

Though Christianity and Christians can be pretty unpopular these days, Jesus remains widely admired... even by many people who don't profess to believe in him or worship him. He is revered as a "good teacher," as a "philosopher," but not as who he said he was, according to the historical record. C. S. Lewis famously wrote about this phenomenon:

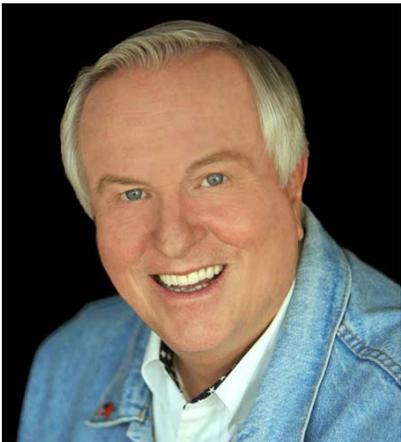
I am trying to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: "I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept His claim to be God." That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic— on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg— or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.⁸

9. Do you really believe that Jesus literally rose from the dead?

Many theories have been put forth to try to cast doubt on the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. All of them are inadequate; some are even ludicrous (we devote three chapters to these theories in our book, *Don't Check Your Brains at the Door*). In fact, the historical evidence for the resurrection is so overwhelming, historians have to become "anti-historical" in their efforts to build a case against it. As Lord Darling, a prominent English judge, once said, "No intelligent jury in the world could fail to bring in a verdict that the resurrection story is true."⁹

10. How can you believe in that stuff?

The most convincing evidence for the Christian faith is not historical, textual, or archaeological; it is the testimony of a changed life. When I (Josh) set out to disprove the Christian faith, my mind met unassailable facts... but my heart met irresistible love. I met a group of Christians at Kellogg College in Battle Creek, Michigan, who exposed me for the first time to the love of God. Oh, how they loved each other. And I wanted what they had. That love paved the road of faith for me, and thus began my journey of faith. All the evidence in the world—the most powerful arguments and most convincing proofs—probably wouldn't have gotten through to me if the transforming power of God's love had not reached my heart through that student group and others.



Always keep in mind that the same will be true of anyone who challenges or questions your faith. Your answers can help open their hearts, but the vibrant evidence of a changed life will always be the most convincing apologetic you can offer.

Josh McDowell is a speaker, author, and traveling representative for Cru (formerly Campus Crusade for Christ). His books include *The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, *More Than a Carpenter*, and *Don't Check Your Brains at the Door*.

Central Mountains Baptist Church

JULY 10, 2016

Does God Exist?

(Continued from Sunday 19/6/16)

7. Who even knows if Jesus ever really existed?

The existence of a man named Jesus who lived in Galilee and Judea in the early part of the first century is utterly indisputable from a historical standpoint. In fact, if you ever encounter such a view from a friend or teacher, invite that person to travel with you to Israel. In the land where Jesus once lived, everyone—Christians, Jews, Muslims, atheists—consider the idea that never existed to be laughable. Why? Because the evidence of his historicity is a daily reality there.

8. Don't you think Jesus could have been just a good teacher who didn't intend to be worshiped as a god?

Does God exist?





I Peter: Overcoming Suffering

Answers III

1 Peter 3:15 commands us to be witness-ready. We suggest that there are two steps to being witness-ready:

1. Be ready to share your faith,
 - ◆ your testimony,
 - ◆ a gospel outline,
 2. Be ready to answer common questions, v 13-15
 - ◆ Why should I believe the bible?
 - ◆ How can I know that there is a God?
1. The evidence from my conscience,
 2. The evidence from my changed life, Isaiah 59:1
 3. The evidence from the word, Isaiah 53:3-6, 40:21-28
 4. The evidence from history, [last time]

(1 Peter 3:15) "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;"

5. The evidence from the world,

(Genesis 1:1) "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

(Revelation 21:1) "Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea."

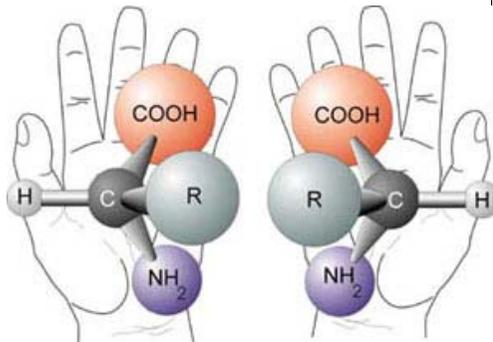
(John 1:1-4) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. {2} He was in the beginning with God. {3} All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. {4} In Him was life, and the life was the light of men."

Three lines of evidence from the world vindicates the Word:

1. _____ chemicals, Psalm 19:1-3

(Matthew 12:36) "'But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment."

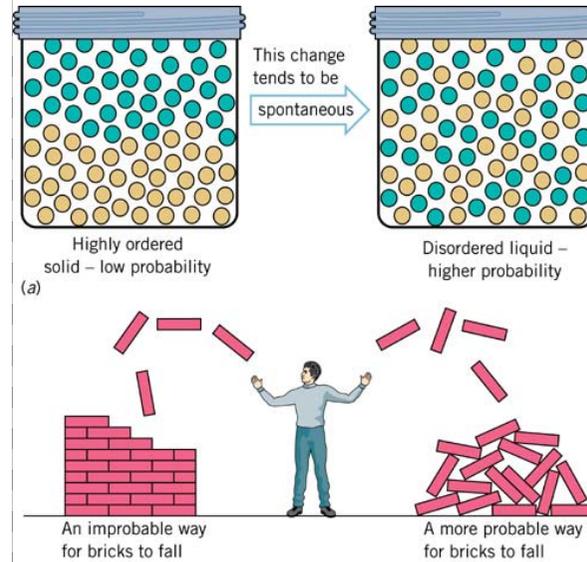
(Hebrews 10:26-31) "For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, {27} but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. {28} Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. {29} Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son



of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? {30} For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people." {31} It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

2. _____ law of _____,

Romans 1:18-20



(Revelation 20:11-15) "Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. {12} And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. {13} The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. {14} Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. {15} And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire."

(John 6:37) "'All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out."

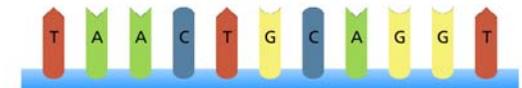
(Matthew 11:28-30) "'Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. {29} "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. {30} "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

3. M _____,

Isaiah 40:25-28, 55:6-7

(Romans 8:22) "For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now."

Original sequence



Point _____

