – referring to events and happenings that have already taken place, that are completed; accomplished facts
- d. “*eyewitness, and ministers of the word*” – the things about which Luke writes are things which had actually happened and were authoritatively witnessed.
- e. “*having had perfect understanding*” – Luke affirms his accurate knowledge of these matters – the idea here in the original language involves a careful, investigative research process in which Luke had engaged to have a complete, true understanding of the life of Christ, about which he writes.
- f. “*write unto thee in order*” – Luke wrote an orderly account of that which he had investigated and found true.
- g. “*that thou mightest know*” – from Gk, **EPIGINOSKO**, which means “to know exactly, thoroughly, completely.”
- h. “*the certainty*” – from Gk, **ASPHALEIA**, which referred to that which was secure and sure – comes from a technical legal term referring to a convincing argument.
- i. “*instructed*” - taught

2. Acts 1:1-3

3. Acts 10:39-42

4. 1 Corinthians 15:1-8

5. 1 Peter 5:1

6. 2 Peter 1:16-18

7. 1 John 1:1-4

8. OTHER WITNESSES: Acts 2:22; Acts 26:24-28; etc.

C. The use of *APOLOGETICS*:

1. **1 Peter 3:15**

- a. “answer” = Gk, APOLOGIA, “a verbal defense; a speech in defense; a defense of conduct and procedure”
- b. Same word is used in Acts 22:1; 25:16; 1 Corinthians 9:3; 2 Corinthians 7:11; Philippians 1:7, 17; 2 Timothy 4:16
- c. It is RIGHT, it is REQUIRED, that we make a defense! (compare Acts 6:9-10; 7; 19:33; 22:1).

2. **Hebrews 11:1**

- a. “substance” = GK, HUPOSTASIS, “confidence; assurance”

“evidence” = Gk, ELEGMOS, “a proving; proof; test; conviction”
(the verb form of this word carries the idea of “giving evidence in the matter; supplying proof; making inquiry and stating facts; showing, exhibiting, bringing into view).
 - b. Thus FAITH is the ASSURANCE we have concerning that for which we hope, and the PROOF we have concerning that which is not seen with the naked eye.
3. **1 Thessalonians 5:21**, “prove” = “to test; to examine, scrutinize, approve as worthy”
 4. **1 John 4:1**, “try” = same as the word above (Gk, DOKIMAZO)
 5. We use our minds, evidence, reasoning and logic to arrive at the proper conclusions (see Acts 17:2-3; 26:22, 24, 25, 27).

EVIDENCE
FAITH

FACTS -FAITH -FEELING

D. Man CAN *know* that there is a God, and about God!

1. Psalm 19:1-6
2. Acts 14:17
3. Romans 1:20
4. Hebrews 3:4

E. True Christian faith is not guess, speculation, mythology, opinion, superstition, tradition, supposition, or sentiment – *but it is our belief concerning knowledge we have of factual matters.*

II. WHY IS THERE UNBELIEF?

- A. Ignorance: Romans 1:18-23; Matthew 22:29
- B. Pride: John 5:40-44
- C. Moral problems: John 3:19-20
- D. Will / bias: John 7:17; Revelation 22:17
- E. Parents / upbringing: Romans 14:7
- F. Educational/social influences.
- G. Humanistic materialism / intellectual arrogance: 1 Corinthians 1:19-21; 26-27

III. WHY STUDY CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES?

- A. To have personal assurance!
 - 1. Thessalonians 5:21
 - 2. Colossians 1:9-10
- B. To be able to defend the faith!
 - 1. Philippians 1:17
 - 2. 1 Peter 3:15
 - 3. Jude 3
- C. To convert the lost: *the ultimate goal of studying these matters is to be able to convince others (skeptics, unbelievers, the unknowing, even atheists) of the truthfulness of Christianity that they would render obedience to the gospel of Christ! 2 Corinthians 5:17*

CONCLUSION: The purpose of defending Christianity (Philippians 1:17; et al.) is showing the truthfulness of it that men might believe -to convince unbelievers, doubters, skeptics, even agnostics or atheists, that there is a God, Jesus is His Son, the Bible is His Word, that these who are so convinced will submit themselves to God's will that they might be saved. The enemy is UNBELIEF, not UNBELIEVERS (like insulin is against diabetes, not diabetics). *"Truth is mighty and will prevail, when championed by her lovers."* The need for this kind of study has never been more acute, for more and more in Western society are casting aside the basic tenets of Christianity; that which has been accepted ~ former times is often ridiculed and shunned in our time. But we need to let the world know the case for Christianity, and the case for faith, is as strong as ever. We invite all who will to examine Christianity, and see that it is true, right, and ultimately soul-saving!

CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES: Lesson 3

The Existence of God

Teacher: John M. Brown, Flatwoods church of Christ. Sunday Bible Class

INTRODUCTION:

A. There are different ideas about “God” in the world:

1. DEISM: belief in God, but denial of His power and providence.
2. PANTHEISM: belief that “god” is everything, and everything is “god.”
3. POLYTHEISM: belief in “many gods.”
4. SKEPTICISM: doubt or disbelief in “god.”
5. AGNOSTICISM: denial that the existence of “God” can be known.
6. ATHEISM: the belief that there is no “God.”
7. THEISM: belief in the existence of a personal God who is Creator, Preserver, and Ruler.

B. Today, we speak of the GOD of the BIBLE: ***John 4:23-24***

1. The infinite, eternal, unchangeable, Spirit Being who is the Originator and Sustainer of all.
2. The existence of God can, and should, be known by man: ***Romans 1:18 ff; 2:15.***
3. Scripture takes for granted God’s existence! ***Genesis 1:1; John 1:1***

C. Consider evidence for the existence of God:

I. THE PRINCIPLE OF CAUSE & EFFECT (Cosmological Argument)

A. Everything begun owes its existence to some producing cause.

1. The universe exists – how came it to be? *Of necessity it owes its existence to a cause equal to its production (as a building demands a builder or a watch a watchmaker).*
2. ***Hebrews 3:4; 11:3***

B. The universe proves the existence of a Maker: ***Psalm 19:1-4***

II. ORDER IN THE UNIVERSE (Teleological Argument)

A. Order and collation pervade the universe.

1. They demand intelligence and purpose as the cause of that order: intelligence to initiate the order, and power to sustain it.
2. The incredible complexity of our universe, and life therein, is an astounding marvel
3. Consider animal instinct, the material universe, or the human body.

B. Design demands a Designer: ***Psalm 139:3-9***

C. Illustration: I can look into the sky, see a plane, and know there is a pilot (though I cannot see him, I can know there is intelligence guiding and steering the plane -likewise with Creation!).

III. MAN (Anthropological Argument)

- A. Man's intellectual and moral nature requires an intellectual and moral Being as its Author.
 - 1. Man is the masterpiece of God's creative acts: ***Psalm 139:14***
 - 2. Consider the wonder of the human body (consider: a surgeon can stitch together and open wound -but God behind the design enables that skin to fuse back together!).
- B. A holy Lawgiver and Judge is behind man's conscience: ***Romans 2:14-15***

IV THE NECESSARY IDEA OF GOD (Ontological Argument)

- A. Space and time are infinite and eternal: *there must be an infinite and eternal Being to whom these attributes belong, for that which is made is but a reflection of its Maker.*
- B. That man universally has an idea (concept) about God demands God as the Cause of that idea.
 - 1. Could a child hunger for bread if bread didn't exist? Or thirst for water if there was no water?
 - 2. Likewise, man's instinctive hunger for the spiritual is evidence of the reality of the spiritual.
 - 3. Man has an intrinsic belief and knowledge of a Higher Power, of a Supreme Being, which pervade every society and culture (unless man is taught otherwise).
 - 4. Man seeks after God because God has placed within man this intuitive knowledge of His existence: *compare Acts 17:22-23*
- B. Atheism is the exception in any society! See ***Psalm 42:1***

V. BASIC MORALITY (Moral Argument)

- A. Man is a moral being, possessing an inner sense of right and wrong.
 - 1. Man has recognition of responsibility to do right and avoid wrong.
 - 2. When man violates his conscience he is subject to guilt, shame, remorse, and the fear of punishment – *Where did these feelings come from?*
- B. Man (even children!) have intrinsic concepts of right, wrong, justice, injustice, and fairness.
 - 1. The conscience of man points to a Designer of that conscience.
 - 2. See ***Ecclesiastes 7:29***

VI. BIOLOGICAL (Life Argument)

- A. It is a fact that life can only come from life; all life must be traced back to a source.
- B. From nothing can come nothing- life is here; there must be a life source!
 - 1. ***Psalm 36:9***
 - 2. ***John 11:25; 14:6; 1:1-5***

VII. THE BIBLE (Scriptural Argument)

- A. The existence of the Bible itself is an argument for God!
 - 1. The Bible is here -from whence did it come?
 - 2. It is easy to demonstrate that the Bible is a Book beyond the ability of man to write – it demands an intelligence, wisdom, insight, and foresight, higher and greater than man.
- B. The Bible is a witness to the existence of God, as it demands DEITY as its Author!
 - 1. **2 Timothy 3:16-17**
 - 2. **Peter 1:21**

VII. HISTORY (Historical Argument)

- A. Human history points to an unseen hand!
 - 1. A thorough study of history will uncover many illustrations and examples that behind it is the hand of a higher power moving, guiding, governing, and controlling, men, nations, and events – it is the hand of God!
 - 2. Consider the history of Israel or the history of the early church.
- B. History argues for the existence of God! See **Daniel 2:20-21**

IX. JESUS CHRIST (Christological Argument)

- A. Jesus Christ is evidence for the existence of God:
 - 1. His belief in God: “My Father”
 - 2. The fulfillment of prophecies.
 - 3. The evidence of miracles.
 - 4. The influence of Christianity in the world (see **Acts 5:34-39**).
- B. All Jesus was, all He did, all He said, attests to God’s existence!
 - 1. He was the very manifestation of God: **1 Timothy 3:16**
 - 2. See also **John 1:18; John 14:9**

X. HARMONY OF EVIDENCE (Congruity Argument)

- A. Congruity means “agreement, correspondence, harmony.”
 - 1. Any of the arguments listed above are powerful individually.
 - 2. And they are all in agreement; there is correspondence and harmony between them; they are complimentary one of another.
 - 3. Thus these arguments build upon one another and, taken in totality, are conclusive!
- B. Consider all the previous evidence, the certitude and veracity they verify, and one arrives at the summation demanding the conclusion “There is a God.”

<p>CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES: Lesson 4 <i>Why We Believe the Bible is the Word of God</i></p>
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INTRODUCTION:

- A. There are many religious books in the world -all religions have a “book” which guides them, upon which they rely --Then there is the Bible! It is here: *How did it get here? Who wrote it?*
- B. We’ll examine evidence for Bible being Word of God – First, consider the ***REASONABLENESS OF BELIEVING GOD HAS GIVEN MAN A DIVINE WRITTEN REVELATION:***
1. **IT IS POSSIBLE** – if we begin with the premise there is a God, we are forced as well to conclude it is *possible* for that God to make Himself known to man.
 2. **IT IS PROBABLE** – granting the goodness and wisdom of God, it is *probable* to think He would want to communicate with man.
 3. **IT IS CREDIBLE** – granted that special Divine revelation is possible and probable, it is *credible* to then believe that one has in fact been given.
 4. **IT IS NECESSARY** – the imperfections and limitations of man’s wisdom call for the perfect light of Divine revelation
 5. **IT IS SUPERIOR** – a written revelation has advantages over a direct, immediate revelation to each person:
 - a) No interfering with freedom of will, forcing message from God upon those not desiring to receive such;
 - b) Doesn’t have to be repeated to each and every person;
 - c) Doesn’t open the way for contradiction and imposture -it’s an objective test.
 - d) Written revelation is fair, impartial, certain, permanent, objective.

Consider the evidence that THE BIBLE is that written revelation of God to man!

I. DIRECT EVIDENCE FOR THE BIBLE’S INSPIRATION

- A. THE CLAIMS OF THE BIBLE ITSELF** – The Bible claims to be the word of God
1. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 & 2 Peter 1:20-21
(over 2,000 times Bible claims to be Word of God!)
 2. **THE MEANING OF “INSPIRATION”?**
 - a. Gk, THEOPNESTOS = “God-breathed” (2 Tim. 3:16)

INSPIRATION is the special Divine influence upon the minds of Scripture writers rendering what they write an infallible communication of Divine truth in human language.

- b. 2 Pet 1:21. Gk verb for “moved” lit, “*to be moved upon; to be borne along as by a strong current or mighty influence*”
 - (1) The verb form is passive participle, distinctly teaching that Scripture was not written by mere suggestion or understanding of man, but by the Holy Spirit – *these “holy men” weren’t acting, they were being acted upon!*
 - (2) Thus, *holy men of God; by infusion of the breath of God; wrote in obedience to the Divine command of God, and recorded infallibly the Divine truths of God*

3. THE EXTENT OF INSPIRATION

- a. Is “inspiration” just ideas or concepts, or the very words and language of God? Does the Bible contain the Word of God, or is it the very Word?
- b. 1 Cor. 2:9-13 (READ)
- c. For accuracy, authority, inspiration, there is no such thing as inspired thoughts apart from inspired words: language is the extension of thought - thoughts are, and must be, conveyed by accuracy of language, as language is the embodiment & vehicle of thought.

4. A WORD ABOUT “CANON”

- a. CANON = 66 books of O. T. & N .T./ “Canonicity” refers to particular book and means the right to place that book in the whole volume.
- b. “Canon” Gk, KANON = “*reed or measuring rod; rule of life and doctrine*”
- c. The very concept of “canon” necessitates the Bible as a rule or authority.

B. THE CLAIMS OF JESUS CHRIST

- 1. Jesus believed the Scriptures to be the Word of God.
- 2. Matt. 4- “It is written” (quoting Deut. 8:3; 6:16; 10:20)
- 3. John 10:35 ...and the scripture cannot be broken
- 4. Many times Jesus quoted from O. T. – as Word of God.
- 5. One can’t accept Jesus as Lord and reject what He said about the inspiration, infallibility, and authority of Scripture!
- 6. Did Jesus lie? Was He deceived? – One capable of deception or guilty of fabrication is not Lord of all!

C. THE CLAIMS OF CHRIST’S APOSTLES

- 1. Galatians 1:11-12
- 2. 1 Corinthians 14:37
- 3. Ephesians 3:3-5
- 4. 2 Peter 3:16
- 5. Romans 3:2 & 1 Peter 4:11
- 6. Either these men told the truth or they did not!

D. THE CLAIMS OF OTHERS IN THE BIBLE: For example, consider the Old Testament writers who claimed to be speaking forth the Word of God:

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| a. Moses – Ex. 20:22; 24:3-4 | k. Amos – Amos 1:1-3 |
| b. Joshua – Josh 1:1 | l. Obadiah – Obadiah 1:1 |
| c. Samuel – 1 Sam. 3:4-14 | m. Jonah – Jonah 1:1 |
| d. David – 2 Sam. 23:1-2 | n. Micah – Micah 1:1 |
| e. Isaiah – Isaiah 51:16 | o. Nahum – Nahum 1:1 |
| f. Jeremiah – Jeremiah 1:9 | p. Habakkuk – Habakkuk 1: 1 |
| g. Ezekiel – Ezekiel 2:2; 3:27 | q. Zephaniah – Zephaniah 1:1 |
| h. Daniel – Daniel 9:20-22 | r. Haggai – Haggai 1:3 |
| i. Hosea – Hosea 1:1 | s. Zechariah – Zechariah 1:1-3 |
| j. Joel – Joel 1:1 | t. Malachi – Malachi 1:1 |

II. INDIRECT EVIDENCE FOR THE BIBLE’S INSPIRATION

A. THE EVIDENCE OF FULFILLED PROPHECY (the *writing of history before it happens*)

1. Every religion has a book; but the Bible is only book with detailed prophecies -- Why? Because the authors of mere human books knew that if they put a word of prophecy in their writings, and it failed, their book would be discredited.
2. But the Bible boldly tells what would happen to cities, nations, individuals hundreds, even thousands, of years before -*WHO could write a Book like this? ONLY GOD!*
3. Consider PROPHECIES CONCERNING CHRIST alone (His birth, lineage, poverty, miracles, betrayal, smiting, death, resurrection)...

B. THE EVIDENCE OF SCIENTIFIC ACCURACY

1. The Bible is not a science textbook (that is not its purpose); however, what it says about scientific matters is accurate -in fact, it is “ahead of its time”
2. There are scientific truths undiscovered by men that were previously recorded -*SOME EXAMPLES*
 - a. The suspension of the earth in space – Job 26:7
 - b. The earth being round – Isaiah 40:22; Luke 17:26
 - c. All nations of one blood – Acts 17:26
 - d. Life in the blood – Leviticus 17:10-16
 - e. The process of rain, evaporation, and condensation – Eccl. 1:72
3. The point: The *Bible spoke of things centuries before man knew them! How – with such exact accuracy, unless there was an intelligence greater than man behind them?*

C. THE EVIDENCE OF MORAL TEACHING AND INFLUENCE

1. Where Bible's influence felt, man's moral standing has been lifted -*The Bible's influence on this world has been phenomenal!*
 - a. The Bible has made better husbands, wives, children, neighbors, citizens – these have been produced where the Bible has been taught and practiced – Has any Book influenced this world like the Bible?
 - b. No one has been *made worse* by truly following its teachings – but millions have been lifted from misery, despair, hopelessness, greed, hatred
2. What other book has turned a hovel into a home? alcohol into shoes? drugs into groceries? thieves into laborers? liars into honest men?
 - a. What book can wrest the human soul from brink of Hell, and transport it to the bliss of heaven?
 - b. The Bible makes the proud humble, the poor aware of riches in Christ, and turns hater into lover of men.

D. THE EVIDENCE OF INDESTRUCTIBILITY

1. The Bible has existed for thousands of years ~ yet it is never obsolete and it is still read, studied, practiced, loved.
2. No book has stood the test of time like the Bible -critics have come and gone, have poured over it in microscopic detail in efforts to destroy it, BUT THERE IT STANDS.
3. No other book has survived the centuries unaltered like the Bible -*the fact of its existence is evidence of its divinity, for it has survived empires, kingdoms, wars, dark ages, renaissance, modernism, and skepticism.*
4. Why? *The Bible cannot be destroyed!*
 - a. *Matt. 24:35 & 1 Peter 1:24-25*
 - b. There is one thing upon which death and decay cannot lay its rotting finger: *the living, breathing, penetrating, vitalizing, incorruptible WORD OF GOD (Hebrews 4:12)*

E. THE EVIDENCE OF THE WONDER OF THE BIBLE

1. The wonder of its FORMATION: It was written by different people of different cultures in different times, yet it all comes together to form one theme
2. The wonder of its UNIFICATION: It is a library of 66 books, yet it is one book; it has many authors, yet has One Author!
3. The wonder of its AGE: It is a most ancient books, yet as fresh and relevant today as when it was written (you never have to worry about the Bible catching up with modern man -just opposite)

The Bible is old, but not obsolete – the alphabet is old, but not obsolete!

4. The wonder of its INTEREST: It is the only Book appealing to all classes and ages of man – it is read by PhD's & children, loved in America and Japan, it is authoritative to white and black.
5. The wonder of its LANGUAGE: It was largely written by uneducated men, yet it is a literary masterpiece

F. THE EVIDENCE OF ITS EXISTENCE

1. That the Bible is here, no one can deny -But, *How did it get here ? Who wrote it?* To deny God as its Author means one must explain its existence and teaching in some other way.
2. But WHO could have written the Bible, if not God?
 - a. Not an ATHEIST – for it's foundational premise is God
 - b. Not a SINNER – for it condemns sin and vice and moral decay
 - c. Not an UNINSPIRED MAN – why has man not ever written anything else as good or better? Man has advanced in every other way, but why not in his ability to do this, if man alone is its author?
 - d. NO! *A survey of its contents points to its Author: GOD!*

CONCLUSION:

- A. Examine the Bible: Its claims! The proofs for its inspiration! The evidence! *And you'll be driven to the conclusion that it is indeed the living Word of the living God.*
- B. In this one Book, we have a volume that contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers.
- C. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its history is true, its decisions are immutable – Read it to be wise; believe it to be safe; practice it to be holy.
- D. THIS IS THE WORD OF GOD!

CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES: Lesson 5
Jesus Christ, the Son of God

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READ MATTHEW 11:41 ff.

New Testament Christians make claims for and about Jesus Christ that are distinctive and unique among the world's religions. We claim that Jesus is the very Son of God, and that He is in fact Deity, on equality with God the Father. No other major world religion makes such a claim for its founder. But, what is the basis for our claim? What is the evidence that Jesus is indeed the very and only begotten Son of God? This is an important question!

I. HIS CLAIMS

A. That Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, there can be no doubt:

1. Matthew 16:15-17
2. John 3:16
3. Mark 14:61-62
4. John 9:35-37

B. In making such startling claims, Jesus would have to be LIAR, LUNATIC, or LORD!

C. And the voice of God the Father also confirms Jesus as His Son:

1. Matthew 3:17
2. Matthew 17:5
3. Hebrews 1:5

D. Jesus claimed an equality with God!

1. John 5:17-18, 23-24
2. John 8:19, 23-24, 58
3. John 10:30-33
4. John 14:1, 7-11

E. Even His adversaries or non-followers recognized something unique about this man:

1. Mark 5:7
2. Luke 4:41
3. Matthew 27:54

F. If Jesus is NOT Lord, Who is He?

1. If He was only a man, what motivated Him to claim otherwise?
2. His claims brought Him hatred, misunderstanding, persecution, torture, and death.
3. He had no political aspirations, neither fame nor fortune -He gave up all denying Himself, to do God's will?
4. Read and consider John 19:6-8, 26-27

II. THE CLAIMS OF HIS FOLLOWERS

- A. His followers claimed He was the Son of God:
 - 1. John 1:49
 - 2. Matthew 14:33
 - 3. John 20:28
 - 4. Acts 8:37
 - 5. See also Acts 3:13,26; 9:20; Romans 1:3-4; 8:3, 29, 32; 1 Corinthians 1:9; 15:28; 2 Corinthians 1:19; Galatians 1:16; 2:20; 4:4-7; Ephesians 4:13; Hebrews 4:14; 1 John 1:3, 7; 2:22-24; Revelation 2:18; et al.
- B. The term “Son of God” applied to Jesus appears all through the New Testament.
- C. What motivation could His followers have, if it were not true?
 - 1. They met hatred, oppression, and martyrdom for several centuries for their profession.
 - 2. Why would His followers concoct a lie, suffer for the lie, go to prison for the lie, and die for the lie, if they knew their claims were untrue?

III. HIS MIRACLES

- A. That Jesus did miracles, none in His day denied:
 - 1. John 3:2
 - 2. John 9:16,31-33
 - 3. Matthew 9:32-34; 12:24
- B. Jesus demonstrated power of defilement, disease, demons, the deep, death, and nature itself.
- C. Jesus’ miracles are the verification of His identity:
 - 1. John 20:30-31
 - 2. Acts 2:22-24, 36
 - 3. Acts 10:38

IV. HIS FULFILLED PROPHECY

- A. Jesus fulfilled prophecy in His birth, life, teaching, miracles, death, and resurrection:
 - 1. John 5:39
 - 2. Luke 24:25-27, 44
- B. Jesus, in exact detail, fulfilled the prophecies concerning the Messiah, the Son of God:
 - 1. Consult the previous handout concerning prophecy.
 - 2. Also compare Isaiah 53:7-8 with Acts 8:30-35
- C. No other religious leader can lay claim to the fulfillment of prophecy: false Christ’s, Messiah’s, and charlatans have arisen making many claims – but none can substantiate their claims as can Jesus!

V. HIS LIFE

- A. His life was characterized by compassion, wisdom, benevolence, purity, and devotion.
- B. Of His life, no fault could be found!
 - 1. See John 18:38; 19:4, 6; Luke 23:13-16
 - 2. His friends knew this: 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 1:19; 2:22; 1 John 3:5
 - 3. His adversaries knew this: Mark 14:55-56; Luke 23:22, 41, 47
- C. His life was characterized by complete devotion to the will of God!
 - 1. John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38
 - 2. Matthew 26:39
- D. Of Jesus, and Jesus alone, is the claim made of complete sinlessness! Hebrews 2:18; 4:15

VI. HIS TEACHING

- A. Jesus taught with wisdom, insight, and understanding unsurpassed in His day, and ours too!
 - 1. Matthew 7:28-29
 - 2. Luke 4:15,32
 - 3. John 7:45-46
- B. How do we explain His wisdom if He was “only a man”?

VII. HIS DEATH

- A. His death is understood and explained by His mission: to take away sins!
- B. Consider the prediction He made of His death:
 - 1. Matthew 16:21
 - 2. John 6:70- 71
 - 3. John 13:21-22, 26
- C. Consider the miraculous events that accompanied His death: darkness, the veil of the temple splitting, the dead arising.

VIII. HIS RESURRECTION

- A. Jesus’ tomb became empty (and remains empty to this day) – But how?
- B. Jesus had predicted this! Matthew 12:38-40; 16:21; 17:9, 22-23; 20:18-19; 26:32; 27:63; Mark 8:31-9:1; 9:10, 31; 10:32-34; 14:28, 58; Luke 9:22-27; John 2:18-22; 12:34

C. Then we have the testimony of witnesses, those who saw Jesus risen from the dead:

1. Mary Magdalene at the tomb: Mark 16:9; John 20:11-18
2. The women on the road: Matthew 28:9-10
3. The disciples on the road to Emmaus: Luke 24:13-32
4. Peter: Luke 24:34
5. Ten of the eleven apostles: Mark 16:14; Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-25
6. The eleven apostles (including Thomas) eight days later: John 20:26-31
7. Seven disciples by the shore of the Sea of Galilee: John 21:1-25
8. More than five hundred: 1 Corinthians 15:6 (cf. Matthew 28:16-17)
9. James: 1 Corinthians 15:7
10. The apostles when He ascended: Acts 1:3-11

Later, after His ascension, to Paul: Acts 9: 1 Corinthians 15:8

D. The resurrection is evidence of Jesus' identity: Romans 1:4

E. If Jesus really, actually, bodily, literally rose from the dead, *then He is the Son of God!*

IX. HIS INFLUENCE

A. Has anyone influenced our world like Jesus of Nazareth?

B. He never wrote a book, composed a song, built a sanctuary or a hospital, or raised an army, yet entire continents for centuries have been influenced by His life and work.

1. No politician, teacher, or religious leader has affected as many lives as Jesus.
2. His name stands above every name, and His teachings have transformed individuals, towns, cities, and nations!

X. THE CONSEQUENCE

A. Consider some consequences if Jesus is NOT the Son of God:

1. The entire Old Testament is impugned.
2. The New Testament is false.
3. The whole system of Christianity is a mere human philosophy built upon fabrication and falsehood, founded by an impostor and perpetuated by fraudulent liars.
4. There is no Savior and no salvation.
5. There is no hope of resurrection or life beyond.

B. Consider some consequences if Jesus IS the Son of God:

1. Then He is Lord of all.
2. He must be obeyed.
3. He, and He only, can make atonement for sin and save our souls.
4. We can have life, hope, peace, joy, and fulfillment.
5. We can live forever.

CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES: Lesson 6

Did Jesus Really Rise From the Dead?

Teacher: John M. Brown, Flatwoods church of Christ, Sunday Bible Class

INTRODUCTION: *The resurrection of Christ bodily, literally, from the dead is the verification of Christianity: on it, Christianity stands or falls and is true or false (see 1 Corinthians 15:12-19). The resurrection is the proof that Jesus is God's Son (Romans 1:4). And the resurrection is powerful (Philippians 3:10). Consider some important facts about Christ's resurrection:*

I. CHRISTIANITY IS THE ONLY WORLD RELIGION CLAIMING A RESURRECTION FOR ITS FOUNDER

- A. No other world religion makes this claim; none invites men and women to behold an empty tomb.
- B. All four gospels relate:
 - 1. That Jesus died, was wrapped in a cloth, and was put into a tomb.
 - 2. That a stone was rolled in from of the tomb, and a Roman seal was put on it to prevent anyone from stealing His body (why would the officials want it sealed?).
 - 3. Roman guards were put in front of the entrance.
 - 4. The women came to anoint His body (not knowing the tomb had been closed and sealed), and they found the tomb empty.

II. JESUS SAID HE WOULD RISE FROM THE DEAD

- A. Jesus predicted over and over that He would rise from the dead:
 - 1. Matthew 12:38-40; 16:21; 17:9, 22-23; 20:18-19; 26:32; 27:63
 - 2. Mark 8:31-9:1; 9:10, 31; 10:32-34; 14:28, 58
 - 3. Luke 9:22-27
 - 4. John 2:18-22; 10:18; 12:34; cc. 14-16
- B. If the resurrection came to pass (as Jesus predicted), that verifies everything else He said!
 - 1. If Jesus really rose, atheism is false, there is a God, and the Bible is true.
 - 2. If Jesus really rose, He is the Son of God and the only way to the Father (John 14:6).
 - 3. If Jesus really rose, all His claims are vindicated and Christianity is true!

III. THERE WERE EYEWITNESS OF THE RISEN LORD

- A. Study carefully Luke 1:1-4
- B. Jesus' appearances:
 - 1. To Mary Magdalene at the tomb: Mark 16:9; John 20:11-18
 - 2. To the women on the road: Matthew 28:9-10

3. To the disciples on the road to Emmaus: Luke 24:13-32
4. To Peter: Luke 24:34
5. To ten of the eleven apostles: Mark 16:14; Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-25
6. To the eleven apostles (including Thomas) eight days later: John 20:26-31
7. To seven disciples by the shore of the Sea of Galilee: John 21:1-25
8. To more than five hundred: 1 Corinthians 15:6; Matthew 28:16-17
9. To James: 1 Corinthians 15:7
10. To the apostles when He ascended: Acts 1:3-11
11. To Paul: Acts 9; 1 Corinthians 15:8
12. To Stephen: Acts 7:55
13. To Paul in the temple: Acts 22:17-21; 23:11
14. To John on the isle of Patmos: Revelation 1:10-19

IV. THERE WAS NO REFUTATION OF THE CLAIM

- A. In the very city where these events occurred, Peter proclaimed the resurrection: Acts 2
- B. But when the resurrection was proclaimed, there was no refutation of it!
 1. Some didn't believe, others mocked, but none could produce evidence that it wasn't true!
 2. See Acts 3:4, 15, 26; 4:10; 5:30; 10:39-41; 13:39-39; 17:30-31; 25:19; 26:22-28

V. THERE IS NO OTHER SATISFACTORY EXPLANATION

- A. SOME DENY THE LORD REALLY DIED
 1. They say He went into a "swoon," then later resuscitated and rolled the stone away.
 2. But this is not reasonable:
 - a. He had undergone a Roman scourging (which many victims didn't survive).
 - b. He had nails driven into His hands and feet, and a spear thrust into His side.
 - c. The great strength that would have been necessary to roll the stone away, Jesus wouldn't have had even had He survived the crucifixion.
 - d. How could one (humanly speaking) roll a 1¹/₂ to 2 ton stone uphill?
- B. SOME THINK JESUS' DISCIPLES SAW ONLY A VISION, NOT REALLY JESUS.
 1. Of all people, they would have been the most difficult to deceive.
 2. They had been with Him 3¹/₂ years and had seen Him raise the dead.
 3. They were not even expecting Him to rise from the dead (see John 2:19-22) and at first doubted, so they wouldn't have been easily susceptible to visions or imaginations.
- C. SOME SAY SOMEONE STOLE THE LORD'S BODY
 1. What conceivable motive would anyone have, for if someone (Jesus' enemies, for example) had whisked away His body, it would make appear the very thing they didn't want to happen had actually occurred.

2. On Pentecost, Peter declared Jesus risen from the dead – in the very city less than two months removed from the event – and no one challenged Peter’s statement.
4. If Jesus had gone to Babylon or Egypt, waited 15 years, and then showed Himself to strangers, this would have aroused suspicion – but that’s not the way it happened!
5. Who would have had the courage to remove the Roman seal under penalty of death?
6. If someone had stolen Jesus’ body, and laid it at the feet of the apostles while they were preaching, Christianity would have been stamped out – but this never happened!

D. SOME SAY THE DISCIPLES STOLE THE LORD’S BODY

1. This is the first of all false alleged answers to the empty tomb (see Matthew 28:12-15).
 - a. Guards were hired to life and say they had fallen asleep.
 - b. But it’s not reasonable that under penalty of death they would all go to sleep at the same time.
 - c. And why would they not have been awakened?
 - d. If they were asleep, how would they know the disciples came and stole the body?
2. And what would have motivated the apostles?
 - a. They said they were witnesses and preached until their dying day the risen Lord.
 - b. If they knew what they were saying was a lie, why would they suffer imprisonment, persecution, and death for a falsehood?
 - c. If the disciples stole Jesus’ body, it means they were deliberate deceivers.
 - d. Consider the conversion of Paul as evidence of Jesus’ resurrection!

E. SOME SAY THE WOMEN WENT TO THE WRONG TOMB

1. But they had taken great note of where Jesus was buried (see Matthew 27:61; Mark 15:47) and told others of Jesus’ resurrection (John 20:2-8).
2. An angel announced what happened (Matthew 28:6) – was the angel at the wrong tomb also, and mistaken?
3. The women went to the wrong tomb, so did the disciples, the Romans, and the Jews.

VI. JESUS’ RESURRECTION IS OUR HOPE

A. Read John 11:14-44 and Corinthians 15:20-26 and 50-58

B. If Jesus didn’t rise from the dead, neither will we – the consequence of rejecting the resurrection is utter hopelessness eternally!

1. Baptism, the Lord’s Supper, and the prospect of Jesus’ return are all dependent on Jesus’ resurrection from the dead.
2. We can confidently affirm the FACT of the risen Lord!

Christian Evidences: Lesson 7

Who Is Jesus?

Teacher: John M Brown, Flatwoods church of Christ, Sunday Bible Class

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Notice the question in John 8:23-29: “Who art thou?”
- B. Jesus Himself asked, “Who do men say that I the son of man am?” (Matt. 16:13)
- C. This is the most important question confronting humanity: WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?
- D. Many answers are given; many do not know; others speculate; still others are wrong.
- E. Note Matthew 22:41-46

I. JESUS IS THE SON OF MAN

- A. The Bible declares the humanity of Christ!
 - 1. Genesis 3:15
 - 2. Isaiah 9:6
 - 3. Matthew 16:27
 - 4. Galatians 4:4
 - 5. Philippians 2:5-8
 - 6. 1 Timothy 2:5
- B. The humanity of Jesus carries great significance: the humiliation, suffering, agony and pain He experienced enables Him to sympathize with us!
 - 1. He’s worn our shoes; He’s walked our earth; He’s breathed our air and tasted our water; He’s felt our pain; He’s shed human tears; He knows the distress of loneliness, the affliction of suffering, and the agony of death.
 - 2. Note Hebrews 2:17-18 and 4:14-15
 - 3. Some in the first century wrongly denied Jesus’ humanity (see 1 John 4:2-3).

II. JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD

- A. The Bible affirms His humanity -but also His Deity: Son of man AND Son of God!
 - 1. Matthew 3:17 and 16:13-18
 - 2. Mark 14:61-62
 - 3. Matthew 27:54
 - 4. John 1:1, 14
- B. Jesus affirmed His Deity, the apostles declared it, and His miracles verified it! John 20:30-31

III. JESUS IS THE SAVIOR

- A. The Bible sets forth Jesus as the SAVIOR of the world.
 - 1. Matthew 1:21
 - 2. Luke 2:8-11
 - 3. Acts 5:30-31
 - 4. Titus 2:13-14
 - 5. Hebrews 5:8-9

- B. Some spend their life, time and energy accumulating wealth, or expanding their intellect, or acquiring power, or even conquering nations – *But Jesus came into the world to save sinners!*

IV. JESUS IS GOD’S SPOKESMAN

- A. God speaks to all mankind through the words of His Son!
 - 1. Matthew 17:5
 - 2. John 1:14-18
 - 3. Hebrews 1:1-2
 - 4. John 8:42-51; 12:48

- B. Jesus, not only in His words but in all ways, is the manifestation of God! 2 Corinthians 4:4

V. JESUS IS LORD AND KING!

- A. The Bible asserts that Jesus is Lord, that Christ is King!
 - 1. Matthew 28:18
 - 2. Luke 2:11
 - 3. Acts 2:36
 - 4. Philippians 2:9-11
 - 5. 1 Timothy 6:15
 - 6. Rev.19:11-16

- B. Our Lord is also our High Priest, Advocate, Intercessor, and Mediator! See Hebrews 2:17; 3:1-2; 5:5-6; 1 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 2:1

VI. JESUS IS JUDGE!

- A. Jesus is judge!
 - 1. John 5:22
 - 2. Acts 17:30-31
 - 3. 2 Corinthians 5:10

- B. Jesus is the One before Whom all nations will be judged! Matthew 25:31-46

CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES: Lesson 8

Creation

Teacher: John M Brown, Flatwoods church of Christ, Sunday Bible Class

INTRODUCTION: There has been tension over the last few decades regarding “Creation vs. Evolution.” It has even become a political issue in many places. Some have come to ridicule what the Bible says about creation, and others perceive the Biblical account as mythology. To some, evolution is regarded as established fact.

While we will not go into great detail concerning these matters (many, many long books have been written addressing these great details!), let us note these facts: 1) *evolution is a theory* (and there are many reputable, credible scientists who do not believe it!); and 2) *the creation account in the Bible is written as an actual, literal event* (happening), not as mythology, and there are many reputable, credible scientists and others who *do* believe this!

If the Bible is the inspired, infallible Word of God, we have no reason to doubt the accuracy of what it says concerning creation -why would we?

Don't let anyone try to convince you that evolution as an explanation for origins is a proven fact (it isn't) or that all who are “scientific” or “educated” deny the Genesis account of creation (they don't -many brilliant, knowledgeable, and highly skilled scientists uphold the literal account of creation as found in the Bible!).

So, concerning what the Bible teaches about origins, note the following:

I. THE BIBLE AFFIRMS GOD AS CREATOR

- A. THE CREATION: Genesis 1:1-2ff; 2:1ff; 5:1-2
- B. The Bible's affirmation that God created all: *Exodus 20:11; 2 Kings 19:5; 1 Chronicles 16:26; Nehemiah 9:8-9; Job 10:3; 8-12; 12:7-9; 26:7-13; 28:23-26; 37:16-18; 38:4, 7-10; Psalms 8:3; 19:1; 24:1-2; 33:6-9; 74:16-17; 89:11-12; 95:4-6; 100:3; 102:25; 104:2-3, 5-6, 24, 30-31; 119:90-91; 121:2; 124:8; 136:5-9; 139:13; 146:5-6; 148:5-6; Proverbs 8:26-29; 20:12; 22:2; 30:4; Ecclesiastes 3:11; 7:29; 11:5; Isaiah 40:12, 26-28; 42:5; 43:1, 7, 15; 44:2, 24; 45:12, 18, 48:13; 51:13; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:12; 27:5; 31:35; 32:17; 33:2; 51:15-16; Amos 4:13; 5:8; 9:6; Zechariah 12:1; Malachi 2:10; Mark 13:19; Acts 4:24; 14:15; 17:24-26; Romans 1:20; 5:12-14; Hebrews 3:4; 11:3; 1 Peter 4:19; Revelation 4:11; 10:6; 14:7*

II. JESUS AFFIRMED GOD AS CREATOR

- A. Matthew 19:4-6
- B. Mark 10:6-10
- C. In fact, Jesus was involved in creation! Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 1:1-3

III. THE BIBLE AFFIRMS A COMPLETED CREATION

- A. The Bible affirms that what God made was “good”: Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25
- B. Adam was created as a full-grown man: Hebrews 4:3
- C. Then God’s law of reproduction was begun: Genesis 1:11-25

IV. THE BIBLE AFFIRMS A CREATION PERIOD OF SIX DAYS

- A. “Evening and morning” = “day”
 - 1. From the Hebrew word “YOM,” it refers to a literal, 24-hour day.
 - 2. These “days” were not long epochs of time; that just doesn’t fit what is said!
- B. The Bible here defines “day” – “evening and morning.”
 - 1. Thus it is a 24 hour day, even as we know it today.
 - 2. All efforts to “explain away” a day (as given here) are simply efforts to compromise the plain and obvious Bible account of creation with currently held evolutionary theories.

V. THE ONLY POSSIBILITIES FOR LIFE:

A. LIFE HAS ALWAYS BEEN HERE

(But this is denied by the Second Law of Thermodynamics, also known as the Law of Energy Decay, which states that every system, left to its own devices, tends to move from order to disorder; things degenerate, which is known as the Law of increasing Entropy).

B. LIFE CAME FROM NOTHING NATURALLY (ACCIDENTLY)

(But this is denied by the First Law of Thermodynamics, the very foundation of science, which states that energy can be converted from one form to another, but it cannot be either created or destroyed; this Law of Energy Conservation states that something cannot come from nothing).

C. LIFE CAME FROM NOTHING SUPERNATURALLY

(That is, life was created from nothing by an Eternal Life Source supernaturally- God, the Creator!).

D. LIFE IS NOT HERE; ALL IS JUST AN ILLUSION.

VI. WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES: Genesis 1:1-2

A. WORD STUDIES:

1. “GOD” = Hebrew, ELOHIM (a plural noun)
2. “CREATED” = Hebrews, BARA (“to make; to form”)
3. “THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH” = i.e., the physical universe

B. Notice the implications of these two verses

1. Regarding SCIENCE: some say the Bible is unscientific -not so! The five basic elements of science are included here:
 - a. TIME: “in the beginning”
 - b. FORCE / ENERGY: “God”
 - c. MOTION: “created”
 - d. SPACE: “the heaven”
 - e. MATTER: “the earth”
2. Regarding ATHEISM: “God”
3. Regarding EVOLUTION: “created”
4. Regarding the GODHEAD: “Elohim” is a plural noun indicating that all persons in the Godhead – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – were involved in creation (see also Genesis 1:26; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2).

FOR FURTHER STUDY

I want to strongly recommend you check out our church library for further information. We have many excellent books that discuss every aspect of this issue in much greater detail than presented here, and you can literally study this matter out to whatever length you desire to go. Every argument that has been advanced against the Genesis account of creation can be, and has been, plainly and rationally answered by those trained in the sciences who are also Bible believers! The Biblical account of creation beautifully fits the facts of science and the demands of evidence. Never feel awkward about defending your belief in God as Creator: that belief is Biblical, historical, reasonable, defensible, and true!