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Questioning



Week 1

The aim of this week is to unpack what apologetics is and why we need to care about it.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Questions for the group:

1. Do you have a tough question about Christianity? Or have you ever had someone who's sceptical about it ask a tough question about Christianity?
2. In 1 to 3 sentences, tell us why you are, or aren't, a Christian.

Watch this video:

Video 1: Why I'm a Christian

Questions for the group:

1. Do you believe we need an evidence-based belief in Christianity?
2. Do you think providing reasons for belief in Jesus will lead others to faith in him?

1.2 WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN APOLOGETIC?

Apologetics is not apologising for what we believe or think. It is actually the opposite. Apologetics comes from the Greek word “*apologia*”, which means to make a defence. This can be seen in 1 Peter 3:15 (ESV):

“...but in your hearts honour Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defence to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect”.

“always being prepared” – The Greek word here for “prepared” carries the connotation of getting fit, and a very similar mindset should be employed with apologetics. Getting fit is not something that once achieved, means never needing to train or exercise again. We must be consistently training our minds so that we are always ready to give reasoned answers to questions about what we believe.

Thus, apologetics is a journey; not a destination. We don’t need to destroy every doubt; we need to move closer to the truth, and in the truth we will find Jesus.

Through this we honour God with our minds for the good things He has done in our hearts. Apologetics has three targets:

- 1) For the sceptic to come to faith in Jesus.
- 2) For the believer to give a reasonable defence for their belief in Jesus.
- 3) For the believer to examine their personal doubts and solidify their own faith.

Question for the group:

1. Is it a lack of faith to doubt in God?

In the Bible we see somebody who felt scepticism and doubt concerning Jesus as Lord. It was one of the twelve disciples. He knew and followed Jesus for at least three years, but despite his proximity to Jesus, he needed evidence to believe that Jesus was God.

Jesus and Thomas

Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe."

Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

John 20:24-29



Questions for the group:

1. Is Thomas right to set up conditions for belief in God? Do you/somebody you know set conditions for faith in God?
2. What does Jesus' response reveal about Himself?
3. Do you identify with Thomas?
4. What are the doubts you have that you want Jesus to meet?

Watch this video:

Video 2: You Can't Prove Christianity is True

Question for the group:

1. Who do you most agree with? Michael Ruse who claims that faith is based on blind belief, or John Lennox who claims that faith is based on testable evidence?

1.3 ESTABLISHING A FOUNDATION

In order for our journey to be effective, we need an established foundation to move forward from.

Biblical: The Bible has a unique status as the apologetics' final court of appeal. This is the foundation of all Christian belief, and the apologist labours to apply the claims within the Bible to unbelief and seek to defend the truth within the Bible. According to the Bible, Jesus is the Truth (John 14:6). The Bible and Jesus are inseparable, and this is the foundation of the apologist. We acknowledge the sceptic might not have this foundation. And we will use objective reasoning as the common foundation in this material.

Mental: Every human has the capacity to think, to reason, to come to a conclusion. Luke 10:27 *“And he answered, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and WITH ALL YOUR MIND, and your neighbour as yourself’.”* Because of this, we will also explore some logical reasons for the existence of God. The Bible calls us to use intellectual skill for our own faith and to remove stumbling blocks so that others may also believe in Jesus.

Heart: Our heart should be for people to come to know Jesus and for our fellow believers to be strengthened in their faith. As we read earlier in 1 Peter, our defence should always be done with gentleness and respect. Apologetics isn’t meant to be a club to beat people with; it’s meant to be a key that opens them up to the Good News of Jesus Christ. We do this because, as Luke 10 says, we should love people as we love ourselves. We are showing both the validity of the claims of Jesus, as well as displaying the love of Jesus.

In our exploration of providing a defence, our first foundation is to question if faith and science are reconcilable.

Question for the group:

1. Considering this foundation, how do we reason with gentleness and respect?

The Big Question:

What is YOUR QUESTION about the Christian faith? Write your answer below:

Can Faith and Science Reconcile?

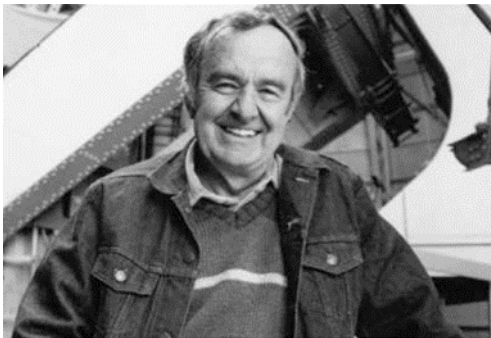
Week 2

This week's aims are to:

- 1. Understand faith*
- 2. Understand science*
- 3. Explore whether science is in opposition to faith*

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Does the latest scientific evidence tend to point toward or away from the existence of God?



"It was my science that drove me to the conclusion that the world is much more complicated than can be explained by science. It was only through the supernatural that I can understand the mystery of existence."

Allan Sandage – American astronomer

We live in a technological culture where many people believe science trumps all other forms of knowledge. According to some, only science is rational; only science achieves truth. Everything else is mere belief and opinion and if something cannot be quantified or tested by the scientific method, it cannot be true or rational.

Harvard geneticist Richard Lewontin claimed that science is *“the only begetter of truth”*.

Question for the group:

1. Do you agree with this perspective? Why?

As a rebuttal to the statement made by Richard Lewontin, consider the following:

- 1) To say that science is the only begetter of truth is self-contradicting, because that statement itself cannot be tested by the scientific method. It's a self-defeating philosophical assumption.
- 2) There are some things we know more certainly through introspection than we know from the sciences. We know we have free will on the basis of our introspection, and no social science studies will convince us otherwise.

While some people view religion as an enemy of science, many more acknowledge that science and religion should not be regarded as foes. However, nor do they think they should be considered friends. They are of the opinion that science and religion are mutually irrelevant, that they represent two non-overlapping domains. Sometimes you hear slogans like “Science deals with facts and religion deals with faith.” But as we will see, science and religion do interact.

In order to proceed we need to first make sure we have a proper understanding of science and faith, and whether they are incompatible or not.

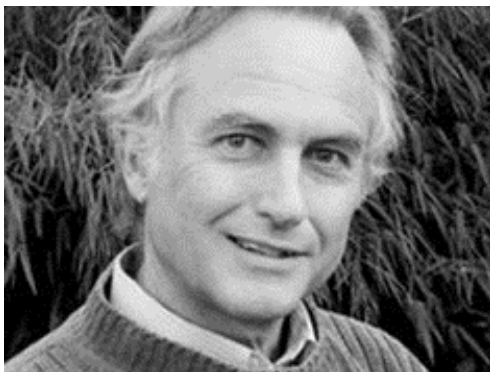
2.2 UNDERSTANDING FAITH

Watch this video:

Video 1: Indiana Jones – Leap of Faith

Question for the group:

1. Is this how you would define your faith? Why/why not?



“Faith is the great cop-out, the great excuse to evade the need to think and evaluate evidence. Faith is belief in spite of, even perhaps because of, the lack of evidence.”

Richard Dawkins

Question to consider: Is faith (as associated with Christianity) a concept that is defined as a belief in something not supported by any evidence? Yes/no and why?

By and large, Christians will say NO, but surveys show most non-religious people do define faith as blind. This is NOT the kind of faith that we should have as Christians. *And a blind faith is the type of faith that is not compatible with science.*

There are varying types of faith and the reality is that every single one of us lives by faith to some degree or another. Here are the four primary types of faith:

Warranted/Human Faith: *EVERYONE* exercises this kind of faith. This is based on *EVIDENCE* and *PAST EXPERIENCE*. For example, we have faith in the surgeon who is cutting us open (even though we do not know them at all, and we do not understand the procedure they are doing). This is trust in what they have told you and past experience. Or stepping onto a plane, you have faith that there is actually a pilot in the cockpit (even though you cannot see them) and that they know what they are doing.

Blind Faith: Where there is no warranted evidence for belief in something. Think of Indiana Jones stepping off the cliff expecting not to fall to his death.

Irrational Faith: This is having faith in something despite the evidence against it. Irrational and blind faith are most commonly associated with Christianity by sceptics.

Biblical Faith: This is a type of faith given to Christians by God. These are things that won't be believed without the Spirit of God. Biblical faith includes elements of warranted faith, but it picks up where warranted faith leaves off. It is possible to have warranted faith that the Gospels are true based on intellect, but that does not make you a Christian.

Question for the group:

1. Which of these four definitions best fits your view of faith? Think deeply and answer honestly. The aim of this course is to promote safe and honest discussion.

Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

1 Corinthians 2:12-14

Questions for the group:

1. What case does 1 Corinthians 2:12-14 make for how we have faith?
2. How does that case support or contradict your view of faith?
3. How do you reconcile this faith with 1 Peter 3:15 which says:

“but in your hearts honour Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defence to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect”

2.3 A PROPER DEFINITION OF SCIENCE

Question for the group:

1. How do you define science?

Watch this video:

Video 2: The Danger of Thinking Science Alone Leads to True Knowledge



“Science is the search for truth, that is the effort to understand the world: it involves the rejection of bias, of dogma, of revelation, but not the rejection of morality”

Linus Pauling – Chemist, molecular biologist, and two-time Nobel Prize winner

“Science is the pursuit and application of knowledge and understanding of the natural and social world following a systematic methodology based on evidence”

Scientific methodology includes the following:

- 1) Objective observation: Measurement and data (possibly, though not necessarily, using mathematics as a tool).
- 2) Evidence.
- 3) Experiment and/or observation as benchmarks for testing hypotheses.
- 4) Induction: Reasoning to establish general rules or conclusions drawn from facts or examples.
- 5) Repetition.
- 6) Critical analysis.
- 7) Verification and testing: Critical exposure to scrutiny, peer review and assessment.

<https://sciencecouncil.org/about-science/our-definition-of-science/>

Watch this video:

Video 3: John Lennox – Limitations of Science

Questions for the group:

1. Do you believe science is in opposition to faith? Why or why not?
2. What question do you think science answers? And what question do you think faith answers?
3. Do your answers correlate?

Watch this video:

Video 4: Can Science Explain Everything?

The Big Question:

Do you think faith and science are reconcilable?

2.4 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is not 'science versus religion' or 'facts versus faith' but one faith versus another type of faith. It is important realise that our view, whatever it is, is not just 'the facts', but we have brought certain assumptions to the table, assumptions for which we have limited evidence. It is these presuppositions that determine how we interpret facts that we then claim are evidence for our worldview.

So now if we can accept science and faith as being mutually beneficial and reconcilable, we have another hurdle. A supposedly irrefutable claim of science that seems to contradict the Bible's account of creation: evolution. Next week we will investigate the scientific validity of evolution and the compatibility of creation and evolution.

Has Evolution Disproved Genesis?

Week 3

This week aims to:

- 1. Identify the different approaches to the Creation vs Evolution debate*
- 2. Explore the compatibility of creation and evolution*
- 3. Explore the validity of evolution*

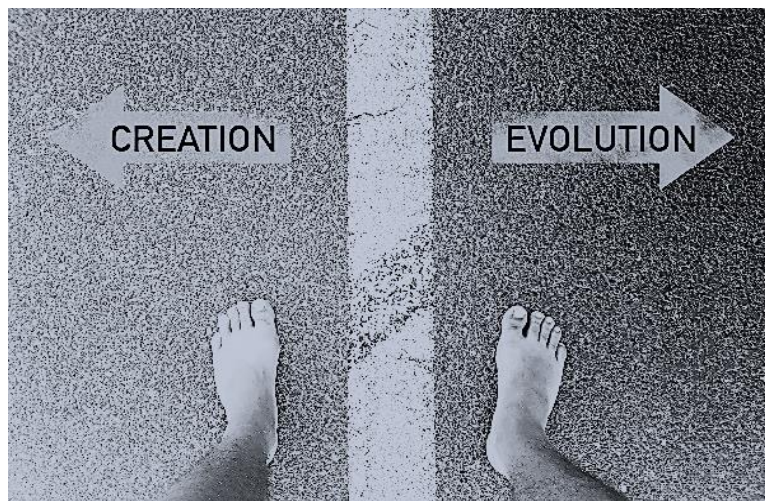
3.1 INTRODUCTION

Three approaches to the Evolution vs Creation debate:

- 1) Evolution is scientific fact; therefore, creation is false.
- 2) Evolution and creation are both true and can be reconciled.
- 3) Creation as described in Genesis is literal fact; it really happened and therefore evolution is false.

Question for the group:

Where do you place yourself in these 3 views?



This week's material will further unpack these three approaches to evolution and creation.

3.2 VIEW ONE: EVOLUTION IS SCIENTIFIC FACT, CREATION IS FALSE

In Week 2, we discussed the definition of science. What we need to realise is that within philosophy of science (the study of the foundations, assumptions, purpose, and methods of science) there is not one definition of science that holds true for everyone. Just as there are many branches of science (physics, chemistry, biology etc) there are many views of what science can tell us about the world and what the purpose of science really is.

For example:

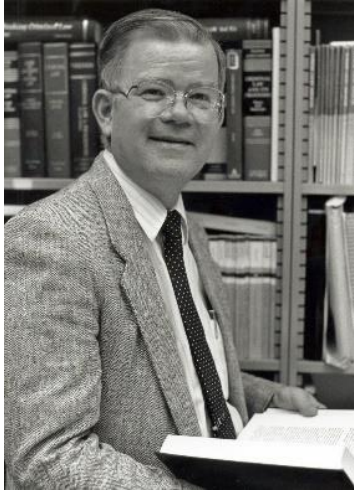
Some people view science as the pursuit of truth, no matter where that truth leads (even if it points to the possibility of something greater than itself). Others understand the purpose and function of science as only needing to explain natural phenomena.

We all approach everything we do with a bias. Science is not excluded from this. As much as a Christian may approach the question of our origin with a bias towards creation, so too may an Atheist approach it with a bias towards naturalism. When we approach the evidence that does exist in the scientific community, we must do our best to look at it with as much objectivity and humility as we can.

Question for the group:

1. What do you believe the purpose of science is?

People who sit completely on the side of evolution take the philosophical approach of naturalism. Let us take a look:



“Science...has become identified with a philosophy known as materialism or scientific naturalism. This philosophy insists that nature is all there is, or at least the only thing about which we can have any knowledge. It follows that nature had to do its own creating, and that the means of creation must not have included any role for God.”

Phillip E. Johnson – Evolution critic

Naturalism, commonly known as materialism, is a philosophical worldview whereby everything can be explained in terms of natural causes. Physical matter is the only reality. Naturalism, by definition, excludes any supernatural agent or activity.

Today’s science that we read in our textbooks at school is equated with naturalism. Only materialistic notions can be entertained. This assumption can be problematic as it uses what is called **Circular Reasoning or Circular Logic** – meaning your reasoning literally goes in circles and can lead to nothing aside from itself.



Circular reasoning is a form of chicken-and-egg argument, where what needs to be proven is what one starts with. It is not a formal logical fallacy since all the statements may well be true and not contradict one another; but it is a fallacy in the sense that the statements cannot be used as a proof of one another.

<https://enviropaul.wordpress.com/2016/04/10/logical-fallacies-and-the-environment-circular-reasoning/>

If we are to proceed with the naturalist approach, as many distinguished scientists do, there are three significant hurdles to cross when it comes to explaining our existence.

- 1) **The Origin of the Universe** – The universe began at some point in time. This has been accepted with certainty by scientists in astronomy and physics. If the universe has not existed eternally then there are only two possibilities for the origin of the universe: either someone made it, or it made itself. Naturalists must identify a natural mechanism by which the universe could have spontaneously created and developed itself without an intelligent designer.
- 2) **The Origin of Basic Life** – Life only comes from life. So how do naturalists fit this into their worldview? They MUST find a way in which life could evolve from inorganic matter. But even the simplest of organisms are incredibly complex. Could this level of complexity really happen naturally by the random chance of chemical interactions over time?
- 3) **The Evolution of Life** – If naturalists can scientifically demonstrate how basic organisms could be produced by random chemical processes, they must explain how creatures such as human beings (who love, hope, fear and have self-

awareness) could possibly have evolved from such single-cell organisms.

The reality is that these challenges have still not been sufficiently answered by naturalists without significant leaps of faith on their part. If science really is the pursuit of truth, the danger for a naturalist is that whenever science cannot adequately explain something, they tend to plug the gap with a blind faith in naturalism. The statement *“science has no naturalistic explanation at the moment, but one day scientists will find one”* is frequently heard. Remember in Week 2 we discussed how at some point, every decision and belief (even scientific belief) does require faith.

3.3 VIEW TWO: CREATION AND EVOLUTION ARE RECONCILABLE

“If creation is through Christ, evolution is what you would expect”

NT Wright – New Testament scholar

Many highly esteemed theologians believe in evolution, while many evolutionary scientists have no problem believing in creation or intelligent design.

Question for the group:

1. How would you reconcile creation and evolution? Or do they not reconcile?

Evolution does pose legitimate difficulties and concerns for Christians who want to reconcile the two. These difficulties cannot be avoided by the Christian:

- 1) Evolution challenges the authority of the Word of God (the Bible)
- 2) It challenges the historical existence of Adam and Eve – was there really a historical fall?
- 3) Evolution contradicts the doctrine of sin through Adam and salvation through Jesus.

Considering allegory:

One of the common ways to reconcile evolution and creation without challenging the authority of scripture, is to treat Genesis as an *allegory*. In other words, Genesis is a story that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning; its characters and events are used to represent a broader story.

The problem with 'de-literalizing' Genesis 3 (Adam and Eve), is that it opens the door to allegorizing virtually anything and everything we find in scripture. If we do that with Genesis 3, we need to be consistently comfortable to allegorise anything else in the Bible.

Question for consideration: What other events in the Bible could be compromised if you open the door to allegory?

The problem with compromise:

According to Genesis, death entered the world with the sin of Adam. This means there was no death for creation prior to Adam's sin. However according to the compromise of evolution and Christianity this is not the case. For evolution, death must be an essential part

of the world prior to Adam's sin. Death is one of the mechanisms necessary for the evolution of all species.

Genesis is very clear: God created animals, birds, and plants fully-formed and unique as "created kinds." While there is definitely potential for genetic change within kinds, created kinds themselves are distinct (a bird is a bird and a snake is a snake, for example).

So where does that leave us? Well we must consider if we are treating Genesis as allegory or literal fact.

The Biblical authors don't treat Genesis 3 allegorically. The Apostle Paul says: *"if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile..."*. It is difficult for us to find a legitimate reason for Jesus to die on the cross if the fall of mankind is only a story. Within Genesis, the Bible authors seem to treat all events as literal facts: Abraham, Adam and Eve, and even the flood. They are in the same book, in the same manner.

And while there are poetry books found in the Bible, Genesis does not fit the style or form of poetry seen in Proverbs, Psalms etc. Genesis 3 is quoted as fact by Paul in the New Testament and Jesus himself often refers back to Genesis in terms of actual people and events that literally transpired. Ultimately there is no Biblical basis for taking these chapters as any kind of non-literal, figurative genre of literature.

Where do we find examples of Biblical authors treating Genesis literally?

- 1 Corinthians 15:17: Paul states that if Christ was not raised then our faith is pointless and futile.
- Romans 5:12, 14 & 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, 45-47: Paul holds one man (Adam) responsible for the insertion of sin and death.

- Matthew 19:3-6: Jesus referred to the literal instantaneous creation of Adam and Eve as historical fact.
- 1 Chronicles 1:8: Gives a long series of genealogies all the way back to Adam.
- Isaiah 54:9: Claims the flood as historical fact in order to explain a future promise.



3.4 VIEW THREE: IS EVOLUTION VALID?

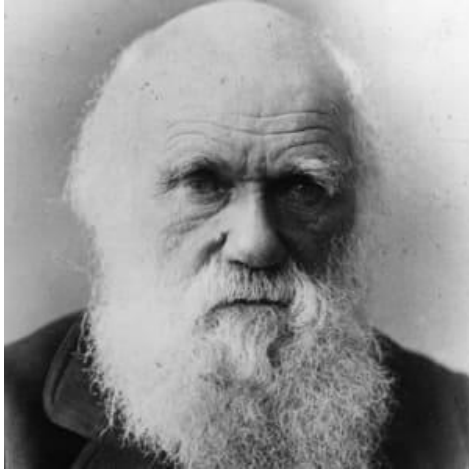
If reconciling Christianity with evolution inevitably leads to the undermining of essential Christian doctrines, then where does that leave us? Because evolution is a scientific fact isn't it? How then could the Bible possibly be true?

Question for the group:

1. The scientific consensus is that evolution is indisputable. True or false?

Watch this video:

Video 1: Doubting the Darwinian Theory



A Scientific Dissent from Darwinism

"We are sceptical of claims for the ability of random mutation and natural selection to account for the complexity of life. Careful examination of the evidence for Darwinian theory should be encouraged."

"There is scientific dissent from Darwinism. It deserves to be heard."

<https://dissentfromdarwin.org>

This is the signed statement of over 1000 doctoral level scientists worldwide, publicly expressing their scepticism about the contemporary theory of Darwinian evolution. The statement was drafted by the *Discovery Institute* in 2001 in response to widespread claims that no credible scientists existed who doubted Neo-Darwinism. Yet mainstream science has asserted that Darwin's theory of evolution fully explains the complexity of living things. The public has been assured that all known evidence supports Darwinism and that virtually every scientist in the world believes the theory to be true. Now science is not a democracy. It is not dependent on majority; it is dependent on validity.

"Because no scientist can show how Darwin's mechanism can produce the complexity of life, every scientist should be sceptical," said biologist Douglas Axe, director of Biologic Institute. *"The fact that most won't admit to this, exposes the unhealthy effect of peer pressure on scientific discourse."*

Question for the group:

1. Discuss what the text means by 'science is not a democracy' – why/why not?

Watch this video:

Video 2: Does Modern Research Support Evolution?

There are several scientific evidences that pose major challenges to evolution yet are no threat at all to the Genesis account of creation. There are many but we will touch briefly on a few here in this study and strongly recommend that you take this investigation further than what we can cover here. (See recommended reading material at the end of this booklet).

Two major evidences are:

- 1) Random chance and the origin of life
- 2) The fossil record

Random chance, self-ordering and the origin of life:**Watch this video:**

Video 3: What is the Probability of Life?

Questions for the group:

1. Are you prepared to follow the truth, wherever it might lead you?

2. Which assumption seems to require the biggest leap of faith - Random chance resulted in the origin of life OR an intelligent designer was involved in creating the first life?

The fossil record

We have been told that the fossil record provided Darwin with overwhelming evidence for his theory of evolution – that all organisms are modified descendants of a common ancestor that lived in the distant past. But this is not the case and the fossil record has three major inconsistencies with evolution:

- 1) The Presence of the Gaps (the missing fossils)** – Why are the (expected) countless millions of transitional fossils missing?
- 2) The Cambrian Explosion** – A period of history where an enormous variety of animals appear suddenly, ‘out of the blue’. Often referred to as the ‘big bang’ of evolution, because dozens of widely different organisms from all the major life groups are said to have arisen over a very short period of time – too short for evolution.
- 3) Living Fossils** – Within the same timeframe given to us by evolutionists, some species have existed unchanged and still exist today, while others have evolved drastically. For example, the salamander. There is disagreement in the scientific community as to how some creatures may evolve while others just don’t.

3.5 ONE FINAL NOTE: TWO BAD EXAMPLES OF EVOLUTION

The last thing we need to clarify in this study is that there are two common misconceptions that are a bad argument to use if arguing for evolution, and they can be consistent with Christianity:

Speciation = evolution.

Natural selection = evolution, therefore evolution is true.

Speciation is the process by which populations evolve to become distinct species. It is often (mistakenly) claimed that creationists believe in unchanging/fixed species; that all the species we have today were created originally by God and have remained unchanged since. But creationist biologists *do not* hold to the view that God created the species exactly as they are found today. Rather, God created different *kinds* of plants and animals (Genesis 1:11–12, 1:21 and 1:24–25) and designed these with the capacity to change and adapt to different environments. The extent of this change, however, is limited: daffodils may turn into other species of daffodil, or horses into other species of horse; but daffodils will never turn into apple trees (a different kind of plant) or horses into giraffes (a different kind of animal).

Natural Selection is not proof of evolution but is rather why certain genes benefit creatures more in certain environments. This explains the death of individuals not adapted to an environment and the survival of those that are suited. Natural selection can only sort *existing* genetic information. By definition, it is a selective process (selecting from already existing information), **not a creative process.**

This is compatible with creationism. But it does not explain the origin of life. Even though it is intimately knit with evolution, they are not the same thing. Natural selection explains the *survival of the fittest* not the *arrival of the fittest*.

3.6 CONCLUSION

Many people try reconciling evolution with a creator, but the Christian is not afforded that luxury. The Bible claims creation as a literal fact and runs against the core claims of evolution. Scientifically speaking, evolution has many flaws. Scientifically speaking, there is much more that argues for a creator.

Ultimately, this study is only the tip of the iceberg of centuries worth of philosophical and scientific debate on our origins. So, we encourage everyone to investigate the evidence for themselves. Remember, we must have grace for each other. The ultimate answer to “where do we come from?” has radical (and oftentimes terrifying) implications for us all and our purpose in this vast universe. So, it is impossible for any of us to really look at this objectively. But if the truth really is what is most important to us, we will put aside our pride and follow the evidence – because as Christians we do not follow blind faith.

“I am the way and the truth and the life”

Jesus – John 14:6

How Can a Good God Allow Suffering?

Week 4

This week's aims are to:

- 1. Explore arguments for how a good God can allow suffering and evil*
- 2. Understand where suffering came from*
- 3. Explore how we can deal with suffering*

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Watch this video:

Video 1: Stephen Fry on God | The Meaning of Life

The problem of suffering goes like this:

If God is all good, all knowing and all powerful why does suffering (evil) exist in the world? It seems to contradict the character of God as claimed in the Christian Bible.

- 1) If God is good, He has the desire to end evil and suffering.
- 2) If God is all powerful, He has the ability to stop suffering and evil.
- 3) If God is all knowing, He has the ability to know suffering is happening or will happen.

SO, WHY DOESN'T HE DO SOMETHING?

This is a problem that has kept many people from believing in the existence of a good God, sometimes causing people to stop believing entirely. The question we as believers must answer for

ourselves and others, is how we can see evil/suffering in the world and still believe in the God of the Bible?



4.2 THE RESPONSE OF SOME BELIEVERS

Some believers respond by letting go of one of the attributes of God. They say that, “maybe God isn’t all good, maybe He is just sometimes good” or let go of the attributes of His power or omniscience. These beliefs run in contradiction to what the Bible says about God, so we can find them to be unsatisfactory as we explore this question.

The Bible claims all three attributes of God: All knowing, all powerful and all good.

Psalm 139:4

“Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O LORD, You know it all.”

The Bible claims **God knows everything.**

Isaiah 44:24

“Thus, says the LORD, your Redeemer, who formed you from the womb: “I am the Lord, who made all things, who alone

stretched out the heavens who spread out the earth by myself."

The Bible claims **God is all powerful**.

Psalm 145:9

"The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made"

The Bible claims **God is good**.

Therefore, the believer must still answer the following question: How can God be good when the world seems to be full of evil and suffering? How do we deal with this?

Questions for the group:

1. Do you think God is all good, all knowing and all powerful?
2. Then how do you answer the conundrum that there is evil and suffering prevalent in the world?

Firstly, before we get into the philosophical and theological "apologia" about the existence of suffering, we need to realise that most people who ask this question are not wanting a philosophically reasoned argument. They are asking because their heart aches over the pain and brokenness that is rampant in this world, over suffering that they have personally endured. This is what we see deep down in Stephen Fry's response in Video 1 – his own anger at evil/suffering. We must always remember this amidst our well-intended attempts to deal with these topics.

Nevertheless, we do need to explore the problem of evil/suffering in a reasoned way – despite how we feel. Suffering is very real. Our

anger over it is very real. So we need to understand suffering better: where does it come from? What worldview best explains why the world is the way it is. Where should we direct our anger? At God? Or at suffering itself?

4.3 WRESTLING WITH EVIL AND SUFFERING

Before we seek to answer these questions, we must define what evil is. Evil comes in two forms; natural and moral.

Natural evil



Natural evil/suffering seemingly have no rhyme or reason. Earthquakes appear and destroy, leaving thousands of dead. As quickly as they come, they go, leaving no answer for those left behind.

Moral evil



Of the two, moral evil seems easier to understand: it is the product of free will. A human has the capacity to choose how to act. In Psalm 1 the Bible says that choice, in essence, is between wickedness and righteousness. When people use their capacity for choice to do what is wrong, that choice perpetuates evil and suffering.

But where does this “evil” come from? Why is there suffering? Is there even such a thing as good and evil?

4.4 ANSWERING THE PROBLEM AS A BELIEVER

The Bible explains how suffering and brokenness entered the world and God’s plan to redeem us from that situation. This is called “The Fall of Mankind.”

What exactly happened in the fall?

Watch this video:

Video 2 - The Severity of the Consequences for Adam’s Sin

*“For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together
in the pains of childbirth until now”*

Romans 8:22

The word ‘together’ in this verse implies that both humans and creation are suffering a corruption and pain. In this, all suffering (whether illness, natural disaster or moral) is the groaning and painful result of the fall of mankind. The Bible also claims that this suffering will end, in the same way that childbirth is acutely painful, yet temporary.

So how could God solve this problem?

He would have to take that capacity for choice, however big or small, away from every human. Effectively creating us as robots that could do nothing other than what we are told to or designed for.

The loss of freedom might sound appealing when it ends murders and rapes, but it would also take away love, joy and spontaneity.

Instead, He comes to us Himself, takes on our flesh and swallows up our pain. He conquers death by taking the consequences of our sin on Himself. Thus, He offers us a free choice: turn back to Him and ultimately be saved and redeemed from this broken world, or live life on our own terms and take on the natural consequences for that. But the choice is always ours.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son”

John 3:16

Jesus came to redeem us. He came to redeem even the cosmos, which is suffering from the penalty of human sin.

4.5 ANSWERING THE PROBLEM AS A SCEPTIC

“Nature is not cruel, only pitilessly indifferent. This is one of the hardest lessons for humans to learn. We cannot admit that things might be neither good nor evil, neither cruel nor kind, but simply callous-indifferent to all suffering, lacking all purpose.”

Richard Dawkins

“My argument against God was that the universe seemed so cruel and unjust. But how had I got this idea of just and unjust? A man does not call a line crooked unless he has some idea of a straight line. What was I comparing this universe with when I called it unjust?”

CS Lewis – Mere Christianity

The very idea of justice points to a category of thought that implies an ultimate form of justice.

Without an objective justice existing, actions are neither good nor bad. Everything is an opinion on an indifferent existence, formed spontaneously and by random chance. Yet how is it that we cry out against the injustice of the world? None of us can look at suffering and death and see only natural selection. Despite our intellectual beliefs, our DNA seems to rebel at the very thought of suffering. Why?

Question for the group:

1. Who do you think has the greater problem with suffering, and why? (Theists or atheists?)

Dr John Lennox argues that the problem of suffering is a greater problem for the atheist than the Christian.

Watch this video:

Video 3: Atheism Can't Solve the Problem of Suffering

Questions for the group:

1. How can the life of Jesus be a hope for those suffering?
2. How best can we talk to people who are suffering? How can we encourage them, rather than avoid the issue?

The Big Question:

Can you reconcile a world of suffering with the existence of God?

4.6 CONCLUSION

The problem of suffering in the context of atheism is a non-problem. Things are simply as they are, neither good nor bad. Within the context of theism, suffering is a problem because of the combination of a bad world and a supposedly good God. According to the Bible, this suffering was not caused by God but by people.

Despite this, Jesus stepped out of prosperity and into our suffering. He suffered pain and ridicule for every injustice ever done. Jesus saw pain and alleviated it through healing and love. And even today Jesus walks with those who suffer and provides healing for those in pain. However bad your pain might feel; Jesus feels that pain all the more. More than you do. If suffering is a problem to you, the only solution is Jesus.

As a final act, listen to the audio clip by Tim Keller on suffering.

Are the Gospels Authentic?

Week 5

This week's aims are to:

- 1. Examine the biblical and independent evidence for the existence of Jesus as a person in history*
- 2. Determine if the Gospels we have now have been preserved with integrity*
- 3. Investigate the apparent inconsistencies in the Gospels*
- 4. Decide if the events recorded in the Gospels really happened.*

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Some sceptics question the validity of the canonical Gospels. As part of their objections, some even question the very existence of Jesus of Nazareth. Another objection is that the four Gospel accounts in the Bible contradict one another, and in so doing provide room to doubt that any of it is valid. Or, they doubt that Jesus claimed to be what the Gospels made him out to be. So, **The Big Question is:** How can we know by way of evidence that the four Gospels are true?

5.2 DID THE HISTORICAL JESUS EXIST?

Part 1: The Case from the Bible

One of the key factors in determining historical validity is the dating and assembling of information. The claim is that the historical life of

Jesus was captured in original manuscripts and preserved for us today in the Bible.

Questions for the group:

1. How do you think we got the Bible?
2. How do you believe it was preserved?
3. Do you think the document maintained its integrity?

These accounts of Jesus would be considered highly valid, because they are given by eyewitnesses, shortly after the life of Jesus. These eyewitness accounts were circulated throughout Judah, Israel and the Roman Empire when other eyewitnesses were still alive. It would have been easy for people to say, “I was there and that is false”, but that never happened. Rather, the existence of Jesus was accepted, his crucifixion was also accepted and even the idea that he did great signs (miracles) was accepted.

To determine if we can trust that the Bible text is accurate, watch the following video:

Video 1: No originals? The Bible is a Copy

Watch from 00:00 – 1:02 and 2:19 – 8:45

Questions for the group:

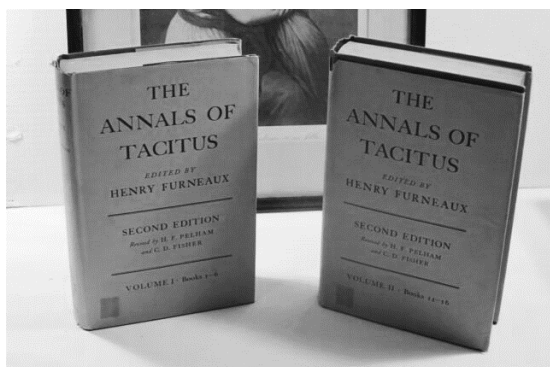
1. What do you think of the experiment Matt did with the Robert Frost poem?
2. Did your view change at all concerning the integrity of the Bible text?

Author	Work	Date Written	Earliest MSS	Time Gap	Manuscripts
Homer	Iliad	800 BC	c. 400 BC	400	1,757
Herodotus	History	480-425 BC	10th C	1,350	109
Sophocles	Plays	496-406 BC	3rd C BC	100-200	193
Plato	Tetralogies	400 BC	895	1,300	210
Caesar	Gallic Wars	100-44 BC	9th C	950	251
Livy	History of Rome	59 BC-AD 17	Early 5th C	400	150
Tacitus	Annals	AD 100	1st half: 850, 2nd: 1050 (AD 1100)	750-950	2+31 15th C
Pliny, the Elder	Natural History	AD 49-79	5th C fragment: 1; Rem. 14-15th C	400 (750)	200
Thucydides	History	460-400 BC	3rd C BC (AD 900)	200 (1,350)	96
Demosthenes	Speeches	300 BC	Some fragments from 1 BC. (AD 1100)	1,100+ (1400)	340
New Testament		AD 50-100	AD 130 (or less)	40	5,795

Part 2: The Case from Outside the Bible

Agreement between friend and foe: If both a 'friend' and an 'enemy' of a historical figure agree that an event happened, this increases the probability of the event's historicity. Someone who has no motive to testify to a truth that is inconvenient for them is more reliable than a biased testimony that benefits the testifier.

In the case of Christ, the early Christians lived under Roman rule, and the Romans crucified Jesus as capital punishment for treason. The early church was a marginalized group because they were perceived as a threat to imperial rule by Rome. If Roman testimony points to the historical Jesus it is highly reliable, considering that the Romans' interest was to squash out the Christian belief. Notice from the following quote the language that confirms the hatred of Christians, while simultaneously verifying the inconvenient truth of Christianity:



“Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilate, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judaea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their centre and become popular.”

Annals of Tacitus – Roman Senator and historian. Written circa 116 AD, 85 years after the crucifixion

Question for the group:

1. What historical claims are made in this text?



“I interrogated these as to whether they were Christians; those who confessed I interrogated a second and a third time, threatening them with punishment; those who persisted I ordered executed. For I had no doubt that, whatever the nature of their creed, stubbornness and inflexible obstinacy surely deserve to be punished. There were others possessed of the same folly; but because they were Roman citizens, I signed an order for them to be transferred to Rome.”.

The report of **Pliny the Younger** – Roman governor of Bithynia et Pontus (now in modern Turkey). Circa 112AD, 82 years after the crucifixion.

Question for the group:

1. What can we infer historically about Jesus followers from this report?

“But the younger Ananus who, as we said, received the high priesthood, was of a bold disposition and exceptionally daring; he followed the party of the Sadducees, who are severe in judgment above all the Jews...so he assembled a council of judges, and brought before it the brother of Jesus the so-called Christ, whose

name was James, together with some others, and having accused them as lawbreakers, he delivered them over to be stoned.”

Josephus Flavius – Jewish general and historian. Circa 93AD, 63 years after the crucifixion.

Josephus is another example of an independent source who was not a Christian but a Jew, who mentions Jesus only in passing when chronicling the downfall of Jerusalem in 70AD. Again, he had no interest in promoting a person who (in his mind) blasphemed the Jewish faith.

5.3 WHAT ABOUT THE GOSPEL CONTRADICTIONS?

One of the concerns regarding the validity of the Gospels is the fact that the accounts within the four Gospels differ – apparently contradicting with each other. Does this fact make the Gospels invalid as a historical source?

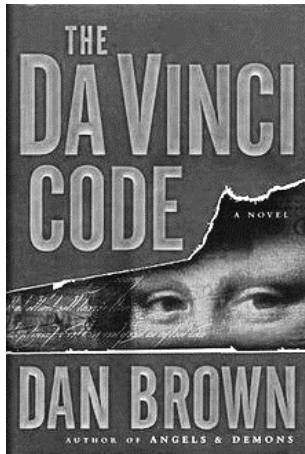
Watch this video:

Video 2: Why the Differences in the Gospel Accounts Make Them MORE Reliable

Question for the group:

1. Do these sources add validity to the claims of the Bible for you? Why?

But what about the gnostic gospels?

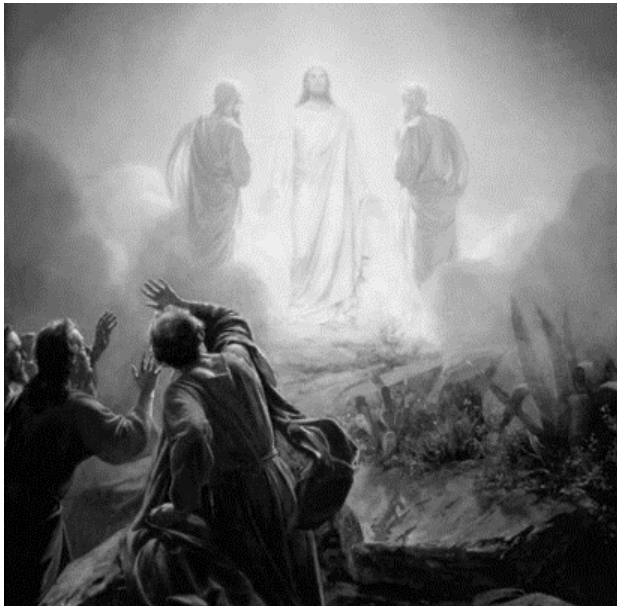


Made popular by books such as *The Da Vinci Code*, much excitement has been generated by the discovery of the treatises unearthed in upper Egypt, claiming to contain “lost books of the Bible” — of historical significance equal to or greater than the New Testament books. However, the importance of these documents has been a bit overestimated. We are talking about the documents named “The Gospel of Thomas”, “The Gospel of Philip” and “The Gospel of Mary” and so forth. These are not so much inconsistent with the four Gospels we have in our Bible, as they are completely irreconcilable in their content. But are they authentic?

Historicity (historical authenticity) is related to trustworthiness. If a document is historically reliable, there is good reason to accept it as trustworthy and objectively true. Scholars have some serious concerns with the trustworthiness of the gnostic gospels which they do not have with canonical Gospels. Here are some listed briefly:

- 1) The gnostic gospels have not been well preserved. There are not enough copies to verify their contents as true (remember what we watched in the first video).
- 2) The gnostic gospels are not dated anywhere near the lifetime of Jesus or his followers. They cannot be written by the authors they claim.
- 3) Some of them claim to only be commentary on the existing Gospels (such as Matthew) and do not contribute new historical material at all.

5.4 DID JESUS REALLY CLAIM TO BE GOD?



“During his lifetime, Jesus himself didn't call himself God and didn't consider himself God... none of his disciples had any inkling at all that he was God.”

Bart Ehrman – Historian and New Testament scholar

Was Jesus a man who became God or God who became man? Or was He neither? Many scholars who study the New Testament say that Jesus never claimed to be God, that this was attributed to Him in later writings by Paul and other followers. Let us take a look at scripture:

*The Jews said to him [Jesus], “Now we know that you have a demon! Abraham died, as did the prophets, yet you say, ‘If anyone keeps my word, he will never taste death.’ Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets died! Who do you make yourself out to be?” Jesus answered... “Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad.” So the Jews said to him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?” Jesus said to them, **“Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I Am.”** So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.*

John 8:48-59

Question for the group:

1. What was Jesus claiming here?

“I AM” (YHWH) is the name God gave Himself in Exodus 3:13-14 when introducing Himself to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” Jesus was declaring to them in no uncertain terms that He is God. Not only is He claiming God’s name and title, but He is claiming pre-existence – to have existed eternally, before even Abraham. This is the height of blasphemy and is what enraged them enough to try kill him.

5.5 HOW DO WE KNOW THE RESURRECTION IS TRUE?

We have looked at the evidence for the Gospels being accurately preserved, which would be sound proof that Jesus did in fact exist. But how do we know that the fantastical events they record (however well preserved) are more than just lies, myths or stories written by Jesus’ followers with an agenda of their own?

“And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins.”

1 Corinthians 15:17

Questions for the group:

1. Would you stake your life on the claim Jesus’ resurrection?
2. What would you endure/sacrifice for your belief in Jesus?

Everything hinges on Christ's resurrection. History tells us He was crucified. Why should we believe in anything more than that? Here are some reasons:

The eyewitness accounts:

As already briefly explained in the previous video, investigators look for certain earmarks when evaluating the credibility of an eyewitness to an event. The list of eyewitnesses to Jesus' resurrection appearances which is quoted by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:5-7 documents these appearances being witnessed by Peter (Cephas), the Twelve, the 500 brethren, and James.

The testimonies in the Gospels provide multiple, independent attestations of these appearances. This is an important indicator of historicity. And these claims of sightings were recorded and publicised during the lifetimes of these witnesses. The crucifixion of Jesus was a highly controversial and public event during a politically turbulent time. Making claims that Jesus had been resurrected was a dangerous thing to do and because many of the eyewitnesses were named, fact checking would have been a very easy thing to do.

Another interesting point to note, is that the Gospels list a group of women as being the first to discover the empty tomb. This is a very unlikely thing to do if you are fabricating a story. According to Josephus, the testimony of women was regarded as so worthless that it could not even be admitted into a Jewish court of law. Any later legendary story would certainly have made male disciples discover the empty tomb.



They died for their beliefs:

Simply put, Jesus' disciples died for following Him. We have already seen in the writing of Pliny the Younger how unreasonably stubborn and unwavering the early Christian church was in its faith. No matter the cost, they did not deny Christ's resurrection. Now we understand how people can die for a cause. We see that in the numerous wars fought and the prevalence of suicide bombers in today's world, where people die for their god. So yes, of course, this could have been the same in the early church. But it was the intimate group of Jesus' disciples, family and followers that died for Him, including the Gospel writers themselves. People that (before the crucifixion) did not believe Jesus was who He claimed to be. This is what really lands the biggest punch. If you know what you are spreading is a lie, that you had stolen the body or fabricated a story, why would you die for it? These people gained nothing from lying. No fame, no fortune, no admiration or respect. They died horrendous deaths in poverty, rejected as criminals.

5.5 CONCLUSION

In this week's study, we have provided compelling evidence to conclude that the Gospels are reliable, well-preserved accounts of Jesus' life, that are consistent with what we view as credible eyewitness accounts. We have established that within the Gospels, Jesus did in fact claim to be God. So that leaves us with two alternatives: either Jesus was a narcissistic madman, or He was telling the truth. Do you think the Gospel accounts are reliable? Do you believe in the claim that He is God and was resurrected? Would you die for this claim?

Is All Religion the Same?

Week 6

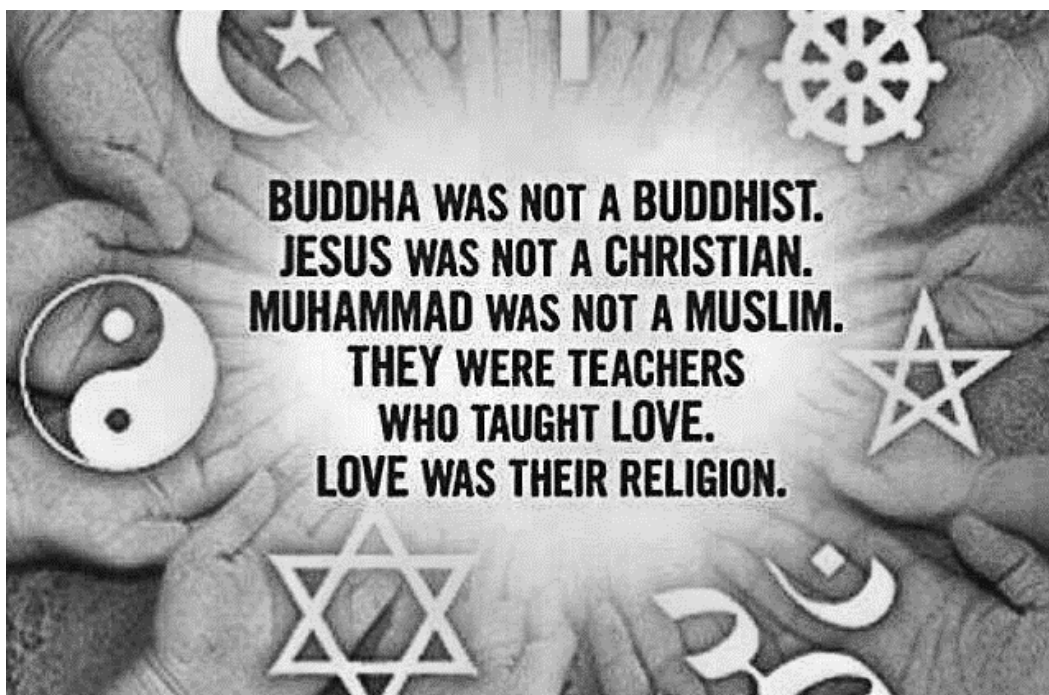
This week's aims are to:

- 1. Understand the role Jesus (the centre of the Christian faith) plays in other major religions*
- 2. Understand Exclusivity vs Inclusivity*
- 3. Explore the fundamentals of the major world religions*
- 4. Make a case that Christianity is unique*

6.1 INTRODUCTION

"All religions try to benefit people, with the same basic message of the need for love and compassion, for justice and honesty, for contentment."

Dalai Lama



Question for the group:

1. Do you believe that all religions are the same?
2. Do you agree with the statement of the previous image?
Why/why not?

Now the centre of the Christian faith is Jesus. Let us look at what some of the other major faiths of the world have to say about Him.

6.2 THE DIFFERENT IDENTITIES OF JESUS

The Islamic View of Jesus

- 1) Islam views Jesus exclusively as a man, not God. Claiming Jesus is God is the highest blasphemy – Muslims say that Jesus Himself never claimed to be God.
- 2) In Islam, Jesus is a prophet whose teachings were perfected by Mohammed and the Quran.
- 3) Islam doesn't agree that Jesus was raised from the dead, or that He was even crucified.

The Judaic View of Jesus

- 1) There is no official Jewish view of Jesus but in one respect Jews are agreed in their attitude towards Jesus – He is not the Lord Christ, God Incarnate, Son of God the Father.
- 2) While the Jews do believe in the coming Messiah, they do not see Jesus as that Messiah, or the fulfilment of the promises given by God in the Old Testament.
- 3) Jesus was a man, a Jew and a teacher (rabbi) that was crucified, possibly for claiming that He was the Messiah. He

was not the first false claimer of that title. Judaism does not believe Jesus was resurrected.

The Hindu View of Jesus

- 1) Hinduism views Jesus as a Holy man and a wise teacher.
- 2) He might have been a god, but only one of many.
- 3) Many Hindus see Jesus as a symbol of what humans can attain, which to them is more important than Him being a true historical person.

The Buddhist view of Jesus

- 1) The Buddhist view of Jesus is complex and not always consistent amongst the Buddhist community.
- 2) Jesus was an enlightened man who lived a self-sacrificial life and had compassion on those who were in spiritual need. This kind of compassion is seen by Buddhists to be the key to happiness and enlightenment.
- 3) Jesus was a wise teacher, especially in light of His teachings on love and compassion.

The Christian View of Jesus

The Christian view of Jesus can be summed up by the following:

- 1) He is the Son of God and the second person of the Trinity.
- 2) He claimed to be God and is God.
- 3) He has existed eternally and is the creator of all.
- 4) He is God incarnate, who gave up His glory in heaven to be born a man through a virgin.
- 5) As a man, He was completely without sin, and died an innocent death on the cross as payment for the sins of mankind.

- 6) He was resurrected from the grave after three days, overcoming death and proving his Godhood.
- 7) He is the only way to God and eternal life.

“You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come up with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.”

CS Lewis – Author and apologist

If these religions cannot agree on who Jesus is then how can these religions all be right?

6.3 THE ARROGANCE OF EXCLUSIVITY

Questions for the group:

1. Do you believe your beliefs are exclusive? And that by implication other beliefs are incorrect?
2. Would you say your belief is arrogant?

The Bible says there is salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone.

Watch this video:

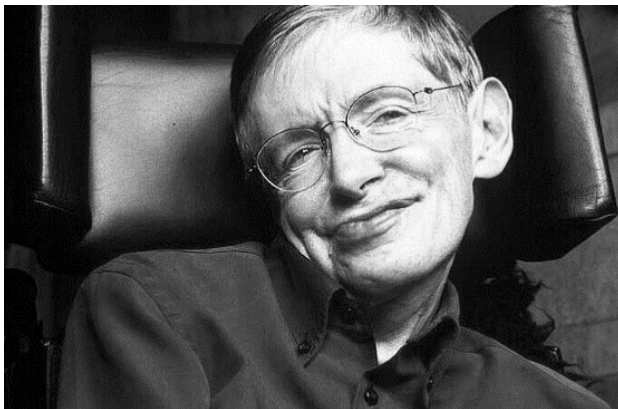
Video 1 – Is the Exclusivity of Christianity Arrogant and Cruel

Questions for the group:

1. Have you ever been accused of being narrow-minded in your views?
2. Think about your day-to-day life. How would you go about being inclusive about your faith to those around you, in your workplace, family etc?

6.4 SALVATION, ETERNITY AND THE MEANING OF LIFE

The most crucial aspects of the various religions are what they say about the state of the world, our purpose in it and the afterlife. What we believe about God, our origins, purpose and death will dramatically affect how we live on earth.



"I regard the brain as a computer which will stop working when its components fail. There is no heaven or afterlife for broken down computers; that is a fairy story for people afraid of the dark."

Stephen Hawking

Question for the group:

1. If you imagine for a moment that you are an atheist, that everything that exists is by random chance and that after

death we simply cease to exist, how would that affect the way you live your time here on earth?

Every belief system, from Buddhism to Atheism has different beliefs on why we are here and what happens when we die. So not only does this affect how we live our lives, it has potentially eternal consequences.

Let's look at the claims of the major religions.

Islam

- 1) The **5 Pillars of Islam** are the core of Muslim faith, salvation and purpose.
 - a. The Profession of Faith – The Shahada: “There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet.”
 - b. Daily Prayers – Salat: Muslims are expected to pray five times a day.
 - c. Alms-Giving – Zakat.
 - d. Fasting during the Holy Month of Ramadan – Saum.
 - e. Pilgrimage to Mecca – Hajj: At least once in their lifetime, if possible.
- 2) Like a scale with good deeds balanced against bad deeds, the Quran teaches that salvation is based on purification by good deeds (Quran 7:6–9). Yet the Quran also teaches that Allah has predetermined every person's destiny, and one's righteous acts may or may not affect Allah's decision (Quran 57:22).
- 3) The purpose for man's creation is to worship the Creator by doing good and refraining from evil.

Judaism

- 1) Judaism believes in only one Creator (God) who has existed eternally and that He alone has made, does make, and will make all things.
- 2) God is the only one it is proper to pray to and humans were created to serve and worship God, as laid out in the Jewish Law Books (The Torah) that were given to the prophet Moses directly from God.
- 3) In Jewish belief, God rewards those who observe His commandments, and punishes those who transgress His commandments.
- 4) Salvation for the Jews will happen when their promised Jewish King (Messiah) will come and gather all the Jews to him. He will rule, and in his days, there will be peace in the whole world and God will resurrect the dead back to life.

Hinduism

The meaning (purpose) of life is four-fold:

- 1) To achieve Dharma: To act virtuously and righteously. Hindus believe that they are born in debt to the gods and other human beings, dharma calls for Hindus to repay this debt. Debt to the gods for their blessings, debt to parents and teachers, debt to guests, debt to other human beings, and debt to all other living beings.
- 2) To achieve Artha: The pursuit of wealth and prosperity in one's life, within the bounds of dharma.
- 3) To achieve Kama: Obtaining enjoyment from life.
- 4) To achieve Moksha: Enlightenment. This may take an individual just one lifetime to accomplish (rarely) or it may take several. However, it is the most important meaning of life and offers such rewards as liberation from reincarnation, self-realization, enlightenment, or unity with God.

Buddhism

- 1) Buddhism conveys the philosophy of self-perfection – its essentials are contained in the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path.
- 2) The Four Noble Truths affirm that
 - a. Life is full of suffering (dukkha);
 - b. Suffering is caused by craving (samudaya);
 - c. Suffering will cease only when craving ceases (nirodha); and
 - d. This can be achieved by following the Noble Eightfold Path.
- 3) Generally, the path consists of right views, right aspiration, right speech, right conduct, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right contemplation.
- 4) Buddhists do not believe in a divine being; therefore, they have no concept of salvation and atonement for wrongdoing.
- 5) Buddhism claims there is no beginning and end.
- 6) There are no directives or absolutes to the path of Nirvana.

Question for the group:

1. Are there any commonalities that run through all of these religions?

Christianity: What Makes Christianity Unique from all Other Religions?

Watch this video:

Video 2 - What Makes Christianity Unique

Questions for the group:

1. Do you agree with the statement that there are only two religions in the world?
2. Do you believe that Christianity is not a religion but a relationship?
3. Why do we need a saviour?

6.5 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we have examined the key claims made by Christianity and ultimately, we must realise that it is completely unique. Nothing we do (however hard we might try) can bridge the gap between us and a perfect, holy and all-powerful God. Christianity is not a religion, but a relationship. A relationship with God Himself who took on our flesh so that He could be with us and we with Him. He reconciled us to Himself and paid the price, because our works will never be enough. He walked as an actual, historical figure in this world and rose from the dead so that we may know that He is Lord.

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER READING

GENERAL

C.S Lewis (**Book**). *Mere Christianity*.

John Lennox (**Website**). <https://www.johnlennox.org/resources>

Josh McDowell (**Book**). *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*

One Minute Apologist (**Video**).

<https://www.youtube.com/user/oneminuteapologist>

Ravi Zacharias (**Book**). *The End of Reason*.

Reasonable Faith (**Website**). <https://www.reasonablefaith.org/>

Timothy Keller (**Book**). *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Scepticism*.

WEEK 1: Questioning_____?

RZIM Foundations of Apologetics **(Video)**.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3SmdHRImZs&t=2505s>

WEEK 2: Can Faith & Science Reconcile?

Creation Ministries International **(Website)**. <https://creation.com/>

Discovery Institute **(Website)**.

<https://discoveryinstitute.org/category/science-faith/>

John Lennox **(Book)**. *Can Science explain everything?*

Timothy Keller's White Paper **(Website)**.

http://evidenceforchristianity.org/images/stories/keller_white_paper.pdf

WEEK 3: Has Evolution Disproved Genesis?

Answers in Genesis **(Website)**. <https://answersingenesis.org/>

Creation Ministries International **(Website)**. <https://creation.com/>

Dissent from Darwinism **(Website)**. <https://dissentfromdarwin.org>

John Lennox **(Book)**. *Has science buried God?*

Lee Strobel **(Book)**. *The Case for a Creator*

Michael Denton **(Book)**. *Evolution: Still a Theory in Crisis*

WEEK 4: How Can a Good God Allow Suffering?

See Week 1: Timothy Keller **(Book)**. *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Scepticism*.

WEEK 5: Are the Gospels Authentic?

Cold-case Christianity **(Website)**. <https://coldcasechristianity.com/>

Lee Strobel **(Book)**. *The Case for Christ*

WEEK 6: Is All Religion the Same?

Dean Halverson **(Book)**. *The Compact Guide To World Religions*

Nabeel Qureshi **(Book)**. *Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus*

Nabeel Qureshi **(Book)**. *No God but One: Allah or Jesus?*