

## Truth Talks Class

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### Questions to Consider Prior to Week 1 of 7

Why are you here - in this class? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a Christian? \_\_\_\_\_

Why are you a Christian? \_\_\_\_\_

... Best of Times ... Worst of Times

In what way is this the best time in history to raise kids? \_\_\_\_\_

In what way is this the worst time in history to raise kids? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you consider the most important beliefs:

Of "Christians" \_\_\_\_\_

Of "Nones" \_\_\_\_\_

Define "faith": \_\_\_\_\_

What is the difference between believing that and believing in?

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When animals are threatened, what are their natural responses?

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Are humans the same as animals when threatened?

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In what ways is Christianity doubted, questioned, criticized and ridiculed as never before?

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What kinds of questions and criticisms have you encountered. ... have your kids encountered?

How have you tried to respond?

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## Week One – Why and How

### You Don't Need To Be Here Today If You Have NEVER:

- † Gone through a “dry spell” where you wonder if God is there and if He hears you
- † Seen something on TV or the web that made you wonder if all that Bible stuff is really reliable and true
- † Had friends or loved ones abandon their faith
- † Faced a question or criticism of your faith and found yourself struggling for an answer and either arguing or not responding at all
- † Missed an opportunity to share your faith with someone because you didn’t know what to say

### Alisa Childers video clip 1

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### Satan's First Tactic? Doubt

How can Christian parents and students be confident in their faith and how can we be better prepared for the attacks of the “new atheism”, secular humanism, scientism, pluralism and “tolerance”?

### Why Does Evidence Matter?

### Because Our Faith Is Challenged As Never Before

**The culture is attacking Christianity as never before.**

Pluralism, Relativism, and Tolerance Redefined

**Today's “new atheists” are more aggressive and more widely publicized and published than ever:**

- In our universities
- In our public schools
- In the media – movies, TV, magazines ...
- In the “social media”
- In our churches!
- In their churches !?! Yes, there are “atheist churches”.

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## Video clip: Bill Maher and Richard Dawkins

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### Why Does Evidence Matter?

Because The Bible Tells Me It Matters

1 Corinthians 13:11

*"When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me."*

- ‘Blind faith’ may be all a child needs:
  - Parents and family: “God loves you and is always with you.”
  - Sunday school: “Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so.”
- Muslims, Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses and others also rely on blind faith, but their beliefs fail to pass the test of evidence.
- If we rely totally on ‘blind faith’ in today’s world, we are vulnerable to ridicule and negative evidence that sounds very powerful. (Proverb 18:17)

### Why Does Evidence Matter?

Because The Bible Tells Me To Use My Mind

Matthew 22:37-39

- “Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your **heart**, with all your **soul**, **and with all your mind**.”
- This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall **love your neighbor** as yourself.’ ”
- Many Christians are “all in” with heart and soul and that may be sufficient for them as individuals.
- But am I also intentionally loving the LORD my God with “all my mind”?

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- And, in using my mind to reason, and to justify and support my faith, am I loving my neighbor?

### More Why – More The Bible Tells Me So

#### 1 Peter 3:15-16

- “But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.
- But do this with gentleness and respect,<sup>16</sup> keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.”
- Instructed to **always** be ready to defend our faith
- But always with “**gentleness and respect**”
- Because winning the argument is **not** the objective

### The Bible Tells Me How

- “Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.” - **Col 4:5-6**
- “Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.” - **Matt 10:16**

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## Blind Faith Would Not Have Grown The Early Church

### Wherever Paul Traveled, He Reasoned From Evidence

- [Acts 17:2](#) (In Thessalonica)
- “As was his custom, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he **reasoned** with them from the Scriptures, explaining and **proving** that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead.”
- [Acts 18:4](#) (In Corinth)
- “Every Sabbath he **reasoned** in the synagogue, trying to **persuade** Jews and Greeks.”
- [Acts 18:19](#) (In Ephesus)
- “He himself went into the synagogue and **reasoned** with the Jews.”

## Blind Faith Would Not Have Grown The Early Church

### The Disciples Had The Most Compelling Evidence

- Luke 1:2 “Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were **eyewitnesses** and servants of the word.”
- 2 Peter 1:16 “For we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but we were **eyewitnesses** of his majesty.”

### Who was the Ultimate Advocate for examination of the evidence?

- How did Jesus answer when John the Baptist had his disciples ask if Jesus was “the One”?
  - “Tell them to look at the evidence.” (paraphrased)

### Is there a conflict? The Great Commission vs Christian ‘Case Making’

### Purpose of This Series

- † To Go Deeper In Understanding Why We Believe
- † To Consider The Evidence For and Against The Christian World View
- † To Be Better Prepared To:
  - Deal With Doubt
  - Help Friends And Family Who Experience Doubt
  - Understand And “Handle” Questions And Objections by non-believers
  - Engage in a “reasonable” discussion with non-believers

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† NOT To Learn How To Win Arguments

## The Word We Will Not Use a Lot! “Apologetics”

- A perfectly good word, properly understood
- It has exploded as a field of study and ministry in the past ~25 years, although its roots go back to the N.T. & O.T.
- Problem 1: Sounds like “apologize”
- Problem 2: Sometimes falsely and narrowly defined as very scholarly and academic, characterized by:
  - † “Extreme logic”
  - † Elaborate “Arguments”
  - † Closely associated with intellectual “philosophy”
- Problem 3: Some good Christians might think that “apologetics” somehow takes away from the “saved by grace” doctrine and the importance of faith.
- Properly defined, our subject today IS “apologetics”, but we will simply not routinely use that name

## The “Big Seven-Eight” Objections:

- † “No Evidence for God”
- † “Jesus – Just a Very Wise Teacher”
- † “The Bible an Old Book of Stories”
- † “The God of the O.T. – A Moral Monster”
- † “The Problem of Evil & Suffering”
- † “No One Religion Can Be the Only Way”
- † “Science Says There Is No God”
- † “Why Do Christians Hate My Gay Friends?”

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## The Natural Response of Animals When Attacked? Fight or flight.

Two other possible responses – not a true dilemma:

- † Freeze
- † Practice the skills of an ambassador

## **Greg Koukl video clip 1 - How can we be more effective as Ambassadors for Christ? Part 1**

## **Greg Koukl video clip 2 - How can we be more effective as Ambassadors for Christ? Part 2**

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## Recap – Week 1 of 7

- † Saved by Grace – Indwelling of the Holy Spirit
- † Only God Can Change a Heart
- † But, we are commanded to “Always Be Prepared To Defend Your Faith”
- † We are commanded to carry out the Great Commission **AND** to always be prepared to present the reasons for Christianity. (The latter makes us more confident disciples and more effective as evangelists.)
- † Jesus, Paul, Peter ... “Reasoned” to Evangelize
- † Therefore, Important To Know The Evidence, the ‘Arguments’
- † But, More Important To Know **How** To Respond To Ridicule, Criticisms & Objections
- † “They Don’t Care How Much You Know Until They Know How Much You Care” (and How Much God Cares)
- † Questions Are Almost Always The Best Answers!
- † Christian adults and students **can** be more confident that Christianity is true and **can** be more **prepared** to make the case for the **truth** of the **Christian world view**.

### Examples of questions an ambassador might ask:

- † “That’s interesting. What do you mean by \_\_\_\_\_?”
- † “Can you help me understand how you came to that conclusion?”
- † “Now you’ve really got me thinking. Have you ever wondered – seriously – why you’re here? Do you ever feel like there’s an emptiness somewhere deep in your gut? Are you just the current version of an unguided process of colliding molecules on a doomed planet in a doomed universe? Is that all there is?”
- † That’s a really interesting question; and, you know what? I don’t really know the full answer. Can we get together again after I do a little research on that topic?
- † “Are you choosing to reject extensive evidence because of your presupposition that nothing supernatural is possible? Is that a blockade to your willingness to infer the most reasonable world view?”
- † “If you knew, beyond reasonable doubt, that Jesus lived, was killed by Roman soldiers, came back from the grave, is alive today and longs for you to accept Him, would you consider becoming a Christian?”

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## So, Now What?

- Personal study (books, YouTube, podcasts...)
- Home Group – Choose an Evidence Study
- “Reasonable Faith” Chapter Meetings: rfcctx.com
- Form a Book Study Group
- reTHINK Conference, March 28-29**
- “Reasons to Believe” Chapter Meetings
- “Bible and Beer Consortium” events
- Step up to help plan and lead events like this class

### Recommended Resources

- Read:
  - ✓ Tactics ..., Greg Koukl
  - ✓ More Than a Carpenter, Josh McDowell
  - ✓ Case for Faith/Christ/... , Lee Strobel
  - ✓ Cold Case Christianity/..., J. Warner Wallace
  - ✓ I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, Geisler & Turek
  - ✓ Who Made God, Edgar Andrews
  - ✓ Mere Christianity, C S Lewis
  - ✓ On Guard, William Lane Craig
- Listen/Watch – Podcasts and Video:
  - ✓ J. Warner Wallace
  - ✓ Frank Turek
  - ✓ Ravi Zacharias
  - ✓ Greg Koukl
  - ✓ Sean McDowell
  - ✓ William Lane Craig \*

### Reasonable Faith Chapter Meetings

† 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays plus special events (confirm at rfcctx.com)

## WEEK 2 – DOES GOD EXIST?

### Review of week 1 class:

- The **PROBLEM**: Young Christians walking away
- The **SOLUTION**: Go beyond teaching to training/equipping – both the church and the parents
- The **QUESTION**: How to intentionally train and equip?
- The **TACTICS**: Fight or flight .... Or ... Learn “ambassador” skills

**Questions are almost always the best answer when our faith is questioned or criticized.**

Greg Koukl's book, Tactics: A Game Plan for Discussing Your Christian Convictions

The most important tactics in Koukl's book are the first 2 “Columbo Questions”.

1. What do you mean by \_\_\_\_\_?
2. How did you come to that conclusion?

Many ways to word those questions; grace and winsomeness are always essential.

“When either person gets angry, the Christian loses.” Greg Koukl

### THIS WEEK: WHEN SOMEONE ASKS, SINCERELY OR CRITICALLY, “DOES GOD EXIST?”

#### For example, a skeptic asserts:

- “There’s No Evidence That God Exists”
- “Superstitious fearful humans ‘created’ god(s)”
- “We just believe in ‘One Less God’ ”
- “Evolution a Fact - Settled Science – no god required”
- “We don’t need your imaginary man in the sky”
- “The mythic ‘God’ of the O.T. is a moral monster”

**Dr Michael Shermer video (several of the most popular criticisms of belief in God)**

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## Truth: There are mountains of evidence, extra-Biblical, for the existence of God

There are more than 10 major categories of evidence, including:

- Beginning of the Universe
- Intelligent Design
- Fine Tuning of Universe
- Origin of Information
- Objective Morality
- Origin of Life
- Cambrian Explosion
- Irreducible Complexity
- “Mind” and consciousness
- Existence of “Evil”

Naturalism (secular humanism) fails to explain – to answer our biggest questions.

God's Crime Scene, the second book by J Warner Wallace, investigates these arguments for God.

Ron's favorite 5 categories of evidence:

1. The universe had a beginning. (Everything that comes into being is caused.)
2. Intelligent Design
3. Fine Tuning of the Universe
4. Origin of Information
5. Objective Morality

From these, we get the acronym that spells the name of our fictional sage, B. D. Fim. Commit this to memory and you'll always be prepared to respond to questions and criticisms.

**B**eginning / Big Bang

**D**esign

**F**ine Tuning

**I**nformation

**M**orality

## **B: Big Bang**

- A pillar of atheism: Infinitely old stable universe universally accepted by scientists and philosophers before about 90 years ago.
- Everything that comes into existence has a cause. The universe came into existence.

(Big bang video)

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## D: Intelligent Design

- All around us, to the naked eye or through a microscope or telescope, the evidence of design is overwhelming.
- (No video for Design)

## F: Fine tuning

- Initial conditions of Big Bang
- Ongoing conditions of the universe as a whole and our earth as a most privileged planet

(Video: William Lane Craig interview)

Fine tuned earth just about perfect in so many ways (Goldilocks zone)

For example:

- Kind of star
- Kind of planet neighbors
- Kind of galaxy
- Place in galaxy
- Place in universe
- Single moon, size & orbit
- Atmosphere
- Earth orbit
- Earth's crust
- Tectonic plates
- ... much, much, much more

(Video: A very special pale blue dot. Contrast to Carl Sagan's pale blue dot argument.)

## I: Information

- Another pillar of atheism: First life was a "simple cell".
- But every cell of every living thing contains an outrageously complex digital computer program.
- All intelligence, including codes and programs, is the creation of an intelligent agent

Video: Discovery and study of DNA

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## M: Morality

- Why is anything “good” or “evil” if God does not exist?

(Video: Craig vs Wolpert)

(Video: Reasonable Faith animation)

## Take Away from session 2:

When someone asserts that there is no evidence for the existence of God, how do you respond?

Depending on the nature of the assertion:

- Columbo question #1 \_\_\_\_\_
  - Then, listen ...
- Columbo question #2 \_\_\_\_\_
  - Then, listen ...
- Then, ... “There was a time in my life when I was very skeptical, but was blown away when I discovered the mountains of evidence that there has to be a God, without even opening the Bible; and it has radically changed my life.”
- “If I ask you a direct question, may I ask you to give me an honest answer? I’ll respect your answer either way.” ...
- “Are you sincerely interested in the pursuit of truth, in the big questions of life including this question – whether there is evidence for God – or do you just in all honesty not care?”

Of the many categories of evidence for the existence of God, these 5 may be the most powerful:

- B \_\_\_\_\_
- D \_\_\_\_\_
- F \_\_\_\_\_
- I \_\_\_\_\_
- M \_\_\_\_\_

### WEEK 3 – THE PROBLEM OF EVIL AND SUFFERING

**Last Week:** There are mountains of evidence for the existence of God. ‘BDFIM’ enables us to always be ready to share 5 of the most powerful categories of evidence.

**TONIGHT:** How can a loving, all powerful God allow so much evil and suffering? Many offer this question as a reason for not believing in God.

(Video: Sampling of the many types of suffering)

#### **TYPES OF EVIL & SUFFERING:**

- Man-made (“Moral Evil”), people hurting people
- Natural disasters
- Disease, birth defects ...

CAUTION! How we respond can do more harm than good. Logical arguments don’t matter when someone has been personally affected by tragedy of any kind.

For C S Lewis, the problem of evil and suffering was a major obstacle to accepting Christianity.

(Video: Why Lewis struggled with this objection)

**So, how can we respond?** Is it wise to say sin is the reason for all the evil and suffering. (Not whether this is true, but whether this response is the best way for Christ’s ambassadors to respond)

**You can be right and still lose.** Grace, wisdom and discernment are needed to be successful ambassadors. We want to win the person, not the argument.

So, then, how do we respond?

What did Greg Koukl teach us to do in week 1?

*(Clue: 2 Steps to Gather information)*

1. Your 4<sup>th</sup> grader prays for Aunt Martha and asks, “How do you know God is really there?”
  
2. Your 10<sup>th</sup> grader says, “Why did God allow my friend to get cancer? I don’t think there is a God.”
  
3. Your sister-in-law says she’s an atheist because a good and loving God wouldn’t allow all the evil and suffering in the world.

(Video: Is God Good?)

Some reasonable responses:

- “Big Picture” response
- “Meaning of Good” response
- “How Much” response
- “Ultimate” response
- “God’s Plan” response (not wise in many situations)

### BIG PICTURE RESPONSE

- † OK. Let’s say suffering proves there is no God. It seems to me that we now have an even bigger problem. We still have a world full of suffering and evil, don’t we? And we can’t blame God because there isn’t one. Right?
- † But here’s an even bigger question we have to deal with. What is it about crime, cruelty, disease, war and natural disasters that makes them evil?
- † Without God, who gets to decide **What is evil?**
- † Better yet, **what is “good”?**
- † **WHY is anything good???**

## MEANING OF ‘GOOD’ RESPONSE

- † This brings us to one of life’s biggest questions. What is the basis for the concept of “good”?
- † If billions of years of purposeless collisions of matter and energy have produced everything, including us, then how can anything be called good? Isn’t it just a question of survival and reproduction?
- † If the secular-humanist evolution model is true, let me ask you this. What is really “bad” or “wrong” with:
  - Torturing animals, just for the fun of it?
  - Killing 6 million Jews - or any genocide? Isn’t that just survival of the fittest?
  - Torturing and killing “inferior” babies, just for the fun of it?
- † Do we really know what is “evil” or “bad”? Why?

## The “How Much” Response

- † God asks you how much evil you think He should prevent.
  - Killer storms? Big earthquakes? Tsunamis? Famines? Epidemics? Wars? Genocide? Rape? Murder? ... Death???
- † How about:
  - Heavy rains, lightning, ice storms, falling trees, allergies, colds and flu, muggings, mind altering drugs, bad bacteria, distracted drivers, road rage, the internet, movies & TV, smart phones ... ?
- † Don’t forget:
  - Greed; pride; bullying; crime, ... evil thoughts???
- † How much evil should God stop?
- † Do you mind if He starts with you?
- † What are the implications? Where does that ultimately lead us?
- † So, wouldn’t a world without evil have to be a world without freedom of choice?
- † Do your children have the free will to love you? To do “good” things? To do “bad” things? Could they really love you if they were not free not to???

### The Ultimate Response?

- † You know what? It's obvious that you're very intelligent and that you care deeply about our world; and you seem to be sincerely seeking the real truth of our existence and the meaning of life – if there is one.
- † So here's an interesting question for you to consider: How big would our world's problems of suffering be if every human obeyed the ten commandments, always, and followed the teachings of Jesus? Instead, we live in a world where God and Christians are rejected and ridiculed. How's that working for us?
- † Please ... let me ask you just one more question, because I care about you. ...

**If** you could study all the evidence both for and against Christianity, and if that evidence pointed overwhelmingly to the conclusion that Jesus of Nazareth ...

- actually lived,
- was killed by Roman soldiers,
- came back from death so we could choose true freedom,
- longs for you to commit to a life-changing relationship

### Would you become a Christian?

There was a time in my life when I didn't know what to believe. All the world's "successes" left me empty and confused. When I discovered the wisdom of Jesus and the mountains of evidence that Christianity is true, I found a peace and fulfillment that surpass human understanding. Would you like to know that kind of peace?

(Video: Ravi Zacharias)

### TAKE AWAY

- † No Simple Answer
- † “Natural” Evil and “Moral” Evil
- † Isn’t This An Even Bigger Problem For Non-Christians?
- † Free Will the Ultimate Explanation for “Moral” Evil
  - Love The Supreme Ethic – Must Be Free To \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_!
- † “Natural” Evil: How Much Should God Remove?
- † God Uses “Trials” to Build Character
- † God Brought Us In; He Can Take Us Out!
- † How To Respond To Ridicule, Criticisms & Objections?
- † \_\_\_\_\_ Are The Best Answers!

### WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS C S LEWIS QUOTE?

“To try to exclude the possibility of suffering which the order of nature and the existence of free-wills involve, and you find that you have excluded life itself.”

## WEEK 4 – THE PROBLEM OF EVIL AND SUFFERING (part 2)

### Last Week – Part 1 of 2

How Can a Loving, All Powerful God Allow So Much Evil and Suffering?

Two Major Categories:

1. “Moral” Evil – People Hurting People
2. “Natural” – Disease, Natural Disasters ...

How to respond:

1. “I hate evil & suffering as much as anyone!”
2. “What do you mean by evil?”
3. “What’s your basis for knowing something is evil?”
4. “Have you ever considered ...? [the “How Much” response]
5. “Is it OK if He starts with you?”

### Take Away:

- Impossible to Love God if not free to NOT Love God
- Evil is only possible if we are free to not love God

### What Is Evil?

#### Cambridge Dictionary:

† The condition of being immoral, cruel, or bad, or an act of this type

- ▶ Immoral: Not following accepted standards of morally right behavior or thought
- ▶ Cruel: Extremely unkind and intentionally causing pain
- ▶ Bad: Not good; disappointing or unpleasant, or causing difficulties or harm

### Animated Video – What Is Good?

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## Week 4 – Evil, Part 2 of 2

### How Can an All Loving, All Knowing, All Powerful God Allow So Much Evil and Suffering?

Key Questions:

1. How much evil is “moral” vs “natural”?
  - How much moral evil would there be if everyone obeyed the 10 commandments?
  - If no moral evil, would we be better able to address “natural” evil?
2. Does God use evil/suffering for His purposes?
3. Does God ever cause suffering?
4. What world view has a solution?
5. Why is it illogical to believe that God might have good reason to allow evil?

PBS VIDEO – “Philosophy”

Theodicy

† Cambridge Dictionary

- “the question of how God can exist when there is evil in the world, or a good reason or explanation for this”
  - *... the problem of how to reconcile a just God with a world containing evil.*

† compellingtruth.org

- “... vindicating the divine attributes of God, particularly holiness and justice, while acknowledging the true existence of physical and moral evil.”

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We Haven't Talked About Trials for Refinement

- † Does God “allow” us to suffer to train and prepare us for our part in His plan?
- † Consider Job, ...
  - Joseph,
  - King Nebuchadnezzar,
  - Abraham Lincoln,
  - Teddy Roosevelt
  - Winston Churchill,
  - Joni Eareckson Tada,
  - Nick Vujicic

and countless more ...

Video - Joni Eareckson Tada

Video - Nick Vujicic

Video – Joni, part 2

Does God Promise Christians No Suffering?

Matthew 10:33-35 - Not Peace, but a Sword

- † <sup>34</sup>“Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. <sup>35</sup>For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

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There Will Be Trials, Even Persecution (many Bible passages)

God allowed Job to suffer!

† Job lost everything but his life

- Home
- Possessions
- Health
- Family

† But God restored everything – doubled!

Job 19:25-27 ESV

† “For I know that my Redeemer lives,  
and at the last he will stand upon the earth.

<sup>26</sup> And after my skin has been thus destroyed,  
yet in my flesh I shall see God,

<sup>27</sup> whom I shall see for myself,  
and my eyes shall behold, and not another.  
My heart faints within me!”

Does God Ever Cause Suffering?

- Biblical “Wrath” of God?
- The Potter and the Clay?
- The Dentist and the Patient?
- Does God Ever “Call a Believer Home”?

Video - Peter Kreeft, Professor of Philosophy, Boston College (Prager U.)

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### Recap

- † No Simple Answer
- † “Natural” Evil and “Moral” Evil
- † Free Will the Ultimate Explanation for “Moral” Evil
  - Love The Supreme Ethic – Must Be Free To \_\_\_\_\_!
- † “Natural” Evil: How Much ... If No Moral Evil?
- † “Natural” Evil: How Much Should God Remove?
- † God Uses “Trials” to Build Character
- † God Brought Us In; He Can Take Us Out!
- † How To Respond To Ridicule, Criticisms & Objections?
- † Isn’t Evil An Even Bigger Problem For Non-Christians?
- † \_\_\_\_\_ Are The Best Answers!

### Questions Are The Best Answers

- † “What do you mean by evil? ...
- † “Why do you think God shouldn’t allow evil and suffering?” ... Why? ... Why? ...
- † Have you ever considered what it would be like if God prevented all evil and suffering?  
...
- † Is it OK if God starts with you?
- † “If you knew, beyond reasonable doubt, that the Bible is the inspired word of God, and that Jesus lived, was killed by Roman soldiers, came back from the grave, is alive today and longs for you to accept Him, would you become a Christian?” ...

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## Week 5

### Do Christians Hate My Gay Friends?

#### 5 minute review of our first 4 Weeks:

- ✓ We Have a Problem – Young people losing their faith
- ✓ We Can Learn to Respond as Ambassadors for Christ
  - Arguing is always the worst response
  - Questions are (almost) always the best first response
  - **Tactics – Columbo Questions**
- ✓ Big Objection #1: Does God Exist
  - **B D Fim** = 5 of the most powerful evidences
- ✓ Big Objection #2: Why Evil & Suffering
  - Moral Evil vs “Natural” Evil
  - Evil is powerful evidence that God exists

#### This Week - Do Christians Hate My Gay Friends?

A few key questions:

1. What does today's culture say?
2. How are Christians portrayed?
3. What does the Bible say?
4. How should Christians respond?
5. What would Jesus do if He were here?

What does today's “Post-Christian” Culture want to teach your kids? Words matter.

Tolerance, Diversity, Marriage, Love, ...

Homophobia, Transphobia, Bigotry, Hate ...

#### This Culture War is **Spiritual Warfare**

*Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy **the devil prowls around** like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. - 1 Peter 5:8*

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. - Ephesians 6:10-18*

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If this is **SPIRITUAL WARFARE**, A Culture War Between World Views:

- Are we prepared to respond?
- Are we preparing/equipping our kids to stand strong?
- What can we do about it?
- Are we willing to stand for truth?
- What would Jesus do ... here ... now???

VIDEO: "Gay Pride"

VIDEO: Gay Church, D.C.

VIDEO: "Lutheran" Church, Denver

➤ Your Thoughts?

VIDEO: Australian Prime Minister

VIDEO: CNN "Report"

VIDEO: USA Today "Interview"

Pastor – Tempe, AZ

➤ Your Thoughts?

VIDEO: BBC Report - How happy are gays?

➤ Your Thoughts?

VIDEO: Can Gays Go To Heaven?

VIDEO: Ravi Zacharias

VIDEO: Rick Warren

➤ Your Thoughts?

## Truth Talks Class

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VIDEO: Frank Turek

VIDEO: Rick Warren

➤ Your Thoughts?

VIDEO: God's Definition of Love

➤ Your Thoughts?

VIDEO: Brett Kunkle

➤ Your Thoughts?

How should you respond before asking someone to consider Brett's 3 points?

Who has the burden to defend a position?

RECAP:

1. Always ask Columbo questions first to get more information.
2. Biblical truth: All sexual sin, outside of God's plan for marriage, is sin.
3. Some individuals have same sex attraction, for whatever reasons.
4. Attraction can become obsession.
5. Attraction is not sexual sin; action on that attraction is sin.
6. Incidence of depression, drugs, and suicide is proportionately much higher in LGBT 'community'.
7. No matter how repulsive to you, your Christian duty is to love everyone and to be salt and light in the world.
8. We must resist the tendency to be self-righteous, like the Pharisees!
9. We should always ask, "What would Jesus do? Where would he be?"

# Truth Talks Class

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## Week 6 Why We Should Believe and Trust the Bible

Review of Class Purpose: Why Apologetics?

1. Christianity is under attack as never before!
2. By knowing the weapons of the enemy, we will become ...
  - a. Immunized against those attacks,
  - b. More knowledgeable of our strengths,
  - c. More confident disciples,
  - d. More effective evangelists.

Evangelists! Seriously?

What is Evangelism?

Engaging with non-believers and presenting the Gospel

We can learn to engage and to respond as Ambassadors for Christ.

- Arguing is always the worst response.
- Questions are (almost) always the best first response.

Tactics – Columbo Questions

The power of stories:

15 Second Testimony

The Big Objections:

1. Does God Exist? > B D Fim
2. Why Evil & Suffering? > “How much? ... Why? ...”
3. Why Do Christians Hate LGBTQ? “Compassion ... Truth”
4. Why Should We Believe the Bible?

# Truth Talks Class

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THIS WEEK: How does the world criticize the Bible?

1. Full of errors
  - a. Embellished by Christians Through the Centuries
  - b. Full of contradictions
  - c. Ancient fictional legends
  - d. Disproved by Science
  - e. Gospels Fabricated Decades Later
  - f. Bible is an Interpretation of a Translation
  - g. Put together by Rome for Political Reasons

The critic says, “There’s No Way the Bible is The Word of God”

1. The Bible isn’t just not “inerrant”, it is overflowing with errors.
  - a. 400,000 “errors” in the NT manuscripts alone
2. Old Testament Stories are just like other ancient legends.
  - a. Adam & Eve, Noah, Abraham, Joseph, The Exodus, Jericho, David, Solomon, ...
3. Contradictions & factual errors in both OT and NT
4. Today’s Bible just an interpretation of a translation
5. The Canon was ‘built’ by Rome for political reasons centuries later
  - a. Excluded the other “Gospels”
6. Science disproves Bible stories

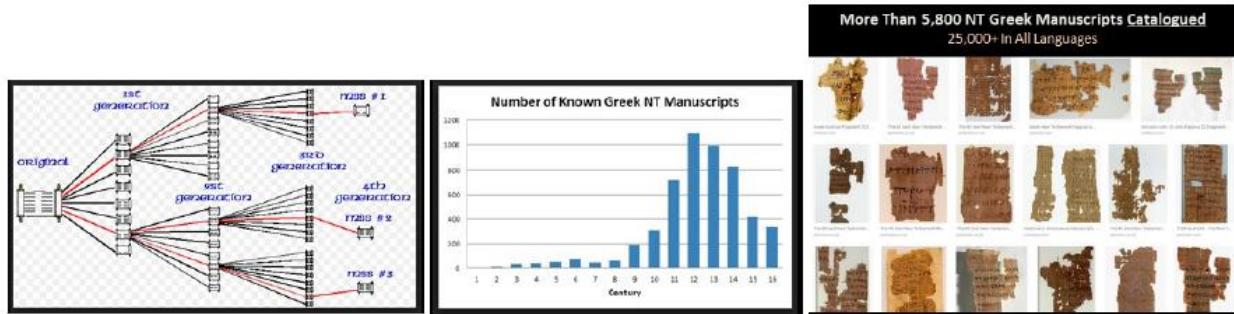
VIDEO: Bart Ehrman – N T Errors

VIDEO: J Warner Wallace – N T Errors

# Truth Talks Class

## Multiplication of Copies:

More Than 5,800 NT Greek Manuscripts Catalogued, 25,000+ In All Languages



**VIDEO:** J Warner Wallace – How we know what the original ‘autograph’ said

**Critics** say, “Bible Stories are Pure Fiction, Just Like All the Other Ancient Legends.”

“You no longer believe in Zeus, Neptune, Thor and the Tooth Fairy. We’ve just dropped our belief in one more imaginary god than you. Seriously, do you really believe in all those old Bible stories – Noah, Daniel, Jonah, ..... ?”

**Archaeological Evidence** Has Validated Biblical Detail & Historicity Over and Over Again. Just a few examples:

1. Nebuchadnezzar
2. The Hittites
3. King Sargon II
4. King David
5. The Pool of John 5:2
6. The Exodus from Egypt

## The Real Mount Sinai!

- **NOT** on the Sinai peninsula in Egypt! In Saudi Arabia, just as both O.T. and N.T. say.
- Abundant artifacts exist but Saudi government no longer allows access.

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**Critics say,** “Scribes and ‘Scholars’ Made Untold Changes Through the Centuries”  
both Accidental and Intentional

For Example: Before 1946, Critics said, “Isaiah 53 had to be added after the crucifixion.” The oldest extant manuscript of Isaiah was dated to about 900 A.D.”

“... pierced for our transgressions ... the Lord makes his life an offering for sin ...”

**1946:** The greatest archaeological discovery of all time?

- Scrolls written by the Essenes more than 100 years before Christ, and stored safely in the caves at Qumron.
- Every O.T. book except Esther.
- The “Great Isaiah Scroll” one of the most intact complete books and what we call chapter 53 is virtually identical to the 900 A.D. manuscript!

**Critics say,** “The books of the Bible were selected, by a narrow vote, at the First Council of Nicaea, in 325 A.D., and numerous other books and gospels were rejected because they didn’t support Rome’s political needs.”

**VIDEO:** Chuck Missler – How We Got the Canon

### Take Aways / Recap

The Bible is:

- 66 books by 40+ human authors
- God breathed - inspired/superintended by the Holy Spirit
- Supernaturally preserved
- One single INERRANT message of Redemption
- Validated by Archaeology and History
- Validated by FULFILLED PROPHECY

Chuck Missler has described the Bible as, “An extraterrestrial message system from outside of space and time, ... God’s love letter to humanity, written in blood.”

Class notes/handouts: 7 Week Class beginning 9/23/18, Cottonwood Creek Church

# Truth Talks Class

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## Week 7

### Evidence for the Resurrection

#### Week 1

##### Why Apologetics?

- By knowing the weapons of the enemy, we will be...
  - Immunized against those attacks,
  - More knowledgeable of our strengths,
  - More confident disciples,
  - More effective evangelists.
- **How to be Ambassadors for Christ**
  - Questions & stories vs fight-or-flight

#### Weeks 2 - 6

- † Does God Exist? > **B D Fim**
- † Why Evil & Suffering? > "How much? ... Why? ..."
- † Why Do Christians Hate LGBTQ? "Compassion ... Truth"
- † Why Should We Believe the Bible?
  - † Manuscripts
  - † Archaeology
  - † Prophecy
  - † Preservation

#### This Week

##### The critic says, "The Resurrection Never Happened!"

- † The core issue: Naturalism vs. Miracles
- † Historical Jesus vs. Mythicism
- † The materialist's attempts to explain the empty tomb
- † The evidence for the Resurrection

#### Multiple Inoculations

In each of the following video clips, How Many Times Would You Ask

- What do you mean by \_\_\_\_\_?
- How did you decide that is true?

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VIDEO: Bart Ehrman, The 'Mainstream' Scholar View – 'Higher Criticism'

VIDEO: Richard Carrier, The Extreme Atheist View

VIDEO: Marcus Borg, The 'Liberal' Church!

VIDEO: William Lane Craig, Evangelical Christian Philosopher

VIDEO: Mike Licona, Christian Author & Apologist

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VIDEO: Matt Dillahunty, One More Shot

Frank Turek's Hierarchy of the Big Questions

Does truth exist?

Does God exist?

Are miracles possible?

Is Jesus true (who He says He is)?

What does this perspective tell us about tonight's topic?

Pop Quiz: List the most powerful categories of evidence for the resurrection:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## TAKE AWAYS

1. If God doesn't exist, then no resurrection
2. If miracles are not possible, then no resurrection
3. The resurrection is the front line in the battle of worldviews:

## NATURALISM vs CHRISTIANITY

John Lennon's "Imagine" is the New World Anthem for mankind's self actualization, if religion would just die so the intellectuals can build the brave new world of secular humanism.

"...Imagine there's no countries; it isn't hard to do.

Nothing to kill or die for, and no religion too.

Imagine all the people, living life in peace. ..."

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