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Christian Beliefs Explained and Defended in Plain Language

Reasonable Answers & Hope Book - 3

By Robert Kiser



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PS. I realize I am not good with proper grammar permission will probably be given in these cases just ask! Robert@ReasonableAnswers.org

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A Defense for Miracles

"If we admit God, must we admit miracle? Indeed, indeed, you have no security against it. That is the bargain." - C.S Lewis

People often reject the Bible because it mentions things like God, judgment and miracles. The problem is that the Bible has been confirmed time and time again to be historically accurate. The parts that we can look to for verification are in fact confirmed. Countless archeological digs have confirmed much of the history of the Bible. Not only history confirms the bible, but details in science provide evidence as well. For example Job 26:7 tells us that God hangs the earth on nothing. In our era with space exploration we know that the earth is indeed suspended in space. However Job lived a couple of thousand years before Christ. How did he know that? Critics have throughout history attacked the bible because of its claims and failed to disprove it. Concerning that fact I would like to share a quote with you.

Time Magazine DEC.30,1974 "After more than two centuries of facing the heaviest scientific guns that could be brought to bear, the bible has survived and perhaps better for the siege even on the critics own terms. Historical fact, the scriptures seem more acceptable now than they did when the rationalist began the attack"

When we consider miracles it is obvious Jesus performed more public miracles than anybody. Jesus said that these works or miracles were in fact proof of his claims of who he was.

John 10:24-33

24 The Jews therefore gathered around Him, and were saying to Him, "How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly."

25 Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father's name, these bear witness of Me.

26 "But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep.

27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me;

28 and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand.

29 "My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

30 "I and the Father are one."

31 The Jews took up stones again to stone Him.

32 Jesus answered them, "I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?"

33 The Jews answered Him, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God." (NAS)

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John 14:9-11

9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how do you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

10 "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.

11 "Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; otherwise believe on account of the works themselves. (NAS)

So what we have here is Jesus offers his works or miracles as evidence for his identity. Are we to now say that miracles are not possible when Jesus offered them as evidence? Jesus and the New Testament writers taught of good moral values and truth. It would be a huge contradiction if those that taught we should be moral and not lie were in fact very immoral by spreading lies about miracles.

Yes the Bible is interlaced with history which has been confirmed true with miracles that some question. It is not logical to disbelieve the bible only on a preconceived notion that miracles are not possible.

Some would argue against miracles because the event only happened once and it cannot be repeated. They might say "I did not see it happen and it cannot be repeated therefore I do not believe it." By that logic we could say the person saying that did not exist. Did you see them born? Can that rare event be repeated? No! The same can be said for the universe. It only happened once and it cannot be repeated yet here we are.

I think one point concerning the numerous miracles that were performed publically by Jesus that should not be overlooked is the Church itself. Consider for a moment where and which time period was the Church born? It was born in the same area and time frame as the miracles that were performed by Jesus. The Gospels and the accounts of the things that Jesus did were being circulated among the same cities that the events and miracles actually took place. You would think that church growth would be impossible if the incredible stories contained in the gospels were just a fabricated lie!

For example: Let's say someone today started spreading news articles stating that the President was performing public miracles in Los Angeles California. Furthermore the articles themselves were spread all over Los Angeles California. How many people in Los Angeles would believe this if there were no eyewitness they could talk to? How many of them would be willing to die for this belief that never actually happened?

Thousands of people in the same time and area of where Jesus performed those public miracles believed. These same people were persecuted for their belief and many died martyrs for their faith in Christ. Furthermore we have no writings from anybody in that time period saying something like; "look I was there and that never happened." If these were all fabrications then you would think we would have lots of written statements like that.

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No on the contrary it is only years later after all of the eyewitness are dead that people stated to say that never happened!

Ok how does this have anything to do with us today? Well first of all it shows us the Bible is true and reliable. This same Jesus that did these miracles is our Lord and Savior. He can and still does miracles today. Granted we do not see numerous public miracles today, but at that time he was offering them as evidence of who he claimed to be. This is evidence that we can still look to ourselves when considering his claims. There are many periods throughout Bible history where there were not a bunch of public miracles. Just because we do not see numerous public miracles does not mean that they do not happen. This is something you may want to remember as you kneel before the Lord in prayer.

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One of the greatest miracles Jesus did was predicting his own death and resurrection. If you would like to read of historical evidence for this, prayer or other similar topics you may want to follow the links below.

<http://reasonableanswers.org/10-Did-Jesus-rise-from-the-dead-importance-of-doctrine.html>

<http://reasonableanswers.org/44-Prayer.html>

It is not reasonable to reject the miracles recorded in the New Testament. We can look at the location and time period of the beginning of the Church to verify these accounts were seen by eyewitnesses.

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The Watchtower Society, Jesus and Creation

Jehovah Witnesses tell us that Jehovah Created Jesus and then through Jesus created all other things. The following is a quote from one of their books that shows this belief.

Knowledge page 39 Jesus was called God's "only-begotten Son" because Jehovah created him directly. (John 3:16) As "the firstborn of all creation," Jesus was then used by God to create all other things.

Is this statement true? The Bible does indeed refer to Jesus as the creator.

Col 1:15-18 (15) And He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation. (16) For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created by Him and for Him. (17) And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. (18) He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything.

(Jesus is also called the creator in John 1:3 & Heb.1:2,)

So here are two questions to ask your Jehovah Witness friend.

1. Do you believe that Jehovah created Jesus then through Jesus created all other things? Their answer of course will be yes; unless they do not understand their own church's teachings.
2. Then why does Jehovah say in Is. 44:24 that he created all alone by himself?

Isa 44:24 Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, and the one who formed you from the womb, "I, the LORD, am the maker of all things, stretching out the heavens by myself, and spreading out the earth all alone,
(NAS)

The translation by their organization takes it a step further by asking: Who was with me?

Isa 44:24 This is what Jehovah has said, your Repurchaser and the Former of you from the belly: "I, Jehovah, am doing everything, stretching out the heavens by myself, laying out the earth.
Who was with me?
(N.W.T)

I had one Jehovah Witness give me the following illustration.

"A contractor may point at a building and say this is the building that I built. In reality lots of people worked on the building, but he was the one in charge."

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You may think "wow that is a good answer!" Well, if we look back at the context we will discover that is not a good answer at all. Ask yourself why the contractor would say he built the building all alone by himself and even ask who was with me? This would make the contractor out to be a liar, if indeed lots of people worked on it!

For the Christian there is no problem with these text saying Jesus is the creator and God saying he created all alone by himself. This is one of the areas we would refer to when showing the Trinity in the Bible. In Gen.1:2, Job 26:13 and Ps.104:30 we also see the spirit involved with creation. How can this be? The answer is because there are three separate persons in the one singular God and there is no other God! That is the Trinity and we see this unfold in scripture in areas just like this one concerning who created.

Some would argue that is confusing. Well it really should not surprise us that God is somewhat complex!

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Concerning the beliefs of the Jehovah Witnesses or the Trinity and other various topics you may want to follow the links below.

<http://reasonableanswers.org/27-The-Trinity.html>

<http://reasonableanswers.org/I-Jehovah-Witness-Index.html>

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Mormonism and the nature of God

One of the 17 points of the true church according to Mormonism is that God the Father has a body of flesh and bones. This concept can be seen in the L.D.S scripture below.

D&C 130:22 The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us.

The question here is this true? Does God the Father have a body of flesh and bones? Since they claim to be the only true church one would think that they should be correct about the nature of God.

Let's see what the Bible has to say.

John 4:23-24

23 "But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.

24 "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

(NAS)

Luke 24:39 "See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have."

Jesus made both of the above statements. Speaking of the Father he said "God is spirit" Jesus also said "a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." So from Jesus we learn that the Father is spirit and that a spirit does not have a body of flesh and bones.

Interestingly enough the Book of Mormon also states that God is Spirit Alma 18:26-27 & Alma 22:8-11. This is just one area of Mormon doctrine that the Bible does not agree with.

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To see much more on the subject of Mormonism follow the link below.

<http://reasonableanswers.org/I-Mormonism-Index.html>

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DO BABIES GO TO HEAVEN?

This is often a concern especially of parents that have lost a child. They realize that to go to heaven you must make a conscious decision accepting Jesus Christ. So what about the child that was not old enough to make a decision such as this? We can find the answer to this in a story found in the Bible, 2 Samuel 11:2 - 2 Samuel 12:23. This is the story of where David lusted after Bathsheba who was the wife of Uriah. David had Uriah sent off to war in the front lines so he would be killed. In this way he could take Bathsheba for himself. David's plan succeeded, he married Bathsheba and had a child with her. After this had taken place, David was confronted by the Prophet Nathan. He was told because of this awful thing he had done the child born to him by Bathsheba would die. The child then got very sick and David began to fast and pray hoping the Lord would let the child live. When the child died he quit fasting and the servants asked him why? David responded, "**why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me.**" David knew that the child was not old enough to consciously acknowledge God. Still David expected to be with him after he himself died. David was told his sin was forgiven even though he would still suffer consequences because of it. So it is reasonable to also say David still believed he himself would go to heaven. In order for David to go to be with the child the child would have to be in heaven. So yes babies do go to heaven. We know not everybody goes to heaven, so it would seem, there is some kind of age in which we become accountable. The Bible however does not tell us what that age might be.

Now for the grieving Mom or Dad they often want to know why God allowed such a horrible thing to happen. Many people will argue that God is not fair or even say he is cruel. I believe that the Bible teaches that even if we do not understand; all things will indeed be reconciled in the end. That being said I absolutely do not think that the grieving parent should be given a lesson in theology while they are grieving! Rather they need a hug! They need support prayer or anything you can offer.

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For more information on the theology aspect of if God is fair you may want to follow the link below. If you are currently grieving wait seek support and do that later.

<http://reasonableanswers.org/60-God-on-trial-by-mankind.html>

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WHY SHOULD A CHRISTIAN BE ABLE TO DEFEND THEIR FAITH ? WHY SPEAK OUT AGAINST THOSE CHURCHES WHICH ARE CULTS?

Often I have heard people from Cults and Christianity alike tell me that they did not feel that it was right for them to debate the gospel with anyone. Their thought is I have the truth and if the person is willing to listen and accept what I have to say then I will tell them, otherwise forget it.

It is my opinion that whether you are a Mormon, or a member of another Cult, or a believer in Historic Christianity a response, such as this is not very well thought out. Obviously Mormonism and Historic Christianity are not both right yet both believe they have the truth. People from both religions can offer you a very sincere testimony. So where does that leave you? If a person's eternal destiny really depends on the truth of your religion, isn't it worth pursuing at least to a point where you both agree to disagree? I am not saying that you should have heated arguments that only develop animosity. Many people are willing to listen to your side of the debate if you will listen to their also.

If a Mormon believes they have the truth and accepts what the believer in Historic Christianity has to say concerning God, Jesus and salvation without searching the scriptures and other sources of fact, that person was not stable in their belief and will probably soon be carried off by some other teaching. The same is true if the roles are reversed. The common ground between these two religions is the Bible and any book that both people may consider note worthy such as a dictionary. Of course leaving you with this thought as my opinion is not enough so, the following is some scripture that you should consider.

2 Tim 2:15 (KJV) Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

- (1) What can we do to help us rightly divide the word of truth? (Verse 15)**
- (2) Was this just a suggestion or an instruction?**

Jude 1:3-4 (NAS)

3 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you **contend earnestly for the faith** which was once for all delivered to the saints.

4 For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Contend according to Webster's College Edition New World Dictionary.....to strive in debate or controversy; argue; dispute.

- (3) What does it mean to contend earnestly for the faith? (Jude 1:3)**
- (4) Was this just a suggestion or an instruction?**

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2 Tim 4:1-3 (NAS)

1 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom:

2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; **reprove**, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires;

Reprove according to Webster's dictionary....to refute; disprove.

(5) When should you be ready to preach the word? (Verse 2)

(6) What does reprove mean and why should you do it? (Verse 2&3)

(7) Was this just a suggestion or an instruction?

1 Pet 3:15(NAS)

but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make **a defense** to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;

Defense according to Webster's Dictionary....a defending; guarding against attack; an argument to justify or vindicate.

(8)What does it mean to make a defense for the hope that is in you?

(9) When should you be ready to do this?

(10) In what frame of mind should this be carried out?

(11) Is this just a suggestion or an instruction?

Ezek 33:1-9 (NAS)

1 And the word of the LORD came to me saying,

2 "Son of man, speak to the sons of your people, and say to them, 'If I bring a sword upon a land, and the people of the land take one man from among them and make him their watchman;

3 and he sees the sword coming upon the land, and he blows on the trumpet and warns the people,

4 then he who hears the sound of the trumpet and does not take warning, and a sword comes and takes him away, his blood will be on his own head.

5 'He heard the sound of the trumpet, but did not take warning; his blood will be on himself. But had he taken warning, he would have delivered his life.

6 'But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, and the people are not warned, and a sword comes and takes a person from them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood I will require from the watchman's hand.'

7 "Now as for you, son of man, I have appointed you a watchman for the house of Israel; so you will hear a message from My mouth, and give them warning from Me.

8 "When I say to the wicked, 'O wicked man, you shall surely die,' and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require from your hand.

9 "But if you on your part warn a wicked man to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, he will die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your life.

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(12) Did God consider it important for the Prophet Ezekiel to warn the wicked ?

Acts 18:5-6 (NAS)

5 But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul began devoting himself completely to the word, solemnly testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.

6 And when they resisted and blasphemed, he shook out his garments and said to them, "Your blood be upon your own heads! I am clean. From now on I shall go to the Gentiles."

(13) Does Paul seem to assume the same responsibility that God placed on Ezekiel when he responded "your blood be on your own heads" ?

(Ezekiel 33:1-9 & Acts 18:6)

(14) We are warned of false teachings and false prophets in Matthew 24:24-25, 2nd Peter 2:1-2 as well as many other places. In your opinion do you think it is important to warn others who have fell into the trap of believing a false teaching?

(15) Is their soul worth your debating with them? Praying for them? Loving them?

I would like to end this by asking you to picture something in your mind.

Let's say your neighbor's house has caught fire. You can see the smoke and the flames starting to flicker at the rear of the house. Your neighbor is out in front of the house watering the lawn. Should you run over and tell them the house is on fire? What if they don't believe you? Or worse yet, they might become offended because you pointed out what they should have seen and will no longer talk to you. Does it seem ridiculous not to warn them? Of course it does! But we are in a spiritual war; we have neighbors who need to know the truth in spite of our fears of them rejecting us because of the truth. Contend for the faith? YES but remember do it with love, your neighbor is not the enemy the fire or / the lie is!

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IS IT IMPORTANT WHAT A CHURCH TEACHES?

We can find out, if what the church teaches is important or by looking to the Bible for some answers.

Gal 1:8-9 (NAS)

8 But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.

9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed.

(1) Do you think Paul would consider it important what a prophet or anyone else taught?
(verse 8&9)

Deut 13:1-5 (NAS)

1 **"If a prophet** or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and **gives you a sign or a wonder,**

2 **and the sign or the wonder comes true,** concerning which he spoke to you, saying, '**Let us go after other gods** (whom you have not known) and let us serve them,'

3 **you shall not listen to the words of that prophet** or that dreamer of dreams; for the LORD your God is testing you to find out if you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

4 "You shall follow the LORD your God and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him.

5 "**But that prophet** or that dreamer of dreams **shall be put to death,** because he has counseled rebellion against the LORD your God who brought you from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, to seduce you from the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall purge the evil from among you.

(2) What if the prophet can do miracles but he tells us of other God's should we listen to him? (verse 1-3)

(3) Does God take the matter of this prophet lightly? (verse 5)

(4) Something to think about. If the teachings about God or Jesus are not the same Jesus or God as the Bible tells us about, is this following after other god's?

2 Cor 11:3-15 (NAS)

3 But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

4 For if one comes and **preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached,** or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, **or a different gospel** which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.

5 For I consider myself not in the least inferior to the most eminent apostles.

6 But even if I am unskilled in speech, yet I am not so in knowledge; in fact, in every way we have made this evident to you in all things.

7 Or did I commit a sin in humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you without charge?

8 I robbed other churches, taking wages from them to serve you;

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9 and when I was present with you and was in need, I was not a burden to anyone; for when the brethren came from Macedonia, they fully supplied my need, and in everything I kept myself from being a burden to you, and will continue to do so.

10 As the truth of Christ is in me, this boasting of mine will not be stopped in the regions of Achaia.

11 Why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do!

12 But what I am doing, I will continue to do, that I may cut off opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the matter about which they are boasting.

13 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.

14 And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

15 Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their deeds.

(5) Was Paul concerned about teachings of Jesus or the gospel ? verse 3&4

(6) Can these false teachers appear as honest and religious people? verse 13-15

(7) Why was Paul afraid for the Corinthians? verse 3

(8) Why would Satan or his servants want to appear as servants of righteousness?

2 Pet 2:1 (NAS)

But false prophets also arose among the people, just as **there will also be false teachers among you**, who will secretly **introduce destructive heresies**, even denying the Master who bought them, **bringing swift destruction upon themselves.**

(9) Does Peter think that false teachings are a serious matter?

John 8:23-25

23 And He was saying to them, "You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world.

24 "I said therefore to you, that you shall die in your sins; for **unless you believe that I am He, you shall die in your sins.**"

25 And so they were saying to Him, "Who are You?" Jesus said to them, "What have I been saying to you from the beginning?"

(10) Does Jesus sound like it might be important to believe correctly about him?

Prov 14:12(NAS)

12 **There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.**

(11) Is it wise to trust emotions or what may seem right? verse 12

(12) After reading these verses, have you reached a conclusion to whether or not it is important what a church teaches?

13) Why do you suppose Satan would want to introduce false prophets or false teachings about who God or Jesus is?

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(14) Do you believe that it is important to know what the Bible says concerning who God or Jesus is?

(15) If the teachings of a church about whom, God or Jesus is are different than that of the Bible, should you attend and support that church?

I would encourage you to study the Bible. If any answer that I or anybody else gives does not agree with scripture, it's WRONG. The Bible has proven itself time and time again. It is important to realize that if the Bible disagrees with what we believe, then it is us who are wrong not the Bible!

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Isn't the Bible just the writings of men?

This is a question that I know I have been asked several times. So I am going to just give a couple of reasons why I personally believe the bible is the word of God.

I can certainly understand why a lot of people say the Bible is not the word of God because it was written by man. For example if someone asked me who wrote the Book of Acts? I would say Luke wrote the Book of Acts. So how can I name a man as the author and then turn around and say that it is the word of God? In theological circles they call this verbal plenary inspiration. In plain English all that means is that God used men to convey exactly what he wanted to say while still allowing for some of the personality and thoughts of the writer to come through.

Now that is quite a claim and it is certainly reasonable to question whether that is true or not.

It is the characteristics about the bible that are beyond mankind's capabilities that make it convincing. First of all the bible is not just one book. The Bible actually contains 66 books. It has at least 40 different authors. It covers a time span of at least 1500 years. It was written on 3 different continents, Africa, Asia and Europe. The authors of these books were from different backgrounds or lifestyles. For example we have a doctor, kings, fisherman an ex-Pharisee etc. as authors. You would think that these people from different backgrounds covering a 1500 year time span would have different world views. In theory it should be impossible to get them to agree about controversial subjects like God, sin, salvation and so on. Yet they do agree on these controversial subjects so much so that all 66 books from the various authors are cross referenced.

Just try to go out on the street and find 40 different people with different backgrounds that all live in the same time period and get them to write their views on these same controversial subjects and see if they all agree. Even if you picked the 40 different people from the same church denomination you would have some discrepancies. Now if they all worked as a group you might be able to get some clarity. The authors in the Bible could not get together as a group. The writing covers a 1500 year time span on 3 different continents. Now I personally find that thought provoking!

Most people reject the bible because it records things about God, judgment and miracles. The thing of it is that these types of things are woven all throughout actual history. Now the history has repeatedly been verified even in the areas that skeptics declared the Bible was wrong. I will give you one example. There are those that did not think Sodom and Gomorrah existed because nobody had found the ruins of these cities. Well that might be because God destroyed them!

Well anyway there was an archeological discovery where they unearthed the city of Ebla. Now Ebla is not mentioned in the Bible. What is interesting about this is they found lots of clay tablets. In these tablets they found that Ebla had actually traded with Sodom and Gomorrah. This proves they did in fact exist and it is an example of the Bible being historically accurate clear back to the book of Genesis. You can read about this in DR. Clifford Wilson's book called the Ebla Tablets.

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Since what we can verify is indeed verified why would we reject it? Are we to reject it just because it records miracles as well? Who is to say that miracles do not happen? There are even accounts today of miraculous accounts that are documented.

There are other things in the bible that are beyond mankind's capabilities. I know that the Bible is not a textbook on science yet there are things in there that declare scientific facts that nobody in that time period knew. For example Job lived a couple of thousand years before Jesus was born. Job said in chapter 26 that God hangs the earth on nothing!

This idea that the earth was suspended on nothing was not even thought of by scientist for thousands of years after Job. Now with our satellites and trips into space we know this to be true. But that was not known in Job's day. How did he know that? There are many other examples that are similar where the Bible declares things long before mankind actually discovered they were true.

Another area that is beyond mankind's writing capabilities is prophecy. There are hundreds of prophecies in the bible. Many of these prophecies have already been fulfilled. So we can just look at what the Bible said would happen and then look to see if that is indeed what did happen. For example in the Bible Daniel foretold a few hundred years of major world history before it even happened. Daniel told that Babylon would be conquered by the Medes and the Persians and that they would in turn be conquered by the Greeks. Then Daniel tells us of a divided empire which would replace the Greek empire. In history that was the Roman Empire. What I did on my website is I quoted what the Bible said would happen then I quote encyclopedia articles to show what actually happened in history.

So I just touched on a few things that are beyond mankind's capabilities that convince me that the Bible is not just a book, but rather it is what it claims to be the written word of God.

Last, but not least is that I can say I have had personal experiences as well through answered prayers and circumstances that I cannot prove, but I know are true. God is has been and still is at work in my own life.

Is the Bible more than just the writings of men? Yes it is the written word of God!

Written by Robert Kiser, ReasonableAnswers.org

For a more detailed explanation check out my website at:
<http://reasonableanswers.org/19-Is-the-Bible-the-word-of-God.html>

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Is Jesus God?

That is a good question. Let's start by looking at what Jesus claimed about himself.

So who did Jesus claim to be? His enemies understood him claim to be God. John 10:30-33 "I and the Father are one." The Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, "I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?" The Jews answered Him, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God."

Here is Jesus' response in verse 36-39 do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'? "If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father." Therefore they were seeking again to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp.

So **Jesus declared that he and the Father are one** . The Jews understood this as a claim to be God. **Jesus then calls himself the Son of God** and then reaffirms his statement of "I and the father are one" So the question is did the Jews correctly understand what he meant. He called himself the Son of God, but did he also claim to be God? I believe the answer is yes he did claim to be God.

This comes out clear in John 20:28-29

"Thomas answered and said to Him, "**My Lord and my God!**" Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."

Thomas here called Jesus his Lord and God. Jesus being the teacher that he was should have rebuked or at least corrected Thomas. Certainly Jesus would not let this error or using the Lords name in vain, (as some have interpreted it) go by without some correction. Jesus' answer to Thomas shows that Thomas was correct to call him his God and Lord.

Jesus not only claimed to be the Son of God and God one with the Father, but he also claimed to be the expected messiah foretold in the Old Testament.

John 4:25-26 ." The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."

Jesus often referred to himself as the Son of man. Matt 17:22-23 And while they were gathering together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "**The Son of Man** is going to be delivered into the hands of men; and they will kill Him, and He will be raised on the third day. "And they were deeply grieved.

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It is interesting that Jesus would call himself this since he was not a son of man in the way we often think. He was born of the Virgin Mary and by the Holy Spirit. Joseph was not his father. He was the Son of Man in two ways.

(1) As the Messiah being born through the family of David as well as, Jesse, Judah, Jacob, Isaac and Abraham as shown on page 3&4. This genealogy traces him through man. Both Mary and Joseph's bloodline can be traced through these people.(Mt.1:1-16, Lk.3:23-38). This title "Messiah" is also applied to Jesus because the Messiah that was to come in Old Testament prophecy was called the Son of Man Dan.7:13-14

(2) Jesus is also seen as the Son of Man referring to his humanity, when God became a man.

Phil 2:5-8 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

John 1:1 & 14 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. & in verse 14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

So how important is it to accept Jesus' claims of who he is? According to Jesus it is very important,

John 8:24-25, "I said therefore to you, that you shall die in your sins; for **unless you believe that I am He you shall die in your sins.** "And so they were saying to Him, "Who are You?" Jesus said to them, "What have I been saying to you from the beginning?"

As we have already seen Jesus claimed to be the Messiah, God one with the Father and the Son of God. So he told them unless they accepted that this is who he was they would die in their sins. So what does it mean to die in your sins? It means to die and be separated from God. The Bible declares that those who are separated from God spend eternity in a place called Hell. Fortunately Eternal Life is a free gift. All you have to do to gain eternal life is accept Jesus and make him Lord of your Life.

(Mt.25:31-41, Jn.3:16-18, Rom.3:23, 1 Jn.1:10, James 2:10, Mt.5:22, Eph.2:8-9, Lk.6:44-49)

Who does the Bible declare Jesus to be?

The church usually answers this question by referring to the Trinity. The Trinity is a title of a doctrine that the Bible teaches. Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary defines the Trinity as follows:

"The coexistence of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in the unity of the Godhead (divine nature or essence). The doctrine of the trinity means that within the being and activity of the one God there are three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

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Throughout the Bible we find that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are all called God and all 3 possess the attributes of God. We also find that there is only one God. There are not 3 Gods in one. All 3 are also seen separate even though they are one God. Jesus is God the Son the 2nd person in the Trinity. One could write a lot on this subject but for here I only want to focus on Jesus.

The Bible calls Jesus God.

Isa 9:6 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

Acts 20:28 "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

According to this verse the church was purchased with whose blood?

Col 2:8-9 See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form.

1 Jn 5:20 And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding, in order that we might know Him who is true, and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

2 Pet 1:1 Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:

Rev 1:7-8 Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen. "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

Compare this with Rev 2:8 "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life.

Heb 1:8 But of the Son He says "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom.

Titus 2:13 Looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus;

Does Jesus possess the attributes of God?

We would expect God to be seen as Creator, Judge, Savior being able to forgive sins, omniscient- all knowing, omnipotent - all powerful, omnipresent - the ability to be everywhere at once, eternal having always existed, and worshipped. I will show all of these things can be found in Jesus Christ.

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Jesus is Creator:

Col 1:13-16 For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. And He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities - all things have been created by Him and for Him.

(See also Jn.1:3, Heb.1:8-10, 1 Cor.8:6, Is.44:24)

Jesus is Judge: (see also 2 Tim. 4:1, Rom.14:10)

John 5:22 "For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son,"

Jesus is Savior he can forgive sins: Mark 2:5

And Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, "My son, your sins are forgiven."

We can forgive someone for sinning against us, but we cannot forgive someone for sinning against God as Jesus did here. (See also Mk.2:10, Col.2:13)

Acts 5:30-31 "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross. "He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

Jesus is Omniscient (all knowing or all wise):

1 Cor 1:24 to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Jesus is shown in the New Testament to have knowledge far beyond our human understanding. We do not know the heart of every man but in Jn. 2:24-25 it says Jesus knew all men and what was in man. In Jn.6:64 we are told Jesus knew from the beginning whom they were who did not believe, and who it was that would betray Him. Then in Jn.13:1 we find Jesus knew his hour had come to die and go to the Father. In Jn.16:30 the disciples said "Now we know that You know all things" Again in Jn.18:4 it says Jesus knew all the things that were about to happen to him. While Jesus was on the cross we are told he knew the Old Testament prophecies concerning him and our redemption had been fulfilled. Nobody else knew that at that time, yet, he did Jn.19:28. Peter declared that Jesus knew his heart and all things Jn.21:17. What man has ever had this kind of knowledge? This knowledge is far beyond even any of the prophets in the Bible. They may have foretold future events but none of them knew the heart and thoughts of every man. These are only a few examples that could be shown that Jesus knew such things.

Jesus is Omnipotent

(All powerful, unlimited authority):

Matt 28:18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

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In the following references we find that Jesus will return with power. Power flowed through him to heal people who merely touched him. Jesus had power over demons. He was able to give power to his disciples to heal others. Peter declared there was power in Jesus name. Jesus is the power of God. It was through Jesus that Paul received power. Jesus has the power to subject everything unto himself. It is by his power that we will be raised from the dead. He upholds all things by the word of His power. Jesus has the keys i.e.. the power over death and Hades. The time will come when Jesus will abolish all other rule, authority and power. (See also Mk 13:26,5:30, Lk. 4:36, 6:19, 9:1, Acts 4:7-10, Rom.1:4, 1 Cor 1:24, 15:23-25, 2 Cor 12:9, Phil 3:20-21, Heb 1:3, 2 Pet 1:16, Rev 1:17-18)

Jesus is Omnipresent

(Present at all places at all times)

Matt 18:20, 28:20 Jesus said "For where two or three have gathered together in My name, there I am in their midst." He also told his disciples "and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Paul declared that Jesus dwells in the hearts of believers. Paul further stated if this is not true of an individual they do not belong to him. Rom.8:9.

(See also 2 Cor.13:5, Gal.2:20, Eph.3:17, Col.1:27, Rev.3:20)

Jesus is eternal (He has always existed)

Micah 5:2 "But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity."

(See also Jn.1:1-2, 17:5, 8:58, Rev.1:17,2:8, 22:13)

Jesus is worshipped: (See also Mt.2:2 & 8)(lamb on throne, Rev.4:10, 7:17, Jn.1:29-36)

Heb 1:6 And when He again brings the first-born into the world, He says, "And let all the angels of God worship Him."

Matt 14:33

And those who were in the boat worshipped Him, saying, "You are certainly God's Son!" (Worship belongs to God alone. Mt.4:10)

What did the Christians think in the 1st century after Jesus? Did they believe the same as what Christians teach today about Jesus?

The Christian's in the first century would have a better understanding of what the writers of the New Testament actually meant. I say this because some of what are known as the Ante-Nicene Fathers personally knew the writers of the New Testament. For example Ignatius was a personal disciple of one or more of the original apostles. (This can be found in the book "A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs") Therefore it stands to reason that, if we are interpreting the New Testament correctly our beliefs about who Jesus was should not have changed from what was believed about Jesus in the 1st century.

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The following quotes can be found in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to AD 325, Rev. Alexander Roberts, D.D., and James Donaldson, LL.D., editors, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company) 1989. These have been copied from the CD ROM available through Logos.

Ignatius was the head of the church of Antioch. (Died A.D.110)
He studied under the original Apostles.
The epistle of Ignatius to the Romans chapter 3."

For our God, Jesus Christ, now that He is with the Father, is all the more revealed in His glory. Christianity is not a thing of silence only, but also of manifest greatness.

Justin Martyr is recognized to be one of the most important Christian writers A.D.110-166.
The first Apology of Justin chapter 63.

"the Father of the universe has a Son; who also, being the first-begotten Word of God, is even God. And of old He appeared in the shape of fire and in the likeness of an angel to Moses and to the other prophets; but now in the times of your reign, having, as we before said, become Man by a virgin, according to the counsel of the Father, for the salvation of those who believe on Him, He endured both to be set at nought and to suffer, that by dying and rising again He might conquer death. And that which was said out of the bush to Moses, "I am that I am, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, and the God of your fathers,"
(See Exodus 3:1-6, Mk.12:18-31)

There are many other quotes that could be brought up and things that could be said, but this should be adequate for our purpose.

Written by Robert Kiser, ReasonableAnswers.org

For a more in depth studies concerning Jesus follow the link below.

<http://reasonableanswers.org/5-concerning-Jesus-Diety-Resurrecton-Return-other-religions.html>

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Does God exist?

When sharing with the non-believer it does not always start with sharing from the Bible. Some people claim that they do not even believe that God exist. However Romans chapter one would tend to say that they do know of his existence that their denial is because of hardness of heart. Still one should be able to give some reason to the non-believer for their belief in God. The purpose of this writing is to help the Christian give the non-believer some reasonable answers for this belief.

I know that God exist because

1. I know him.
2. I know that God exist because of the fact that the world is here and is full of design in everything from planets to flowers and atoms. The design is evidence there was a designer and a maker.
3. Evidence from the worldwide flood is indication that God not only exist, but he once judged the world already and the evidence of that is everywhere.
4. I know God exist because he has continued to communicate with mankind sharing with him things in detail about the future that no mere man could possibly know. (Prophecy)
5. I know that God exist because he has shared things about science that have proven accurate long before they were quote discovered by mankind.
6. I know that God exist because he was here in human form 2000 years ago. There are historical records of this fact. What makes his testimony credible is that his death and resurrection were told about before he was born. He himself also predicted his resurrection and there were more than 500 eyewitnesses to this event that lasted 40 days. Jesus even appeared to unbelievers. The resurrection of Jesus is an historical fact that can stand in a court of law. The bible says Jesus is God
7. I know that God exist because there are numerous accounts of people who have been clinically dead and have given accounts of God, heaven and Hell.
8. Great scientific minds of both the past and the present have continually believed in the existence of God.

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How do I know God exist?

(1) I know him. Give an example of an answered prayer or your own testimony. This is a point nobody can effectively argue against.

(2) I am here and you are here. In other words mankind came from somewhere. There was a beginning. There are really only two schools of thought of where mankind came from; Creation and Evolution.

Creation says in the beginning God.

Evolution says in the beginning Matter

Sounds funny, but that is indeed what they are saying.

Evolutionists teach single cells eventually evolved into a person. In other words the frog turned into a prince. (Fairy Tale not based upon knowable science.)

There is more than one type of evolution taught. Micro evolution is true and we can see examples of it. A dog can be breed into other types of dogs, but it will always remain within the same kind of animal. It is still a dog it will never become an elephant!

For the dog to become an elephant is Macro evolution which has NEVER been seen or proven.

This takes a giant leap of faith with no direct evidence at all.

The 2nd law of thermodynamics tells us that everything is reaching a state of disorder. In other words things die, rot and decay. We see this everywhere even your house will eventually fall apart without maintenance from an outside source like people.

Evolution teaches the opposite that things over time can reach a state of order and design. This has NEVER been observed or proven. A tadpole may turn into a frog, but for a frog to turn into a prince is a fairy tale not science. Even Charles Darwin knew this was absurd.

Darwin said that:

"To suppose that the eye, (with so many parts all working together)....could have been formed by natural selection, seems, I freely confess, absurd to the highest degree."

"Absurd to the highest degree."

That's Darwin's own opinion of using natural selection to explain the origin of traits that depend on many parts working together."

Christians believe that design shows evidence of a maker. In other words if I found a watch I would probably reach the logical conclusion that somebody made it because it has design and many intricate working parts. The bible tells us that both creation and the flood are knowable to mankind.

2 Pet 3:5-6 For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. (NAS)

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Rom 1:20-22

20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

22 Professing to be wise, they became fools,
(NAS)

(3) There was a worldwide flood. God judged the world back in the days of Noah with a worldwide flood. The fact that he did this and there is evidence of the flood verifies that God exist. We know there was a worldwide flood because clams were found on top of Mt Everest and fossilized oysters were found high in the Andes mountain range in Peru. These locations are on different continents high above the ocean. How did they get there? They are there because of a flood produced because of God's judgment on the world.

(Mt Everest) Holt Modern Earth Science, 1983

(Giant Oysters) Dailey American Republic, Friday March 2, 2001

(4) I know God exist because he has continued to communicate with mankind. Much of this communication has been recorded in written form. God has shared with people in the past future events that nobody could accurately predict yet God did it! We call them fulfilled prophecies. Automatically when referring to the bible people say it cannot be trusted yet it has NEVER been proven wrong I would like to start with a quote from Time Magazine.

Time Magazine DEC.30,1974 "After more than two centuries of facing the heaviest scientific guns that could be brought to bear, the bible has survived and perhaps better for the siege even on the critics own terms. Historical fact, the scriptures seem more acceptable now than they did when the rationalist began the attack"

The Bible has never been proven wrong in any of its prophetic messages. I will give one example of a prophetic message which came true.

Isa 44:28-45:1 "It is I who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd! And he will perform all My desire.' And he declares of Jerusalem, 'She will be built,' and of the temple, 'Your foundation will be laid.'" Thus says the LORD to Cyrus His anointed, whom I have taken by the right hand, to subdue nations before him, and to loose the loins of kings; to open doors before him so that gates will not be shut:

Notice Cyrus is mentioned by name although at this point he has not even been born. What's also interesting about this prophetic message is that at the time Isaiah wrote this the city was not yet destroyed and the temple was still standing. Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came along and destroyed it about a hundred years later. Then about 160 years after Isaiah's writing the temple was completed because a Persian king named Cyrus gave the decree to rebuild the city and the temple.

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The American Peoples Encyclopedia vol.11, pg.395 dates the time of Isaiah's death at about 668 B.C. The same volume on pg. 611 states that Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city and the temple in 586 B.C In volume 6 pg.688-689 of The American Peoples Encyclopedia we find that Cyrus liberated the Jews and allowed them to return to rebuild Jerusalem and even restored sacred vessels taken from the temple. This took place around 539 B.C the new temple was completed in 515 B.C vol.11, pg.611

This is an example of God communicating with mankind proving God exist. No man can make the predictions the bible makes and always be correct. Therefore fulfilled prophecies are evidence of the existence of God because we have recorded communication from him in the Bible.

(5) I know God exist because of knowledge revealed that we did not know.

I would like to mention one area where science and the Bible do meet together.

Job 26:7 "He stretches out the north over empty space, and hangs the earth on nothing."

Keep in mind that Job lived almost 2000 years before Christ. This idea that the earth was suspended on nothing was not even thought of by scientist for thousands of years after Job. Now with our satellites and trips into space we know this to be true. But that was not known in Job's day. The Egyptians declared the earth rested on pillars. The Greeks said it was carried on the back of Atlas. People believed many things but they did not come close to what we know to be true today, and what Job declared a few thousand years ago.

(6) I know God exist because God was here in the form of man. Phil. 2:5-11 Jesus claimed to be God in John 10:30-33 even his enemies understood his claim when he stated "I and the Father are one." Furthermore he acknowledged he was God to Thomas John 20:28-29. Jesus claimed to be from heaven John 6:38. The Bible also tells us Jesus is the creator Col.1:15-16.

Ok so Jesus claimed to be God. Did he leave us any evidence of this fact? Yes he did with the Dead Sea Scrolls we can verify all of the prophecies concerning Jesus were written before Jesus was born through Mary. There are numerous prophecies concerning the Messiah that Jesus fulfilled including his death and resurrection. Without even using the Bible we can show reasonable evidence that Jesus rose from the dead. For more detailed information concerning this see ReasonableAnswers.org from the home page click on "concerning Jesus".

(7) I know God exist because many people have had experiences being clinically dead and have relayed information to us concerning heaven and hell. The Lazarus Phenomenon DVD gives an account of an Africa Pastor named Daniel Ekechukwu who died in a car accident in Nigeria. He later returned to tell of his experience. Secondly, Ian McCormack a young surfer from New Zealand died and returned after being stung by the box jellyfish

The Search for heaven is a documentary DVD which examines the scientific studies, personal testimonies and experiences of those who have had a near-death experience some of these personal testimonies are more evidence that God exist

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8. Great scientific minds of both the past and the present have continually believed in the existence of God. I will mention a couple from the past. Leonardo da Vinci although more famous for his paintings was also a scientist who believed in God.

Isaac Newton famous for discovering gravity he also was a Christian who spent much time studying biblical prophecies. Concerning the prophecies in Daniel Newton once said "to reject Daniel is to reject the Christian religion."

I would like to comment about arguments against the existence of God.

How can one prove anything does not exist? To know that something does not exist anywhere you would have to obtain all knowledge of everyplace at all times.

As far as the existence of God we can offer sound reasons for this belief. In a court of law we can rely on circumstantial evidence. For example in a murder we might have the gun the ballistic report saying that the bullet came the accused persons gun and his fingerprints are on the gun. We could establish motive and other such things that would convict the person of murder even though there were no actual eyewitnesses to the murder.

It is through this circumstantial type evidence that we will offer to show that God does in fact exist.

Many people say evil in the world is an argument against God's existence. I would argue that what they think God should or shouldn't do about evil does not disprove his existence. That is an argument concerning his character which is not what this debate is about. God said that death would come from disobedience. Well we all die!

To totally wipe out sin and the effects of sin by mankind this world as we know it would have to be destroyed; and it will be in God's time. God's character or how he does things is not the question of the debate. Whether he exists is the debate. Pay attention to how they define things be hesitant to agree even if it sounds reasonable. People in debates are often trapped by agreeing to false terms and false definitions.

Written by Robert Kiser, ReasonableAnswers.org

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The Bible has told details of scientific fact long before mankind through science discovered they were true.

The Bible unlike any other writing is unique in the fact that it surpasses mankind's abilities. The prophecies in the Bible that have already been fulfilled are what most point to for the Bible actually being the word of God. No man has ever been able to predict the future with the detail and accuracy that the Bible has shown. However the Bible is in no way limited in providing evidence to the fact that it is indeed the word of God. Another area that can be pointed to for the authenticity of the Bible is science.

Most informed Christians will readily admit the Bible is not a text book on science. You cannot prove the Bible to be the word of God based solely on science. Then again science does not refute the Bible either. Some people think of it as Religion VS Science. Well the fact is the Bible has never been proven scientifically wrong. The same cannot be said about some theories proposed by scientist. Science and the Bible are in harmony in areas where they do meet. However the Bible was written to reveal God to mankind. The Bible was not written to teach anybody about science.

I want to give you a few of the many examples where the Bible mentions scientific facts that today we know are true. Yet what is amazing about these examples is that the Bible declared them as fact long before mankind discovered they were true!

Job 26:7 "He stretches out the north over empty space, and hangs the earth on nothing."

Keep in mind that Job lived almost 2000 years before Christ. This idea that the earth was suspended on nothing was not even thought of by scientist for thousands of years after Job. Now with our satellites and trips into space we know this to be true. But that was not known in Job's day. The Egyptians declared the earth rested on pillars. The Greeks said it was carried on the back of Atlas. People believed many things but they did not come close to what we know to be true today, and what Job declared a few thousand years ago. How did Job know this was true when science had not yet discovered it?

Job 28:25 "When He imparted weight to the wind, and meted out the waters by measure,

Does air have weight? In 1643 a mathematician named Evangelista Torricelli performed an experiment to learn if air has weight. His experiment is what led to the making of our barometer.

The relative weights of air and water are needed for the efficient functioning of the world's hydrologic cycle, which in turn sustains life on the earth.

Nasa.gov tells of an experiment that kids can do to verify this fact in school. Simply make a scale that pivots and balances correctly. Hang two empty balloons on each side and balance it out. Then remove one balloon and blow it up then hang it back in the same place. The side with the blown up balloon will go down because it has the weight of the air inside it.

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Here again we find that air has weight discovered in the 16th century however Job lived almost 2000 years before Christ. The book of Job told us air has weight before science discovered this was true.

Lev 17:11 'For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.'

During George Washington's time, the practice of blood-letting to treat various kinds of illnesses was common. This practice is actually what killed him. The understanding of this verse could have spared his life. In today's world it is common knowledge that blood circulation is vital for our survival. William Harvey is accredited for being the first to introduce the importance of blood circulation in 1616. Yet all critics will agree that the Book of Leviticus was written a few thousand years ago. Any year that falls in B.C is long before 1616 and William Harvey.

William Harvey (1 April 1578 3 June 1657) was an English physician who was the first to describe correctly and in exact detail the systemic circulation and properties of blood being pumped around the body by the heart. (wikipedia.org)

So we learn that the life of the flesh is in the blood in Leviticus long before science discovered the details of this truth.

Job 36:27-30

- 27 "For He draws up the drops of water, they distill rain from the mist,
- 28 Which the clouds pour down, they drip upon man abundantly.
- 29 "Can anyone understand the spreading of the clouds, the thundering of His pavilion?
- 30 "Behold, He spreads His lightning about Him, and He covers the depths of the sea.

This bible reference clearly describes evaporation and its cycle which we now refer to as the hydrological cycle. We also see that the context includes the sea. However the Greeks thought that spring water came from the oceans and was purified in the ground somehow making fresh water.

The understanding that it was through the evaporation process as described in the Book of Job was not discovered and understood until the 17th century. Yet Job was written long before Jesus was even born.

I have personally found the knowledge of this process very comforting when hiking in back country. Using this principle and a clear sheet of plastic a person can obtain purified water from anywhere. Most survival manuals teach this concept in the making of a solar still.

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Here is a short related quote you may find interesting.

Brief historical overview of the hydrologic cycle

" Before the 17th century, many natural philosophers accepted the Greek theory (proposed by people who lived in a semiarid climate on limestone hills) that rainfall was insufficient to feed springs and rivers. It was thought that spring water was purified sea water from deep within the earth (reverse osmosis?).

However, in 1580, Bernard Palissy proposed the theory of the hydrologic cycle. Pierre Perrault (1608-1680) made careful observations of rainfall and streamflow in the Seine River basin, confirming Palissy's hunch and thus began the study of modern scientific hydrology"

Chapter 11 of the 1999 NGWA Press publication, Ground Water Hydrology for Water Well Contractors.
(ngwa.org)

Here in Job we find the Bible describes the hydrological cycle long before science discovers the reality of it.

Job 38:16

"Have you entered into the springs of the sea? Or have you walked in the recesses of the deep?"

Think how this must have sounded to Job. There is no way that anybody in his day that could know there were springs in the ocean. It is not like anybody went deep sea diving or any other type of underwater exploration in his day.

Today we find that hot springs or hydrothermal vents coming from the ocean floor. Scientist first discovered these in the 1970's. How could Job possibly know there were springs of any kind on the ocean floor?

Ecc1 1:6

Blowing toward the south, then turning toward the north, the wind continues swirling along; and on its circular courses the wind returns.

A study of Jet Stream & Trade Winds will show you that the wind does go in the circular course as described in this verse that was written in between 930-970 BC.

Jet Stream was discovered during World War 2.

The Trade Winds were discovered during the time of Christopher Columbus 1451-1506
(earthguide.ucsd.edu & Wikipedia.org)

How did Solomon know about this in 900 BC?

Isa 44:24

Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, and the one who formed you from the womb, "I, the LORD, am the maker of all things, stretching out the heavens by myself, and spreading out the earth all alone,

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There are a number of Bible references speaking of the stretching out of the heavens. Isaiah is not the oldest reference, but it was written about 746-680 BC.

With the discoveries found with the Hubble Telescope and studies of redshifts most scientists today will agree that the universe has expanded. This is something that has just been discovered in our life time, but the Bible declared the heavens were stretched out in about 17 different passages several thousand years ago.

When we look at the Bible there is no other document rather it be religious or non religious that has this kind of credentials or uniqueness. In prophecies we see the Bible tell world history in advance and much of it has already happened. So the sincere student can check out if the Bible really can foretell the future by looking to see if it was accurate on predictions in the past. Well it does not end there. As you can see here the Bible also had knowledge of scientific details long before they were discovered by mankind. How is that possible? Well perhaps it is because it is what exactly what it claims to be; the written word of God!

Written by Robert Kiser, ReasonableAnswers.org

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Did Jesus rise from the dead?

This is a good question; although some would ask what difference does it make?

Well it is one thing that separates Jesus from all other religious leaders. As a matter of fact the Apostle Paul said that if Jesus did not rise from the dead then Christianity was a fraud and we are still in our sins. No other religious leader in history predicted their own death and bodily resurrection and left numerous eyewitnesses to testify to this fact.

So how do we know this is really true? How many people have you seen rise from the dead? It is certainly reasonable to question such a claim as this. Is the Bible the only evidence that we have? No it is not our only source in fact we can establish the resurrection of Jesus as historical fact without even using the Bible.

Josephus and Tacitus were both 1st century historians and neither one of them were Christians. Just between these two historians we can show that:

Jesus was a person that was alive around 30 A.D. Jesus was sentenced to death on a cross at the hands of Pontius Pilate. His death seemed to put an end to the followers of Jesus for a short time. Then Christianity arose in the same place where Jesus was crucified and buried. There were those that claimed Jesus rose from the dead. This belief spread from the location of the crucifixion to Rome.

We do not have to use the Bible at all to support this much as fact. We can quote from historians and others who lived at that time to establish this much and more of the story that is given to us in the gospels. Even the historical critics that do not believe the Bible can accept this much to be true.

Who were these people that claimed Jesus rose from the dead and is their testimony reliable? It is interesting that not all of these eyewitnesses were believers in Jesus before the resurrection. Paul and James were both unbelievers until after the resurrection. Paul was even out persecuting the followers of Christ until as he said he met the resurrected Jesus. I find it kind of odd that Paul and James became believers only after the resurrection unless they actually believed it to be true.

Paul mentioned that there were more than 500 eyewitnesses most of whom were still alive in 1 Corinthians 15. This would be a rather foolish statement for Paul to make if it were not true. All the people would have to do is question where are these eyewitnesses? He would have been discredited immediately if there really wasn't any.

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Peter preached to a large group of people in Acts chapter 2 telling them that they themselves were aware of all of the miracles that Jesus performed. He goes onto retell the story of the crucifixion and tells them that he and others are eyewitness of the resurrection. About 3,000 people believed what Peter said and accepted Jesus and were baptized after this speech. That is rather hard to explain if the tomb was not empty because they were in walking distance from it at the time. It would also be very hard to explain if the eyewitness's testimonies were not commonly known by the people.

The Bible mentions 20 of these eyewitnesses by name. These eyewitnesses did not just claim to get a glimpse of Jesus in some spirit form or anything like that after Jesus rose from the dead. They claimed they seen the imprints from the nails from his crucifixion and the place where the soldier pierced his side. They claimed to touch him, talk to him and eat with him on more than one occasion over a period of 40 days at which time some watched him bodily ascend into heaven. Now you can choose not to believe that it really happened, but that is what they claimed.

So we have more than 500 eyewitnesses some of who were non-believers before the resurrection claiming this to be true. Should we believe them? What if they were ALL lying? Let me share something that I find interesting. Simon Greenleaf was a professor of Law at Harvard University from 1833 to 1848. He wrote a three volume work "A Treatise on the Laws of Evidence" that is still a classic in the area of law and evidence today. He took his knowledge of law and the rules of evidence and applied it to the testimony of the disciples. Simon Greenleaf said:

"Let (The Gospels) testimony be sifted, as it were an account given in a court of justice on the side of the adverse party, the witness being subjected to a rigorous cross-examination. The result, it is confidently believed, will be an undoubting conviction of their integrity, ability, and truth."

Now the Pharisees had political and personal motive to expose the disciples as liars if at all possible. The same could be said of the Sadducees and the Roman government. Yet the story of the resurrection prevailed in the one area that should have been the most difficult and unlikely, if it were indeed fabricated. The same area and time frame that Jesus was crucified and buried is where the story originated and grew.

Concerning these eyewitnesses what did they have to gain by spreading this story? What was their motive? John was exiled to the island of Patmos all of the rest of the disciples died violent deaths at different times for this belief that Jesus rose from the dead. What would cause someone to willingly die for a lie with no other apparent motive?

Sure today we can see that there are suicide bombers that willingly die for what they believe. What is the difference? The difference is in what they believed. The suicide bombers believe in their cause. The disciples of Jesus willingly died because they believed they seen, talked to, touched and ate with Jesus on several occasions after he rose from the dead.

Simon Greenleaf also said "If then their testimony was not true, there was no possible motive for this fabrication." (The Testimony of the Evangelists, page 32, by Simon Greenleaf)

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We are left with the historical fact that Jesus was crucified and buried. More than 500 eyewitnesses claimed to see him alive after the resurrection. These people claimed to see him, touch him, talk with him and eat with him. After a 40 day period some of them claimed to watch him bodily ascend into heaven. Many of these people died violent deaths for claiming this to be true.

Our evidence of the resurrection does not rest solely upon the Bible. We have documentation from 1st century historians and other writers that lived during that time. We have eyewitness accounts that were willing to die for their testimony of this fact.

Most people reject the resurrection not because of lack of evidence, but rather from a preconceived notion that it is impossible. I suggest to you that it is not wise to let our preconceived ideas determine truth. Rather let us carefully examine the evidence and let the facts of the case determine the truth.

If you are a currently a non-believer I must warn you. There have been other non-believers with great minds who were critical thinkers who have seriously accepted this challenge and became believers in the process.

Written by Robert Kiser, ReasonableAnswers.org

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The Tree

Years back I had rented some property out in the Applegate area in Southern Oregon to put up my teepee. I have to date lived in a teepee for seven winters. I have found it to be a cheaper way to live in the country than renting a house. Anyway I had set it up in a nice clearing in the trees across Thompson Creek and a little ways up a hill.

The first winter there it worked out pretty good. However the second winter there the creek which normally does not get very deep rose up pretty high. It was all I could do to keep from being washed down-stream while wading across the creek to get to the teepee.

I went over and asked my landlord if I could fall a tree across the creek to use as a bridge. I was informed that I could not do that. Somebody there suggested that I go home and pray about it. So that is what I did. I went home and prayed for a tree to fall over.

The next day I waded across the creek changed into some dry clothes and drove to work. I continued to pray while I was at work. After work I decided to go to Bi-Mart and buy some rope. I thought perhaps maybe I could figure out a way to make a temporary rope bridge to get across the creek.

While I was at the store I had a very strong feeling that I did not need the rope and that perhaps I should just drive home and see if a tree fell over. I argued with myself thinking that was crazy. It would easily be an hour and a half drive round trip just to come back to buy the rope. So logic won out and I bought the rope and proceeded to drive home.

When I had arrived I was shocked to see that there was a large tree lying across the dirt drive where I normally parked. It looked like the butt of the tree was on the other side of the creek. I was in awe to say the least! Then I proceeded to reason with myself and thought perhaps my Landlord had changed her mind and had somebody else cut down a tree for me. I got out of my car and decided to investigate the matter. I was in awe again. A live tree about 3 feet through the center had come up by the roots and fell across the creek near where I normally crossed at.

I pondered the whole thing for a while then went back to my car. I tried to back up but the dirt drive was pretty muddy and the tires just spun. So I went forward a little bit more instead. Of course I could not go very far because the top of the tree was in the way. I then remembered that my chainsaw was at my friend's house back in town. I began to become frustrated. Now what am I going to do? I got out of my car and was looking at the top part of the tree. I had not noticed before that the tree actually had broken in several places starting at the edge of the drive and was now pieces that I could move by hand. Wow! The Lord is gracious and he thinks of everything.

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My landlord also had gone to inspect the tree. Of course she knew nobody could just pull up a large tree like that by the roots. Interestingly the day it fell over there was no storm and the part that fell over the creek did not break. Later that following summer I cut up and split the top part of the tree and hauled it over to my landlord's house so she could burn it for firewood.

Ironically when my mom died I was sitting on this tree and yelling at God. I was very mad at him because I thought he should have made her live long enough to accept him. As I was yelling at him it came across in my mind so loud and clear it could not have been more clear, if I had actually heard and audible voice. What came across is: "Even if she did reject me is that a reason for you to reject me?" I was speechless and my tantrum was over!

This will always be a personal reminder to me that the Lord cares about the details in my life!

Written by Robert Kiser, ReasonableAnswers.org

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The Truck

God sometimes answers our prayers not only to help us, but also to show others that he is real and at work in our life.

Not long after I became a Christian I had decided to spend a semester at Calvary Chapel Bible School down in Southern California.

As I made my plans and started saving the money needed to go I had a friend named Jack that tried to talk me out of it. He kept telling me that this Christianity thing was just a phase I was going through. Don't waste your money he would argue; use it for something worthwhile.

I ignored his advice and when I had saved enough for a semester I enrolled and was on my way. I had decided to leave my truck at home and take the bus down to Southern California.

After Bible school was over I came back home and found that my truck would not start. Now Jack was pretty good about working on cars so I asked him for some help. We worked on the truck all day and could not figure out why it refused to start.

Jack finally gave up and went home. Not long after he had left my Pastor Earl Best from Provolt Community Church came by. Earl told me he heard I was back and just wanted to stop by and see how I was doing and how my time at Bible School went.

I told him everything was great except my truck would not start. Earl told me he had a toolbox in his truck and would be glad to help me with it. I objected telling him that my friend Jack and I had already spent the whole day working on it and got nowhere.

Earl insisted that it couldn't hurt so I said ok. Earl got out his toolbox and set it next to my truck. Then Earl asked me if I had prayed about it. Reluctantly I admitted that that had not occurred to me. So Earl suggested that we get down on our knees and pray. After we prayed Earl suggested that I get in the truck and start it up.

I remember looking at him like he was nuts. As if that was really going to work, but I did as he said and much to my surprise the truck started immediately with no problem at all. Earl smiled and quietly put his toolbox back in his truck said goodbye and left.

Thrilled that my truck was working I decided to drive down to Applegate store. I ran into Jack at the store who came over asking me what was wrong with the truck and how did I fix it? I told Jack that I did not know what was wrong with the truck.

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Jack looked at me with a rather puzzled look and asked again. How did you fix it? So I told Jack about how the Pastor came over and suggested we pray about it and then the truck started right up.

Jack was speechless! He also quit teasing me about being a Christian and trying to convince me it was all in my head. I believe that that particular answered prayer was for both me and Jack.

Written by Robert Kiser, ReasonableAnswers.org

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God what are you doing?

The scare with my sister and the Lord does heart surgery on me.

I was living in Oregon and most of my family at the time was in California. One morning I received a phone call from my mom. She said that my sister Leslie had left a note indicating she might not be alive at the end of the day and she wanted me to take care of her kids. This was not something that I took lightly, but what could I do? I was in Oregon and she was in California who knows where? I started to pray! I asked the Lord if He could just have Leslie come up to Oregon so I could tell her about Him. About an hour later my mom called again telling me that Leslie had called and she wanted to come up to Oregon to see me. Wow! Talk about a quick and powerful answer to a prayer! I was excited! I was supposed to go and pick her up at the Greyhound bus station. I was there early and my sister walked in the front door and not where the buses unload. The bus had not even arrived yet. I did not question her about it. Instead I suggested that we go into the coffee shop next door and I would buy her a cup of hot chocolate and myself a cup of coffee and we could talk. She started to talk about her husband Ruben saying that he knew how I felt about him and he wanted me to forgive him. I laughed and said I was in Oregon and I didn't expect to even see him for a long time. Leslie said "He is here now"

Now the last time I had seen him was before I was a Christian. He had blacked my nephews' eye and he was only five years old at the time and he pushed my mom. I knew he had hurt my sister in the past, but I looked at it back then like it was her own fault for staying with him. Anyway after this event with my mom and my nephew I had decided to kill him. I loaded my gun and went into the house where he was at. My sister and he lived in a split level house with them on the top floor and my parents on the bottom floor. I met my mom in the stairway and of course she was alarmed and wanted to know what I was up to. Anyway my mom talked me out of it and soon after I moved to Oregon. Not long after moving to Oregon I ended up giving my life to the Lord and forgot all about Rueben. Out of sight out of mind I guess. So here I am talking to my sister who I am afraid is on the verge of ending her own life and she wants me to forgive Rueben. The last time I seen him I was ready to shoot him. Talk about some mixed emotions! I went outside with my sister and met him. Rueben asked me to forgive him and I said I would. They both stayed with me for several days. Rueben stuck to my sister like glue. Everything I wanted to tell her about Jesus I had to say in front of him. That was very hard for me, but the Lord took all of the anger that I had against him away. I still do not trust the man, but I am glad to say I don't hate him either.

Here I was excited to be able to tell my sister about Jesus and the Lord himself was doing a work on me. I got much more than I had asked for and the experience was not pleasant. However I am very grateful that the Lord had much more planned than I had thought at the beginning.

Written by Robert Kiser, ReasonableAnswers.org

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Who do you envy?

I would like to share with you a lesson that the Lord once taught me. I found myself wanting to model myself after others that I seen in Christian ministry and at times found myself even a little bit jealous of them. Now we as Christians know that we are not to covet anything that anybody else has. However secretly if we have nothing it is easy to sometimes look at others that seem to be blessed with everything and ask why not me? Well I am not perfect and I have had moments like that. On one of these occasions I shrugged it off and began reading my bible. The following passage is one the Lord used to get my attention.

Mark 12:38-44

38 And in His teaching He was saying: "Beware of the scribes who like to walk around in long robes, and like respectful greetings in the market places,
39 and chief seats in the synagogues, and places of honor at banquets,
40 who devour widows' houses, and for appearance's sake offer long prayers; these will receive greater condemnation."
41 And He sat down opposite the treasury, and began observing how the multitude were putting money into the treasury; and many rich people were putting in large sums.
42 And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which amount to a cent.
43 And calling His disciples to Him, He said to them, "Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasury;
44 for they all put in out of their surplus, but she, out of her poverty, put in all she owned, all she had to live on."

I read this and paused for a moment and pictured this lady in my mind. I seen an older lady dressed in worn shabby clothes. Even in the text you can see she was poor. Now an older lady who was a widow in Jesus' day would not receive very much attention. In fact women in general were not given a lot of respect. So here is this poor lady dressed in rags coming up to put money in the temple treasury. She comes up quietly with her head down low and puts in a cent which really amounts to nothing. She is someone that the compassionate would pity. Anyway I visualized this in my mind. I feel as the Lord interrupted my thoughts to ask me a question. The question that my thoughts were interrupted with was this. "In the times that you have envied others or wished that you were in their shoes so to speak have wished you were like her?"

Now before you read on stop right here and ask yourself the same question. Seriously stop a minute and picture this poor widow in your mind and ask yourself this question.

I did stop and pondered this question and I said no I have never wished I was like her. Then in my mind the Lord came across loud and clear. Why not? She received my praise!

Wow! I felt ashamed! You see by the Worlds standards we may appear as a failure. We may appear as someone of no significance, but the Lord views things a lot differently than the world does. This lady was at a state of disadvantage in the world's perspective. Yet Jesus used her as an object lesson for his disciples whom he was trying to teach. Somehow I do not think that she is at any disadvantage now! I do not think the praise from Jesus ended there!

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We are to give of ourselves not looking for recognition of those within the Church or anybody else. Consider the next passage and how it ties in with the one we just read.

Matt 6:2-6

2 "When therefore you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be honored by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

3 "But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing
4 that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

5 "And when you pray, you are not to be as the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners, in order to be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

6 "But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

We are to approach our duty in a quiet humble manner not looking for the recognition of any person or church leader. Our concern is to be obedient and pleasing to the Lord.

I would like to add one final illustration that I heard somewhere about our committing to the Lord and pleasing Him. This illustration I have found thought provoking. Committing totally to the Lord is like being handed a legal contract which you know that you will be strictly bound to. This particular legal contract will be involved in every single area of your life. It is on a legal form with the law firms name stated at the top. There is a line down at the bottom where the one bound to the contract is supposed to sign. The rest of the page is blank.

The Lord hands you the contract and ask if you wish to sign stating as he hands it to you. "Do not worry about all of the details; I will fill in the rest later!"

Do you really trust him? Will you sign the contract and not worry? Will we be content being looked at by the world as a failure and a person of no significance? Whose praise are we seeking?

Written by Robert Kiser, ReasonableAnswers.org

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The will of God

Christians often talk about being in the will of God. What does that mean anyway? Well it means to be actively following God's plan or purpose for an individual's life. As Christians we should always want that, but the truth is sometimes we do not. Now right about now somebody is going to ask why not? After all doesn't God have the best plan, purpose and intentions? Well yes, but that does not mean that it is always going to be pleasant. For example the Apostle Paul was called by the Lord to suffer.

Acts 9:15-16 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake."

The Apostle Paul is someone that we as Christians look up to, but his life was not easy in fact it was hard.

2 Cor 11:23-28

23 Are they servants of Christ? (I speak as if insane) I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death.

24 Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes.

25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep.

26 I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren;

27 I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.

28 Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure upon me of concern for all the churches.

Even though Paul suffered all of these hardships while he was in the will of God he considered it worth all of the misery he went through. Why? Because he was not focused on the here and now; he was focused on eternity.

2 Cor 4:16-17 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,

Now honestly if you knew that you were going to go through all of the hardships Paul went through would you rush right out and volunteer? No probably not unless as Paul you could focus on eternal things even during the hardships. Most of us in our inner being would say I do not have the strength to go through that. We would in fact be correct in that assessment. I suggest to you that Paul did not have the strength to go through it either. Consider what Paul said in the following passage.

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Phil 4:12-13 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

Paul's strength came from the Lord not from himself. God usually gives people what they need when they need it. He gives people strength during the trial and usually not long before the trial. Often to us as Christians it seems as though the Lord waits until the very last minute or from a human perspective until it is too late.

Being in the will of God does not always involve extreme examples such as we see in the life of the Apostle Paul. Being in the will of God is in fact something we should desire. The interesting thing is that many Christians also speak about the will of God as some sort of mystery that they are hoping to discover. So how can you try to be in the will of God if you have no idea what it is? Well it really is not as difficult as some may think. It is true that we do not know all of the details of his will, but in reality it is not necessary because God is sovereign. He can and does lead his children without them knowing all of the details.

Most of God's will for you will have to do with your relationship with him. Where you work, live or go to school are secondary issues. To be in the will of God is going to start with looking to the Bible for answers and obedience.

Mark 3:35 "For whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and sister and mother."

John 14:14-15 "If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it. "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

To keep his commandments you will have to know what they are. You find that out by studying the Bible. A lot of the will of God for your life is in his written word. I remember a friend once told me that the answer to everything was in the bible. I objected and said that the bible did not tell me what color of socks to wear today. Mark laughed and said yes it does! He then gave a partial quote of Matt 6:25 Do not worry about what you will wear! Is not life more than food or clothing?

We need to seek the Lord in prayer and in his written word. Then let the Lord lead the way.

Matt 6:33 "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.

(The context here applies to food and clothing)

Ps 37:4 Delight yourself in the LORD; and He will give you the desires of your heart.

The interesting thing about this passage is, if you really delight yourself in the Lord the desires of your heart will be on godly things.

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Prov 3:5-6 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.

Notice this passage does not tell you how he will make your paths straight or lead you. Your part is to trust him and acknowledge him in every area of your life.

How has God led people in the past?

God has led people in a number of different ways in the past. In Exodus God led Moses and his people in the desert with a cloud and a pillar of fire. God has led people in the Old Testament through prophets and signs. God also has led people using angels, dreams and visions. God has spoken to people directly and through others. There is no set pattern that God is limited to in leading his people. Yet we are to always seek God for his guidance.

God also directs us through circumstances.

For example the messiah was to be born in Bethlehem according to Old Testament prophecy. (Micah 5:2) However the reason why Joseph took his pregnant wife Mary to Bethlehem was because of a decree issued by Caesar Augustus that required everyone to return to their own city for a census. (Lk. 2:1-8) Joseph did not go to Bethlehem to be in God's will and fulfill prophecy. Joseph went to Bethlehem because he was required to for the census. Joseph was in the will of God without knowing all of the details.

I once drove from Oregon down to Yreka California to pick up my nephew. When I got there and knocked on the door nobody answered. Since I had already drove that far I decided to drive a little farther to hike around at Castle Crag State Park and then come back to see if my nephew was home yet. I started up a trail that crosses the Pacific Crest Trail, which runs from Mexico to Canada. As I was approaching that intersection I heard a little girl screaming and crying. I started running toward the sound to see what was the matter. It turned out she was lost and terribly frightened. I spent some time talking with her and praying with her concerning the where about of the adults that she was supposed to be with. I then took her back down the trail to a parking lot where she recognized the car she came in. So I left a note on the windshield telling them they could find her at the ranger station. I then drove her to the ranger station and informed them that the adults could also possibly be lost out there. Later when I drove back to Yreka I found out my nephew was there the whole time. He was asleep so he did not hear me knock on the door. I am convinced that God had more in mind for me to do that day than to pick up my nephew or go hiking. The Lord led me to help a lost little girl. He led me there through circumstances. Call it a coincident if you want to. I have found the more I follow the Lord the more coincidences I have especially after prayer!

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I have studied every passage I could find on the will of God and I can tell you with absolute certainty that being in the will of God starts with prayer, studying the Bible and obedience. Beyond what you can find in scripture such as where to work, live, go to school or who to marry has everything to do with asking him and obedience. Your understanding of all of the details is not necessary because God is in control. He is more than capable of leading you without your knowing all of the specific details. Learn to ask, listen, wait and follow. Is this going to sometimes be confusing or frustrating? Yes! Trust Him!!

Written by Robert Kiser, ReasonableAnswers.org

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Why read the Old Testament?

I have met Christians that feel that we do not need the Old Testament. They want to refer everything to the New Testament and view the entire Old Testament as outdated or something. They may make some sort of statement that the Old Testament is the Law and Christ fulfilled the law. We even publish lots of New Testament by themselves eliminating a big part of God's written word.

How did Jesus view the Old Testament?

John 5:39 "You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me; (NAS)

What scriptures did they have when Jesus said this? All they had was the Old Testament the New Testament had not been written yet. Still Jesus said the Old Testament bore witness of him.

Luke 24:25-27 And He said to them, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" And beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. (NAS)

Here we see Jesus starting with Moses and all the prophets to explain things concerning himself. Since the Old Testament bears witness to Jesus why would you want to eliminate it?

When the Apostle Paul and the Disciples were out witnessing to people they constantly referred to the Old Testament. Let me share a couple of examples of this.

Acts 8:30-35

30 And when Philip had run up, he heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

31 And he said, "Well, how could I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

32 Now the passage of Scripture which he was reading was this: "He was led as a sheep to slaughter; and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so He does not open His mouth.

33 "In humiliation His judgment was taken away; who shall relate His generation? For His life is removed from the earth."

34 And the eunuch answered Philip and said, "Please tell me of whom does the prophet say this? Of himself, or of someone else?"

35 And Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him. (NAS)

Acts 17:11 Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so.

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These people were commended for accepting what the Apostle Paul said and searched the scriptures daily to see if the message that Paul gave was true. Again the scriptures they were checking daily was the Old Testament. The New Testament wasn't finished yet.

2 Tim 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (KJV)

Here is a passage really that states the need to study the Old Testament clearly. Think about this a minute. The New Testament was not complete at the writing of this passage. So it cannot only be talking about the New Testament.

God went to the trouble of making sure we had his written word. There are 66 books in the Bible and 39 of them are in the Old Testament. It makes no sense to say that as a Christian we do not need it. Jesus and the Apostles made constant use of it and so should we.

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Do good people go to heaven?

It is a common belief that good people that believe in God will go to heaven. There are indeed good people that believe in God that will go to heaven. There are also good people that believe in a God that will go to Hell. Being a good person and believing in God is not what gets a person into heaven.

In the Bible James tells us even the demons believe there is one God and shudder. Isaiah tells us that our righteousness is like a filthy rag before the Lord. This means even your best acts or most sincere prayer is corrupt, filthy and stained. The Bible tells us that every person in their very best state is altogether vanity. You see man is not the standard of good; God is the standard of good. All of us have sinned and fall short. Every single one of us is guilty and has broken God's laws.

Have you ever told a lie? Stole something small? Envied your neighbors possessions or relationships? According to the Bible even breaking one of God's laws makes you guilty. Picture someone in court for driving 75 MPH in a 45 MPH zone. They tell the judge that just this week I have helped feed the homeless. I went to church twice and I helped a little old lady putting her groceries into her car. Is an honest judge with great concern for the law going to let them off the hook for speeding? No he is not! God is the one who will judge each and every one of us. His justice demands payment for each and every sin. Now none of us can keep the law of God. The Bible tells us the law was meant to be a tutor to lead us to Christ. True within the law there are a lot of things that we should apply to our lives, but you will never actually live the law without breaking it. Breaking the law is a sin and one sin is enough to separate us from God for eternity in a place called Hell. Now many will say that is not fair! Considering that God himself paid a great price to provide a way of escape he considers it fair. It reminds me of a poster I once had that said "There are 2 factors for human enlightenment (1) There is a God (2) You are not Him!

What is his way of escape? It is a genuine decision to leave your old life and commit everything you are and own to Jesus. You are not your own person you were bought with a price at the cross. You can believe that God is real and lead a pretty good life without doing this and never actually be saved.

Unfortunately we as Christians often throw around words that many do not really understand. What does it mean to be saved? Saved means rescued or delivered. Rescued or delivered from what? According to the bible we can be rescued and delivered from the wrath of God. That brings us to the next words we often hear "the gospel" what does that mean? Well gospel means good news. The good news is you can be rescued and delivered from the wrath of God. Another term we use is to be born again. Jesus told Nicodemus that we must be born again. The bible describes us as dead in or trespasses and sin. So spiritually we are considered dead even though we have been physically born and are physically alive. When we receive our spiritual birth we are born again and then we are adopted into God's family before this point we are not God's children.

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So if just believing in God and being good does not save me; how am I saved? We can be saved by accepting God's payment for our sins. The bible tells us we must repent and we are saved by faith. Repent is more than just temporarily feeling sorry for what we have done. Repent is a change of mind. What are we to change or mind about? This is where we quit trying to run our own lives and decide to relinquish everything to the Lord and let him be in control. Part of the definition of Faith in Webster's Dictionary is loyal and trusting. Now as mentioned earlier the demons believe in God, but they are not loyal and trusting to God. So we decide to accept Jesus' payment for our sins on the cross and in doing so we change our mind about who is in control of our life and desire to become loyal and trusting to God.

Now this is a heart decision and is not an actual action or work. When we sincerely do this we are saved by grace. This means we do not deserve or earn it in any way, but rather we accept our salvation as a gift from God. This has absolutely nothing to do with you being a good person. This has everything to do with Jesus taking all of your sins past, present and future upon himself on the cross. Jesus dying on the cross paid the penalty for our sins. Jesus takes our sins away and replaces it with his own righteousness. Not only are we declared not guilty we are declared righteous and then there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus. We are saved by grace and not of works or good deeds. (Eph.2:8-9)

Now some get confused because James says we are justified by our works. Well justified does not mean saved. As James illustrates justified is to show outward evidence that we really are saved. In other words if you have a genuine faith then good deeds or works is the natural fruit or results of it. James and Paul both used Abraham as an example when you study all of the related passages you will find that all of the following statements are true.

Abraham was saved by faith alone
Abraham was justified by works
Abraham was not justified by works alone

I have met people that believed that they were going to heaven because years before they said a prayer like they were told. Yet there never was any change in their life. This means there never really was true repentance or genuine faith. The Bible teaches that if we have true faith then our life will change and it will continue to change the rest of our lives. This is a point that James was trying to emphasize. James asked the all important question: "What use is it, my brethren, if a man says he has faith, but he has no works? Can that faith save him?" (James 2:14) The answer to the question is "No" because it isn't genuine faith. Works is the fruit of having real faith. Yet we are not saved by our works. It is only the fruit of real faith. We do good works because we are saved. We do not do good works to become saved. A sheep says baaa baaa because it is a sheep. The sheep does not say baaa baaa to become a sheep.

Obedience has results that are often desired by the true Christian. Do you want the fruits of the spirit love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness? Do you want the Lord to answer your prayers? Do you want to be in the will of God? Do you want to see real purpose in your life? Do you want to be used by God and see fruit? Well my friend that comes from obedience. A well behaved child is more likely to be rewarded by the Lord than a selfish wining brat which we often are! However obedience is not what saves us. We are saved by grace alone.

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One of our first acts of obedience as a Christian is to be baptized. In doing so we are identifying with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We are saying that we will put to death the old sinful nature and raise a new person. We will take up our cross and follow Jesus. Following Jesus is a process that will continue the rest of your life. It is not just a one time or weekly event.

By accepting Jesus payment for your sins and totally committing your life to him you can be saved from the wrath of God. This is something that no person deserves or can earn. This is a gift of God. It can be accepted on the Lords terms or you can turn it down.

My personal advice is to accept this gift and flee from the wrath to come!

This of course does not mean that your life is suddenly going to become easy. In many respects my life got harder after turning to Christ because I suddenly became concerned about what was morally or ethically right. It amazes me that some would refer to Christianity as a crutch for the weak. I found that that is the opposite of reality in my own life. That being said your life here may not be easier, but it will certainly end up having more meaning and purpose. Furthermore it makes even the bad hopeful when you focus on the beautiful eternity that awaits God's children in the afterlife instead of the evil fallen world we live in.

I should also tell you that committing your life to Christ is only the first step. When you are first adopted in to the family of God you are only an infant in Christ. To grow you need to be fed by studying the directions that God left for you. (The Bible) Also as in any relationship you need to learn to communicate often. This is done through prayer and we need to learn to listen as well. As with all children sometimes we fall down and get hurt. That is OK get back up and keep following Jesus.

Also after being adopted into the family you are not an orphan. Being part of the family has blessings and responsibilities. So a good start would be to start meeting some of the rest of the family. As with any family we are to support and help each other. We have dysfunctional members of the family as well. You will end up having brothers and sisters that you would rather hang out with than other family members and that is OK. Just remember we are all still family.

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Demons caused me to turn to Christ

I would like to share with you my own experience of how I came to the Lord. I feel that it is unfortunate that our culture often views demons, hell and other such things like some sort of fairy tale.

I was born and raised in an active Mormon family. I had kind and loving parents for which I am thankful. I grew up believing a different gospel than that which is found in the Bible, but rather I was taught and believed Mormon doctrine. When I became a teenager I was very rebellious. Although I believed in God, I was much more interested in partying and getting in trouble. I did a lot of things back then that I am ashamed of today. One night some friends and I were watching a demonic movie. I remember my friends commenting on the movie. They were saying that, if the things that were taking place in the movie were happening to them they would leave that house. I did not see how that was an answer. I pointed out that the demons certainly were not confined to that house.

Later that night while I was working graveyard shift I was reflecting on this. I started wondering how much Satan enjoyed my lifestyle. I wondered if he had any part in my life that led to mental anguish and anger. I know this sounds crazy but the thought of this made me mad! I began to want to retaliate against him. I was alone in the shop and so I began to yell at him. I said that for every person I robbed I would tell somebody about Jesus. Not that I cared about Jesus. I just figured that would make him mad.

Right after this I was overwhelmed by the feeling that something evil was there in the shop with me. The feeling was so strong that it scared me. I began to pray and the feeling went away. For the next 3 months or so this same awful feeling would come upon me, even if I were not thinking about such things. Each time it scared me so much that I would begin to pray. Every time I prayed the feeling would go away but it always seemed to come back. Things began to get worse. Sometimes while I was driving it would feel like something would grab my steering wheel of my car. I would be pulling really hard to try and turn then suddenly it would break free like something let go and I would almost wreck. I was becoming afraid to go anywhere or do anything.

One night when I had gone home; as I began inserting my key into the lock I saw something on the other side of the glass staring back at me. I jumped back and while I was looking at what I believe was a demon, it disappeared. If I was high on drugs perhaps I could have brushed it off, but I wasn't. For me this was all I could take! I got down on my knees there in my front yard and told God that if he would just make this go away I would give my life to him. That night these things stopped happening to me. I have a friend that had become a Christian several months before this, so I began to go to church with him.

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Later I took a vacation and went to see my parents. I wanted to tell them about what had happened and the change that had taken place in my life. I figured they would be happy considering all of the hardship I had put them through in my teenage years at home. To my surprise my dad was not pleased at all. He said I might as well not go to church at all because I was going to the wrong one. He insisted that I needed to return to the Mormon Church. This caused a lot of confusion for me. I had friends saying the Mormon Church was a cult and that it that did not teach biblical truth.

I also had my family telling me the Mormon Church was the only true church. I began to question who or what I should believe. For that matter why should I even believe the Bible? A good friend of mine directed me to the Christian bookstore. I began to study Mormonism as well as historic Christianity. After a lot of research, study and prayer I found a lot of factual reasons to accept the Bible as the word of God. I also discovered just as many reasons not to accept the Book of Mormon as the word of God. I found that Mormon doctrine is contrary to the teachings of the bible. I also found that it could be proven that Joseph Smith was a false prophet. I accepted the Lord around 1985 and have been studying on and off since then. I am glad to say that although the majority of my relatives are still Mormons. My dad who was a High Priest in the Mormon Church and served on 3 stake missions has left Mormonism. My Dad now has accepted Jesus and the doctrine of historic Christianity.

Several years after accepting the Lord the Mormon Missionaries started coming to my house. After some discussion one of them asked me if I wanted my name removed from the L.D.S Church records. I stated that only if somebody understood why. I gave them a book that I wrote which contained a portion of what is found on my web site. I stated in a letter written on the inside of the cover of that book that I would be willing to listen to anybody that could show me in the Bible where I was wrong. I further stated that I would gladly accept any correction from the Bible since I believed that it is the final authority. About a month later I received a letter in the mail stating that they were removing my name as a member of the L.D.S Church. I find it interesting that nobody within the L.D.S Church ever even attempted to show me where I was wrong in scripture in what I had written. I am not surprised however because I know that the L.D.S Church is in fact the one that has greatly abused the word of God. (The Bible)

I am aware of the many strong testimonies from L.D.S members who claim to have had supernatural experiences. Especially in the area of those who are deceased being grateful for the L.D.S members being baptized in their behalf.

To this I must say we should interpret our experiences through the Bible. We should not interpret the Bible through our experiences. The bible warns us not to even listen to an angel if they tell us something which is contrary to the bible. A spirit could seem good and do wonderful things for you, but if it contradicts the bible then you know it is not from God. Some would question why a demon might do good things for anyone. Well, if in doing so it leads you away from Jesus and the truth of the gospel then it accomplished its purpose.

Written by Robert Kiser, ReasonableAnswers.org