

Answers to Many Other Common Questions

Question 1. How do we know God really exists?

God's existence is clearly revealed in the things He has made. The vastness and order of the universe, the precise movement of the stars and planets, the incredible variety and complexity of plants, animals, birds, fish, and insects, all point to a creator of stupendous power and intelligence. Man himself reflects a creative God. His brain is greater than the world's most powerful computer, his body more intricate than the world's most complex machinery. The fact that DNA involves a sophisticated digital code puts the matter beyond doubt. It is self-evident that a code cannot come about by accident; it must have been designed by a super intelligence. The SETI program searching for extra-terrestrial intelligent life in the universe is in fact based on listening for some form of coded message which would be regarded as evidence of intelligent beings.

Question 2. How do we know the Bible is God's Word? Isn't it full of myths and contradictions?

It is entirely logical for God to give us a written word, as verbal communication passed down through the ages would be totally unreliable. Although the Bible has been systematically attacked for years, no one has yet proven contradictions, myths or errors. Archaeologists have even used the Bible as a guide to ancient cities, and the findings have proven the Bible to be true over and over again. Many remarkable Bible prophecies about people, events, cities and nations have come to pass, such as the rise and fall of the Babylonian, Persian, Greek and Roman empires, and an amazing number of prophecies were fulfilled by the birth, life, death and resurrection of Christ. Perhaps the greatest proof of its divine inspiration is the way the Bible has transformed the lives of millions, including many whom the world had given up as hopeless; and it is still transforming lives today. Jesus Himself endorsed the Old Testament, and the New Testament writers claimed that all the Scriptures are inspired by God.

Question 3. Hasn't science proved the Bible wrong?

No! True science involves carrying out experiments and tests and drawing conclusions from the unbiased analysis of the resulting data and observations. Such science has never been found to contradict the Bible. In fact, many scientific principles and discoveries have been inspired by truths written in the Bible thousands of years ago. The Bible contains scientific facts about medicine, hygiene, diets, the stars and other marvels of nature, many of which are only being understood in recent times. For example, the basic medical practice of washing of hands after touching dead people, which was rejected by hospitals when first proposed, was inspired by the biblical hygiene laws. God asked Job whether he knew the ordinances (laws) of the heavens and how they affect the earth. We now know that the universe is indeed governed by laws, and are still learning about them.

Question 4. What about evolution?

Evolution is no more than a theory based on unprovable assumptions, and cannot be tested by proper scientific experiments. It was developed by people who wanted to discredit the Bible, such as Darwin and others. It depends on mutations and natural selection to "create" more and more advanced forms of life. The real truth is that mutations never result in increased genetic information, so that the basic foundation of evolution has never been demonstrated. Natural selection, which is often used to support

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evolution only results in variations within the basic families or kinds (e.g. variations within the dog family, the cat family or the horse family), and never results in the formation of a new kind creature.

The early evolutionists expected to prove their theory by finding links between the kinds in fossils. However, despite millions of fossils being dug up over many years, not one decisive piece of evidence for their theory has been unearthed. None of the so-called "proofs" which have appeared from time to time have stood the test of thorough scientific examination, and some have even been shown to be fakes. The stunning discovery that DNA involves a highly complex digital code, conclusively proves that an intelligent being was involved in designing and creating human and all other forms of life, and study of the human body and the structure of animals, birds, insects, marine life and plant life reveals a stupendous array of sophisticated engineering and chemical design features, many of which we do not yet fully understand. Many of these are being studied by scientists and engineers seeking to learn about and adapt the advanced technology to a wide range of applications from aerodynamic control systems to super glues. It is clearly inconceivable that these were developed accidentally.

Perhaps most importantly, science has no explanation as to how life originated from inorganic matter!

Question 5. Why doesn't God intervene in the world?

He already has! The birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus are central to the history and future of the world and the people in it. Through going our own way and rejecting God and His Word, the world is in a state of separation and alienation from God. However, because of His great love for us, God sent Jesus to intervene, and provide a way out of the problem. If God came down to earth now to meet man face to face, He would have no choice but to sit in judgment over us. Thankfully He prefers to continue to offer salvation through Jesus until the time when He decides to bring this present age to an end, after which His final judgment will take place.

Question 6. If God loves us, why does He punish us and send us to hell?

A system of justice with punishment of law breakers is considered to be normal and necessary in every civilized country. We would be outraged if criminals were allowed to do as they wished without restraint. Why then is it unjust or strange for God to have a system of justice and punishment for His universe? God's great love for us is clearly demonstrated by the crucifixion of Jesus who, though totally innocent Himself, bore our punishment to make a way for us to be freely pardoned. The fact that He was willing to sacrifice His only Son reveals just how great His love for us is!

Question 7. Why did Jesus have to die on the cross?

Jesus took our wrong doings and lawlessness (sins) upon Himself as our substitute in order to make a way for us to escape the punishment rightfully due to us. This allowed God to offer us forgiveness for our sins, without setting aside His justice, as the due penalty was paid by Jesus. The horrific physical and spiritual sufferings of Jesus graphically illustrate just how far we have collectively fallen below God's standards and laws, and should provide a great incentive to all of us to take advantage of God's gracious offer while there is still time.

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Question 8. Wasn't Jesus just a great teacher?

If Jesus was only a teacher and not the Son of God, then He was a liar, fraud and charlatan, who has deceived untold millions. Why? Because He specifically claimed to be divine, equal with the Father and to possess eternal life. Furthermore, He allowed His followers to worship Him. No, Jesus is either who He said He is or a fake. The choice is ours to make.

Question 9. What is sin?

Sin is the breaking of God's laws. It is also missing the mark or standard of behaviour set by God for His creation. The Bible informs us that everyone has sinned and fallen short of His requirements. We are all responsible for responding to the light we have received concerning God's laws and standards, and will be judged according to this. We all have God's law "written" on our hearts, and our conscience is designed to tell us when we do wrong. The Bible provides further light, and those of us who have been exposed to it will be responsible for how we react to the truths it has brought to us. Those who have not had access to the Bible are responsible to the laws of God in their heart, and to what their conscience tells them.

Question 10. Is it possible to be too great a sinner to be forgiven by God?

No! Christ died for all our sins, no matter how great; and the Bible tells us that He is able to save to the uttermost. Paul the Apostle regarded himself the chiefest of sinners as a murderer of Christians, and regarded his own salvation as an extreme example of God's grace. Since then many great sinners down through history have been transformed through faith in Jesus, and it is still happening today.

Question 11. Why didn't the Jews accept Jesus as Messiah?

Many of them did. The 12 initial Apostles were all Jews, and other major figures in the early church were Jews, including Paul, who was formerly a Pharisee, a strict religious sect who strongly opposed Jesus. The first big influx of new believers into the early church consisted of Jews, as many thousands of them responded to the Apostles' ministry. Later even some of the priests were followers of Christ. Since then, Jews have continued to accept Jesus as Messiah down through the centuries, and it is still happening today. The Bible indicates that the Jews as a nation will receive Jesus as Messiah when He returns to set up His kingdom.

Question 12. Why is there suffering and injustice in the world?

In the beginning of creation everything was good. However, man turned away from God and became separated from His wisdom and His blessing. As a consequence, the world fell under the influence of the evil fallen angel Lucifer (Satan), who brought oppression, injustice, destruction and death - things never intended by God. While God has given us a free will, He has also provided a way out through Jesus. God is constantly looking for opportunities to help us find Jesus as our Saviour, and sometimes uses the evil intended by Satan to lead us to Jesus. This has happened time and time again when people facing desperate situations have turned to God.

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Question 13. Why do evil people seem to prosper and get away with it?

They may seem to be doing well now, but they will not escape God's justice. It will eventually catch up with them either in this life or on God's judgment day, when no one will escape. However, we need to remember that God loves all people and wants to give everyone time to repent and be saved.

Question 14. What about people who have never heard about Christ?

The laws of God are "written" on the hearts of every person, and the conscience is given to judge our own actions. Those who have never read the Bible will be judged by their own conscience. Those who have been exposed to the Bible will be judged by it. We will all be judged according to the light we have received.

Having said that, the Bible teaches that wherever there are people with open hearts seeking after the truth, God will find a way to bring the Good News about salvation through Jesus to them. There are many examples of this happening to people, even in countries where it is forbidden to talk to others about Him.

Question 15. What about other religions?

Jesus said that He is the way and that that no one can come to Father God except by Him. Furthermore, the Bible presents Him as the only mediator between God and man. A mediator must be accepted by both parties. Who else but Jesus is qualified? As the Son of God, He is acceptable to God, as the son of man he fully understands and empathizes with our situation. Which other person throughout history is acceptable to God? All of us are, and always have been, in the same boat, as we have all sinned. In addition, He is the only man qualified to be the substitute to pay for the world's sins, as He is the only one who has never sinned. Finally, He is the only one to rise from the dead and be able to help us.

Question 16. Isn't it enough to lead a good life?

It would be if anyone could live a life to match God's standards. The fact is that none of us qualify. Furthermore, who is qualified to even define a "good" life except God Himself? The majority of people will inevitably draw the line of sin below themselves. Man's standards change from country to country and from age to age. Where is the reliable standard of "goodness"? Obviously it must come from God, and the line that He has drawn is unfortunately higher than the behaviour of everyone in this world. The only way out is for us to make a new start and share in God's goodness through being born again (or recreated) as completely new people.

Question 17. Isn't Christianity a crutch?

It's much more than a crutch. The Bible presents man as being totally unable to save himself from the consequences of sin and separation from God. Without Christ's intervention in the world, all men would be liable for God's judgment and would be excluded from heaven forever. Man's nature is described as being beyond repair, and Christ's death and resurrection provides the only way for us to be reborn with a completely new nature.

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Question 18. Why is there a devil?

Satan was created as the angel Lucifer who apparently had a prominent position in heaven. He rebelled against God's authority and desired God's throne for himself. He led a number of angels in opposition to God and became known as Satan, which means "Adversary". The Bible tells us that Satan will eventually be judged and punished. In the meantime, he tempts mankind into disobedience to God, and opposes those who decide to follow Jesus. The Bible tells us that his power was broken by Christ's death and resurrection, and the challenge to all believers is to resist him by faith in Word of God and to play a part in liberating others from his deception.

Question 19. Isn't church attendance enough?

No! Religious services and church membership will not save us. We are saved by personally receiving forgiveness of sins through Jesus, and by becoming a new creation.

We then automatically become part of the true Church, which consists not of buildings or organizations, but of all true believers. We should then see church attendance as gathering together with God's people to worship Him, to partake of the Lord's Supper (Communion), to be exposed to the teaching of God's Word and to fulfill our role as a member of the body of Christ on earth.

Question 20. Can't we obtain salvation by good deeds?

Definitely not! The Bible makes it very clear that we are cannot be saved by good works, but only by God's grace through faith in Christ, so that no one will have any grounds for pride or boasting. However, once we are born again we are expected to do good works. In fact, good works are one of the evidences that we have been truly born again. The Bible teaches that faith that does not produce works is actually not true faith.

Question 21. Can't we be saved after we die?

No! Jesus and the Apostles taught that we must be saved in this life. If we do not take the opportunity of receiving salvation through Christ in this life then, after death, we will face the Judgment of God. Jesus made it very clear in the account of Lazarus and the rich man in Luke 16: 19-31 that we settle our eternal destiny, one way or another, before we die.

Question 22. What about reincarnation?

Reincarnation originates from Eastern religions, and has never been part of the Christian faith. The Bible clearly teaches that we die only once, and then have to face the judgment of God. Some claim that people in hypnotic trances have described past lives. However, hypnotism has been used for centuries by those involved in occult arts, and can result in contact with evil spirits who are only too ready to supply false teaching and to deceive us into making wrong spiritual choices. The Bible makes it clear that we only have one life on this earth, so we cannot put off making vital spiritual decisions until after death, as it will be too late.

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Question 23. What about the fighting between churches and denominations?

Church membership does not necessarily mean that a person is a true Christian. A true believer has been born of the Holy Spirit and is committed to loving fellow Christians and his neighbour as himself. Fighting between so-called Christians simply reveals they either are not true Christians, or that they have fallen back into the ways of man. This does not mean that Christians cannot have disagreements and debates about the meaning or application of parts of the Bible, or about the conduct of the ministry. Even Paul, Barnabas, and Peter had their disagreements, the outcome of which was of key importance to the future of the church.

Question 24. Why do some Christians seem to be hypocrites?

Many people call themselves Christians but have never been truly born again, and therefore they have never really been changed from their natural selves. People who are truly saved, aim to incorporate the teachings of Jesus into their everyday lives, and not just on Sundays. From time to time, true Christians do lapse into sin, but it is no longer part of their lifestyle. Eventually they obtain forgiveness through Christ and resume their life in God.

Question 25. Why didn't salvation work for me when I prayed? I haven't felt any different.

Salvation is not based on feeling. If you honestly and sincerely acknowledge your sin, put your trust in Jesus for forgiveness of sin, decide to live a new life, and submit your whole life to Him as your Lord, then the Bible (God's Word to us) assures you that you are saved. You then need to put your faith in God's Word that you are indeed now one of His people and begin to live a life pleasing to Him. You will not necessarily have any particular feeling to rely on, though you will begin to have an inward assurance about your salvation, which comes from the Holy Spirit. Don't be intimidated by stories about people having great spiritual experiences. In reality, this only happens to a minority, and most new believers generally have a similar experience to you! Learning to live by faith in God's Word is a key part of being a Christian, while feelings are unreliable and vary from day to day. Having said all of that, we will all have wonderful experiences with God from time to time, usually when we least expect it!

Question 26. Could I have committed the unpardonable sin?

Jesus said that if anyone witnesses many undisputable miracles such as casting out of demons and says that it is the work of Satan, it is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit and will not be forgiven. So, if you are not in that category, you haven't committed the unpardonable sin.

Sometimes Christians fear they cannot be forgiven when they have sinned. This can only happen if you deliberately turn back to lead a life of sin and unbelief which can cause your heart to become so hard that the Holy Spirit is unable to renew you to repentance. The fact that you are asking this question means that the Holy Spirit is still working in you. God is always ready to abundantly forgive those who sincerely turn back to Him. Remember Jesus received Peter back even after Peter cursed and swore and publicly denied he even knew Him.

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Bible References for Further Study

- Question 1. Ps. 19:1-4, Rom. 1:19-20.
- Question 2. 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20-21; John 20:31.
- Question 3. Lev. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15; Deut. 23:10-13; Job 38:31-33).
- Question 4. Gen. 1:1-28; Deut. 4:32; Mark 13:19; Col. 1:16-17.
- Question 5. Heb. 1:1-2; John 3:16-17; Rom. 5:6; 2 Pet. 3:9; Mark 16:15-16; Rev. 20:11-12.
- Question 6. Ezek. 18:25-32; Rom. 5:8; John 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 3:9.
- Question 7. Luke 24:46-47; Rom. 5:6-8; 2 Pet. 3:9.
- Question 8. John 10:30; John 10:38; John 8:58; John 20:28; Luke 5:8; Matt. 16:15-17.
- Question 9. 1 John 3:4; Rom. 3:23; Rom. 2:14-15.
- Question 10. Heb. 7:25; 1 Tim. 1:13-16.
- Question 11. Acts 2:5 & 41-42; Acts 4:4; Acts 6:7; Acts 21:20; Rom. 11:25-27.
- Question 12. Gen. 1:31; Ps. 107; 2 Chron. 33:12-13; Dan. 12:28-37; Acts 16:25-34; Acts 9: 32-35.
- Question 13. Ps. 73; Ezek. 18:32; 2 Pet. 3:9; Acts 17:31.
- Question 14. Rom. 2:12-16; Acts 10; Acts 16:6-10.
- Question 15. John 14:6; 1 Tim. 2:5; Rom. 3:23; Heb. 4:15-16; Heb. 7:25.
- Question 16. Rom. 3:9-12; Rom. 3:23; Matt. 19:16-17; John 3:3-5; 2 Peter 1:2-4.
- Question 17. Jer. 17:9; Rom. 3:10-11; Eph. 2:12; Rom 7:24-25; John 3:3-8.
- Question 18. Isa. 14:12-15; Jude 6; Rev. 20:1-3 & 10; 1 John 3:8; Col. 2:15; 1 Pet. 5:8-9.
- Question 19. John 3:3-8; Acts 2:47; Eph. 5:29-30.
- Question 20. Eph. 2:8-10; Jam. 2:14-26.
- Question 21. Heb. 9:27; Rev. 20:11-15; Luke 16:26.
- Question 22. Heb. 9:27; Luke 16:26; Luke 23:42-43.
- Question 23. John: 13:35; 1 John 4: 7-8; 1 Cor. 3:3; Acts 15: 36-40; Gal. 2:11-21; Acts 15:1-31.
- Question 24. Rom. 8:8, John 3:3-8
- Question 25. 2 Cor. 5:7; Rom. 10:9-10; John 20:29; John 20:31.
- Question 26. Matt. 12:22-32; Heb. 6: 4-6; 1 John 1:8-9; Heb. 7:25; Mark 14:71; 1 Tim. 1:13-16.