

2. IF GOD EXISTS, PROVE IT THEN!

(PART II)

RECAP

God has proven Himself by:

1. Creating the world
2. Creating the human race.

STOP

Q: What do these things teach us about what God is like?

He is powerful,

creative

and good.

But God has also revealed Himself in another way to us.

He has spoken.

The Christian God is a talking God. He speaks to us through the pages of the Bible.



JACK

Like most people Jack hasn't got the first clue about the Bible. He's sure there's one in his Nan's house but he's never had much to do with it. He may have read the odd bit of it here and there but mostly the only thing he knows about it is what he and his friends have found online from conspiracy theorists. As far as he is concerned, the Bible is old-fashioned, full of mistakes and out of date. It may have been good in his Nan's day but it is irrelevant for him and his life. Anyway, according to Jack, science has disproved most of it and it's hard to believe fairy stories like people living in giant fish and stuff like that. In his mind, you'd have to be mad to live your life according to the Bible.

STOP

Q: What do you think of Jack's view of the Bible? Do you agree or disagree? Why?

What if we were to throw our Bibles in the bin? Would the world around us give us enough information to find out what God is truly like? As we've discovered, creation tells us *some things* about God but it doesn't tell us *everything* about Him. The existence of trees might tell us that there's something out there that is quite creative but it doesn't tell us anything specific about our purpose in the world, does it?

In fact, there's only one place in the universe where we can find out true and specific facts about what God requires from the human race.

The Bible.

It is there that we discover

**Who He is,
 what He is like,
 who we are and
 what He expects from us.**

For these reasons it is vitally important to the life of the Christian.

We need the Bible because:

1. It tells us what we are like as a human race
2. It tells us what God is like
3. It tells us how each of us can come to know God personally.

What do we do these days if we want to know the quick answer to something? Well we probably get out our smartphones to Google it. Or, if we're really old school, we might ask somebody that we know. Now the problem is, particularly on the internet, that there are a lot of fruitcakes and conspiracy theorists out there. There are all sorts of weird and wacky people in the world with all sorts of crackpot ideas, particularly when it comes to the Bible.

How do we know what's reliable and what's not?

How do we know that we're not being given dodgy information?



ILLUSTRATION

If we have a problem with our car, for instance, it's no good looking up a microwave manual. That's not going to help us. We need to take the car to a garage and find a mechanic who knows what he's talking about.

So when we want to find out about the gospel, we don't need to go to some illuminati website or go and see our uncle Bob who went to church once a while ago.

We need to go to the source material.

We need to check out the original handbook.

We need to go to the Bible.

Only this book has the **authority** to tell us what the gospel really means and why it really matters.

In fact the Bible is the *only* trustworthy place that we can find out about God in our world.

STOP

Is the entire Bible true, or just some of it? Which parts are true and which are not? How do we tell the difference?

We live in a world where people think that Bible-believing Christians are idiots for taking it all so seriously. How can Christians believe some stupid old book written thousands of years ago by superstitious half-wits?

This is the new millennium. We've moved on, haven't we?

Surely no intelligent person believes all that mumbo jumbo in the Bible, do they?

That's what Jack and his friends and family think about these issues. According to Jack's friends, that's what most normal people (those in their right minds anyway) think about it too. The Bible may be interesting to read in parts but that is about

as far as it goes. A few good stories, maybe some decent moral advice here and there, but nothing more than that.

Bible-believing Christians, on the other hand, believe and teach that not only is the Bible

100% true

it is also

100% trustworthy

and

100% God's Holy Word.



JACK

'Come on man,' he says. 'Nobody believes the Bible is 100% true. It is just stories patched together by cavemen. It's full of mistakes and contradictions. How can that be trustworthy?'

The problem is Jack says these things but he doesn't know how to back them up. How can he know that a book he has never read is so full of mistakes? When we ask him to point out the contradictions, he cannot. So, let's give him a helping hand.

In Mark 15:25 we read, *'And it was the third hour when they crucified him.'* Yet, in John 19:14 we read, *'Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!"'* Mark says Christ was crucified on the third hour, yet John quite clearly states that He was still on trial on the sixth hour. So how could Jesus still be on trial in the book of John three hours after Mark claims He was supposed to have been crucified? It doesn't make sense.

It looks like a glaring error.



JACK

You show it to Jack triumphantly and ask, *'Is this the kind of mistake you mean?'* He's not quite sure how to respond to that. After all, he's supposed to be the one attacking the Bible, not you. *'Exactly,'* he says. *'If the Bible is wrong here, then it can't be trusted, can it? Agreed?'* You ask him. *'Agreed,'* he responds.

What really blows his mind is when in your next breath you inform him that, despite these verses, you are still convinced that the Bible is *100% error free*.

The word we use for this is **INERRANT**.

God has written every single word in the Bible and He never, ever makes mistakes. Now Jack is even more confused. He asks, *'How can you believe that, yet you've shown me these two verses?'*

Now, this so-called mistake is easy to defend. There is no difference in the time of the trial and crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ despite what the texts say. You see John was following a Roman numbering and time system, because he wrote his gospel in Ephesus, which was the Roman capital of the province of Asia. We know this for a fact because he uses this system elsewhere in the Bible. Mark consistently uses a Hebrew numbering and timing system. The third hour according to Mark's Hebrew time system was 9 a.m. and the sixth hour according to John's Roman time system was 6 a.m. So there is no mistake. Christ was tried at 6 a.m. and crucified at 9 a.m. that same morning. This matches with the other gospel accounts.

Parts of the Bible often thought to be contradictory actually have perfectly reasonable explanations.

The Bible is a special book; in fact it is a fantastic book.

How many of us think the same things as our parents or our grandparents? Not many.

Do we still think the same and agree with the same things as people 100 years ago? No we don't.

Yet here we have a book that is in reality

a library of **66 books**

written over a period of **1500 years**,

by over **40 different authors** from all walks of life:
kings, philosophers, fishermen, poets, intellectuals.

Written in different places: *in the desert, in a dungeon, in a palace, on an island, in captivity.*

Written during times of war and times of peace. During times of great joy and happiness as well as times of great sorrow and grief.

Written in Asia, Africa and Europe. In Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.

Written about hundreds of different topics.

Most of these authors never met. They never knew one another. They didn't get together down at their local coffee shop to work it all out. **Despite this, every person and every book agrees with and complements the others.**

And they all tell the story of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.