

Be Reformed – Open the bible: study, dig and ask what the main point of the passage is

Be Charismatic – Expect the Holy Spirit: ask God to speak, minister, build up and lead us to maturity

Be Community – Love God's people: share vulnerably, apply, pray and build each other up

Be Missional – Win the world: apply lessons to outreach, make content accessible to non-Christians

Prefacing principles

We preach the gospel. That is to say that we simply declare it as truth, not as something that stands on the fact that it can be argued or proven (although it can). That truth must also be consistently and integritously exemplified in and defended by our lifestyle, character, logic and love.

God changes hearts. We are here to save the lost, but we do not save the lost. We labour with humility, honouring God first, then others, leaving our pride at the door.

That said, when logical arguments or scenarios are presented here, they are an attempt to answer honest questions.

Be careful about getting too engrossed with "proving" God. God has proof, but He does not need it. Often, those who have decided not to believe will simply gainsay or disregard the logic or evidence. Matt 16:1-4 recounts the Pharisees asking for a sign, just as some opponents of God today ask for logical arguments or evidence. Jesus refuses because He discerns their hearts. Ask God to give you the same discernment. Focus your attention on those who are truly looking for God.

Romans 1:18-25 says that knowledge of God is plain and obvious in the things that have been made (by God) – all creation, especially people. However, some people simply refuse to acknowledge this.

Finally, don't be afraid to admit you don't know. There are other leaders to ask and not every question has to be answered immediately. In fact, not knowing the answer can often reveal the heart of the asker – whether he was truly seeking God or whether he was simply trying to test you, like the Pharisees did Jesus.

Study Notes 24 Oct 2010 – How Can I Know God?



Why do people ask this question?

We all have doubts. Even if we have heard about God, we sometimes don't know Him well, or have been told lies about Him or have made up lies about Him in our own minds because of what we have seen or experienced.

There is also a philosophy that says that there are many ways to God and that THIS way, through Jesus, is one of many and therefore not vital. This has been reinforced by an incorrect perception of God, Jesus and the church in our pop culture and sub cultures.

Why answering this question well is important

It is not enough to know things about God. Because God is personal and interested in each one of us, we need to truly seek an intimate and personal relationship with Him. That is the only way we can possibly be reconciled to Him and escape His wrath.

People who believe that there are many ways to God either don't know God or are very confused by all the different things they have heard. Christians also need to be confirmed in what they know is true (there is only one way to God – Jesus Christ) because we are constantly under attack from relativist, pantheist, ecumenical (in one sense of the word), "inclusive", "tolerant" thinking which is common and popular today.

The answer

John 14:6 – Through Jesus Christ alone.

While God reveals Himself and speaks to us in many ways, without faith IN Jesus Christ, this will only result in knowledge about God.

Have faith in Jesus as your personal Lord and saviour (Heb 6:1, Acts 20:21). This is different from believing Jesus

(that what He says is true) or believing about Jesus. This is a matter of making God God in your eyes. He must become your only God, the only one you trust, love, desire, fear, serve, and follow. This will result in a life that is changed. The changed life is evidence of faith (James 2:14-26).

Answers to study questions

Is there life after death? What implications does this have on how we live?

Yes, because the bible says there is (Matthew 22:31-32). If there was no resurrection then our faith would be meaningless (1 Cor 15). Non-existence of life after death makes this life ultimately meaningless to us as individuals. Some will claim a collective purpose for creation/humanity but that's just shooting in the dark.

Life after death (and in particular ETERNAL life) should cause us to live this moment utterly for that eternity to come and for the God who sustains us in this life and in that eternity.

What is sin?

Sin is essentially any sort of rebellion against God: any deed or thought that goes against God's desire or nature, whether we know it or not. Eg. God is perfect, therefore anything about us that is not perfect is an affront to God and is sin.

Sin incurs God's unlimited wrath, because God is unlimited. The penalty for that wrath is unlimited torment and destruction. The price to pay to remove that wrath can only be unlimited perfect innocence, which is why Jesus had to die and had to be God.

How is Christianity fundamentally different from other religions?

Christianity is not about works.

Christianity requires a personal relationship with God.

Christianity claims to be exclusively the only way to know God.

Christianity teaches that salvation cannot ever be earned.

Christianity teaches that God personally identified with man, became man and suffered with man.

Christianity teaches that God's love for us is the reason for our love for Him and for others.

Being born into a Christian family or society does not make you a Christian.

The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and His claim to Godhood.

What would make someone claim that He was the only way to God?

C.S Lewis' trilemma – God, lunatic or liar – 3 reasons.

If Jesus' claim was untrue, it could be because he was fooled into believing that it was true (deceived or insane) or else he deliberately told a lie.

Is God satisfied with our personal strivings to appease Him?

Hosea 6:6, Hebrews 10:8, Acts 17:24 and 25 and more show us that God is not at all interested in the rituals, works or offerings we give, nor even in our time and talent and finances. Simply put, we have NOTHING to offer God.

How can we know if Jesus is God?

The bible is our testimony of Jesus' deity. We know that the bible is true because the bible testifies that it is so (2 Tim 3:16). We believe the bible is the word of God because God tells us that it is. This is axiomatic (circular reasoning), but every single system of belief (and unbelief) relies on axioms. Even science. Science is reliable because the process is scientific Logic is truth because it is logical that it is. Likewise, we simply believe and know that the God we preach is true. There are many types of evidence to support this – creation (Rom 1), experience, miracles, logical evidence, scientific evidence, historical evidence, but the bottom line is whether you believe or not.

Isaiah 9:6 - For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 43:10,11 - "You are My witnesses," says the Lord, "And My servant whom I have chosen, That you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, Nor shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the Lord, and besides Me there is no Savior."

Revelation 1:17-18; Revelation 2:8 - (Jesus is the First and the Last)

Isaiah 44:6 - (God is the Redeemer)

2 Peter 1:1 (Jesus is the Redeemer) - "To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ"

Isaiah 44:24 - (God created the world by His self alone)

John 1:3; Colossians 1:16 - (Jesus made all things)

John 1:1 - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... 1:14 - And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

John 5:17,18 - "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working." Therefore the Jews sought to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.

John 5:23 - that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

John 8:24 - "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I AM He, you will die in your sins."

John 8:58 - Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."

John 10:30-33 - Jesus answered them, "I and My Father are one." Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, "Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?" The Jews answered Him, saying, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God."

John 14:6-7 - Jesus said to him, "I AM the way, the truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

John 14:9-11 - Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

John 20:28 - And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

Acts 4:12 - "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Acts 20:28 - (God purchased us with His own blood)

Revelation 1:5,6; Revelation 5:8-9 - (Jesus' blood purchased us)

Philippians 2:5-7 - Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bond-servant, and coming in the likeness of men.

1 Timothy 3:16 - And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.

Titus 2:13 - looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ

Hebrews 1:8,9 - But to the Son He (God) says: "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions."

2 John 1:7 - For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

Revelation 1:8 - "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

Revelation 22:13 - "I AM the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."... 22:16 -

"I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches."

Final thoughts

Examine the proofs and claims of Jesus Christ and decide for yourself if He is a lunatic, Satan or God Himself.