



Evangelism Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

This is a simple and concise document to provide seed thoughts in helping Gospel Light Christian Church members reach out to seekers. As such, it is not meant to be absolutely comprehensive. We welcome all enquiries for clarification via email at shine@gospellight.sg.

CHRISTIANITY AND WORLD RELIGIONS

1. Why are there so many religions?

Man was created to worship the one true God. (Exo 20: 3-4, Ecc 3:11, Rev 7:9-12) But man rebelled against God and is separated from Him. Even then, man still has the impulse to worship and has been seeking to find ways back to the “higher powers”. However, instead of seeking God, man created gods and religions of his own imagination – thus the birth of many religions. But because his understanding is darkened, his ways are not accepted by the one true God. The only way whereby man may be reconciled to the one true God is through the Gospel of Jesus Christ as He has revealed in the Bible.

2. Why are there so many Christian denominations?

A Christian denomination is a group that holds on to the fundamentals of the Christian faith, but may differ in practices and expressions that are not essential to the Gospel. Denominations such as Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Anglicans, Brethrens, Lutherans and the Pentecostals were formed over the course of history as people sought to understand and put to practice what they saw in Scripture. Christian denominations differ in practices such as matters of church governance and modes of baptism, but they all agree on the essentials of the faith with regards to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, for example, the deity of Christ, His incarnation, virgin birth, sinless life, substitutionary atonement, death and resurrection, justification by grace alone through faith alone, etc. Where there is a departure from the essentials of the faith, the group should be considered a cult. Jehovah’s Witnesses for example is considered a pseudo-Christian cult because they deny key doctrines about the person of Jesus Christ.

For more information, refer to: <https://www.gotquestions.org/denominations-Christian.html>*

3. What is so special about Christianity if all religions teach man to do good anyway?

All religions teach men to do good to obtain favour with the “higher powers” in order to gain eternal bliss or temporal favours. Christianity, while teaching us to live moral lives and do good, also tells us that it is impossible to gain merit with God by doing good works. We cannot be saved from God’s judgment by any amount of good we do because all of our good works are stained with our sin and fall short of God’s standard (Isa 64:6, Rom 3:23). The only way to be reconciled to God is to believe in Jesus Christ who has accomplished all the good on our behalf and died on the cross to save us from our sins

4. Is Christianity a Western religion?

Christianity is not an ethnic religion as if its God is a god of the West and there is another god for the East. Neither did it originate in the West as though the West created it. Christianity came from God, who created the whole world and all mankind. Hence it is a religion for everyone regardless of nationality or ethnicity. However, working through time and space, God gave His Word through the Jews of the Old Testament in the Middle East, sent His Son Jesus Christ to live among them, and allowed His Gospel to spread throughout the known world in the New Testament, and then to the West which then brought it to us here in Singapore. So while that may give the impression that Christianity is a Western religion, it is actually a religion for the whole world from the very beginning, in order that anyone in any part of the world who believes the Gospel may be saved through Jesus Christ (Joh 3:16).

5. If I believe in Jesus Christ, will all my former gods be angry with me and cause harm to me?

The Bible firmly states that there is only one true God (Deu 6:4) and that all other “gods” are false gods and not gods at all (1Co 8:4-6). However the Bible also speaks of demons that are opposed to us believing in Jesus Christ and who will do what they can to stop that from happening. Thankfully when we believe in Christ, God the Holy Spirit comes to live in us, and He is greater than these demonic forces (1Jo 4:4). On the other hand, those who do not believe in Jesus will face the certain wrath of the one true God (John 3:18) and be punished in everlasting Hell for their sins (Rev 21:8).

SIN

1. Where did sin come from?

Sin is a rejection of God and His ways whether by passive disobedience or active rebellion. God did not create sin (Jas 1:14-15). It was first “found” in Lucifer (Satan) (Eze 28:15) who became proud and wanted to be like God (Isa 14:12-14). He then led a host of angels to rebel against God (Rev 12:4, 9). This is the origin of sin. Following his fall, Satan proceeded to tempt Adam and Eve into sin by disobeying God’s command to not eat the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil (Gen 3), and because of the sin of humanity’s first parents, death and sin was passed on to all their descendents and all men since then with the exception of Jesus Christ was born sinful (Rom 5:12, Psa 51:5). Because we are all born with a sinful nature, we all have the tendency to sin.

2. Why did God allow sin?

God created man to love and honour Himself. However, in order for man to love God, man needs to be able to exercise his free will and choose for himself to love God. This has to be done without coercion or compulsion. Just as an earthly father cannot coerce a child to love him, God cannot coerce man to love Him because a love that is coerced is not true. So God allows man to choose whether to love and honour God or reject Him. To reject God is sin (Jer 5:23).

3. Why do I need God when I’m good?

There is no one who is good enough before God (Ecc 7:20). When we compare ourselves to another person, especially one who has committed many evil deeds, we may appear to be good or at least

better than them. However, before a perfect and holy God, our righteousness or good deeds are like “filthy rags” (Isa 64:6). The Bible tells us that all humans have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23). The reality is that no man is righteous (Rom 3:10-11).

JESUS

1. Is Jesus God?

The New Testament presents Jesus as God in several ways and provides proofs:

- He is called God (Mat 1:23, Joh 1:1, 14, Joh 20:28, Act 20:28, Tit 2:13, Heb 1:8)
- He is worshipped as God (Mat 2:11, 14:33, 28:9, 17, Luk 24:52, Joh 9:38)
- He exercised the powers of God, such as raising the dead (Joh 5:21, 11:38-44), creating and sustaining all things (Joh 1:2, Col 1:16-17) and forgiving sins (Mar 2:5-7, c/f Isa 43:25)
- He made claims that He is equal with God (Joh 10:30-33, Joh 5:18, Joh 8:58)
- He rose from the dead (Rom 1:4)
- The New Testament epistles also teach that Jesus is God (Phi 2:6, Col 1:15, Heb 1:8)

2. Did Jesus rise from the dead?

Jesus’ resurrection from the dead is recorded in the Bible in Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24 and John 20. There are also several recorded occasions of his post-resurrection appearances. On one occasion, He was seen alive by over 500 people at the same time (1Co 15:6). His enemies did not deny the empty tomb and could not produce a body, so they concocted a story to say His disciples stole the body and lied that Jesus had risen from the dead (Mat 28:11-15). Both Paul and John saw the resurrected Christ in His glory (Act 9:3-6, Rev 1-3). Jesus’ resurrection gave courage to His followers to give their lives for the Gospel. If Jesus’ disciples knew that the Resurrection was a lie, it would be highly improbable that all of them would die and suffer for a lie. Many followers of Jesus since then have similarly suffered and died for their faith, including the Apostle Paul who was once a fervent opponent of Christianity.

FAITH

1. Why is it so easy to become a Christian?

On one level, becoming a Christian is easy – one only needs to believe. However, believing in Jesus is not necessarily easy. It means having to admit you are a sinner headed for eternal doom, repenting from your sin, accepting you cannot save yourself, and coming to Christ in surrender and faith to depend on His sacrifice on the cross as your only means of escaping God’s wrath and being saved. It means putting away our pride and humbling ourselves before God. If salvation seems easy, it is because God has done all the hard work by giving His only Son to die for our sins and pay the penalty of our sins on our behalf. Because of Jesus’ finished work on the cross, God can freely offer salvation to all who trust in Jesus (Joh 3:16, Eph 2:8-9). True salvation is evidenced by a life of surrender and obedience to Jesus as Saviour and Lord (Mat 16:24).

2. Why can't I work for my salvation?

The Bible tells us that we are spiritually dead (Eph 2:1). That means we have no power to do any good work that can earn us God's acceptance. The Bible also tells us that those who try to earn their own salvation by obeying God's Law are cursed because nobody is able to obey the whole Law perfectly at all times (Gal 3:10). James 2:10 tells us that if we break one commandment of the Law, we are guilty of breaking the Law as a whole. Because of this, the Bible tells us that "by the works of the law no human being will be justified in [God's] sight" (Rom 3:20a).

3. Am I not a Christian if I am born into a Christian family?

Nobody is a Christian simply because he is born into a Christian family. Faith is a matter of personal decision. Nobody can believe on your behalf. One becomes a Christian through personal repentance and faith in Jesus Christ: "But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God" (Joh 1:12-13). Even if you are born into a Christian home, you still need to be "born again" spiritually (Joh 3:7) to enter the kingdom of God. That is why Jesus promises eternal life only to those who believe in Him (Joh 3:16).

4. Does one need to witness miraculous signs and wonders in order to believe?

One does not need to witness signs, wonders, or miraculous acts in order to believe. (Luk 16:31, Joh 12:37). Romans 10:17 says, "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ." As long as you can hear/read the word of Christ through the Bible, you can believe. If any sign is needed at all, Jesus said in Matthew 12:39-40 that the ultimate sign has already been given: 'But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.' Christ's resurrection from the dead proves beyond doubt that he is who he claimed to be – the Son of God who came to save us from our sins.

5. Will I feel different if I have believed?

Not everybody has an unusual emotional experience when he believes. While some believers experience feelings of joy and peace when they receive Christ, what the Bible emphasizes as proof of salvation is a change in the way you live. The Bible tells us that a true believer is given a new heart (Eze 36:26). He is now a new creation (2Co 5:17). He will therefore love God and keep His commandments (Joh 14:15, Psa 119:97), love fellow believers (1Jo 3:14) and love not the world (1Jo 2:15). This change may not be immediately apparent, nor does it mean that the new believer will love and obey God perfectly. What it does mean is a true believer will not fail to experience progressive change in his life as he grows in his faith and continues to follow Jesus.

6. Can I believe just before I die?

One of the thieves crucified with Jesus put his faith in Jesus just before he died, and Jesus promised him that he would be in Paradise (Luk 23:43). While it is possible for someone to believe in Jesus just before dying and subsequently go to heaven, that belief must be a sincere faith and not a

presumptuous expectation. Someone who is truly convicted about his or her sins will not hesitate to repent and turn to Jesus for salvation upon hearing the Gospel. The danger of waiting till the last moment to believe is that it may be evidence of an unrepentant heart. Why wait till the last minute when you can do it today? You might change your mind or miss your chance later, and death can come swiftly and suddenly. Moreover, nobody knows when he or she will die. Hebrews 3:15 urges us, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts..." So heed God's call to believe today, because He says in 2 Corinthians 6:2, "Behold, now is the favourable time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

7. Is baptism required for salvation?

No. The thief who was crucified beside Jesus was promised Paradise without water baptism (Luk 23:43). Salvation is by grace, received through faith, apart from works (which includes water baptism). See Eph 2:8-9, Joh 3:16, Tit 3:5.

TRUTH AND THE BIBLE

1. How do you know the Bible is true?

The best way is for you to read the Bible for yourself (Joh 10:27). Besides that, there are many supporting evidences to prove that the Bible is true:

- a) Fulfilled prophecies- Hundreds of prophecies have been fulfilled in the Bible. At least 300 are fulfilled in Christ at His first coming.
- b) Endurance of the Bible - Despite being the most persecuted book in history and numerous attempts to destroy it, the Bible is preserved till today and is in fact the best-selling book in history.
- c) Scientific Facts - Many of the principles of modern science were recorded as facts of nature in the Bible long before scientists discovered them. See references listed below.
- d) Unity of the Bible - The Bible consists of 66 books (39 OT and 27 NT) written by around 40 different authors over the course of 1,500 years and on 3 different continents (Asia, Africa, and Europe). When considering the varying aspects of the Bible it is amazing to note that the Bible is truly consistent in content.
- e) Historical facts - Many archaeological discoveries have confirmed the historical accuracy of the Bible. See references listed below
- f) Changed Lives – Throughout history, people who have read and understood the Bible have experienced radical life-change. A prime example is the Apostle Paul who was a fervent persecutor of Christians. After his conversion, he became a tireless missionary for the Gospel, enduring tremendous persecution and was eventually martyred for his devotion to Christ.

For more detailed explanations, you may refer to the following websites:

<http://www.bibleinfo.com/en/questions/is-bible-true>

<http://www.christiananswers.net/q-eden/edn-t003.html>

<https://answersingenesis.org/is-the-bible-true/seven-compelling-evidences-confirm-bible-is-true/>

2. How do you explain the contradictions of the Bible?

It is easy to make the claim that the bible contains contradictions but it is not as easy to prove it. Many of these so-called contradictions stem from a superficial reading of the text. Under scrutiny we find the so-called contradictions are more apparent than actual. That is to say they are not contradictions at all. There are viable and intellectually plausible answers to every supposed Bible contradiction and error.

The Bible is a divine book originating from the divine mind of God. Naturally some parts will be difficult for a finite human mind to understand (“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts” Isa 55:9). Rather than dismiss as contradictions the parts you don’t understand, we encourage you to dig deeper to see how these apparent contradictions may be reconciled. God authored the Bible and His Word is truth (2Ti 3:16, Joh 17:17). He will not contradict Himself in His Word.

For detailed explanations of numerous examples, please refer to the following websites:

<http://www.christiananswers.net/q-comfort/contradictions-bible.html>

<https://answersingenesis.org/contradictions-in-the-bible/>

<http://defendinginerrancy.com/bible-difficulties/>

3. Is this world created or is this world a product of chance?

The Bible declares God created the universe (Genesis 1:1). Psalm 19:1 and Romans 1:20 teach that the created universe bears witness to the glory, power and divinity of God on a daily basis.

4. How old is the Earth?

From the genealogical records of Jesus Christ in Luke, the estimated history of humanity spans about 6000 plus years. However, there are also arguments for the possibility of a much older earth. The Bible does not provide us with enough information to be dogmatic about the exact age of the Earth. Regardless, the world is not a product of chance but the design of the Creator God.

5. Does the Bible speak about dinosaurs?

The Bible does not deny the existence of dinosaurs, but it does seem to affirm their existence. The descriptions of the Behemoth and Leviathan in Job 40:15-24 and Job 41 seem to match the descriptions of huge creatures like dinosaurs.

For more information, please see below:

<https://answersingenesis.org/dinosaurs/dinosaurs-and-the-bible/>

<http://www.bibleinfo.com/en/questions/are-dinosaurs-mentioned-bible>

<https://www.gotquestions.org/dinosaurs-Bible.html>

6. Are there aliens out there in some other planets?

The Scriptures do not directly address the question of alien beings. The Bible does not explicitly confirm or deny the existence of intelligent life from other planets. Although the subject is not addressed explicitly, the Bible implicitly teaches that the only things He created with intelligence are the angels, man, and animals.

<http://christiananswers.net/q-eden/edn-c012.html>

<https://answersingenesis.org/astronomy/alien-life/are-ets-ufos-real/>

<http://creation.com/did-god-create-life-on-other-planets>

THE AFTERLIFE

1. Is there really life after death?

Yes, there is life after death because Jesus taught on Hell (Mar 9:43-49) and Heaven (Mat 7:21, Joh 14:1-6). Hebrews 9:27 clearly warns us, "And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment". Those who have received the forgiveness of sins through faith in Christ will be with God forever in Heaven (Rev 20:6) and those who have not will be punished in Hell (Rev 21:8). Furthermore, Jesus affirmed that the repentant thief who was crucified with Him would be with Him "in Paradise" (Luk 23:43). There is no teaching in the Bible on annihilation, soul sleep, reincarnation, or any other possibilities after death.

2. What is so bad about Hell if all my loved ones and friends are there?

The Bible presents a serious and sobering picture of Hell. Jesus taught that there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Mat 13:42), which indicates unbearable regret, sorrow and pain. He warned us that no loss and pain on earth can be compared to that which will take place in Hell (Mar 9:43-49). In this world we are never truly separated from God and His daily mercies (such as air, sunshine and rain; see Mat 5:45). The agonies of Hell – especially the separation from God and all that is good in Him – last forever. It is a destiny you and I should avoid at all cost!

3. Where are my dead relatives today?

Those who believe in Jesus are saved from their sins. They will be reconciled with God in Heaven and will not be punished in Hell (Rom 10:10). We grieve that those who do not believe are not saved. The church is therefore entrusted with an urgent and vital task to reach people with the precious gospel.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

1. Why will a good God allow suffering in the world?

God allows suffering in the world to bring about good to man and glory to Himself.

a) *God allows suffering*

God created the world without suffering. When He created the Earth, He declared everything to be good (Gen 1:31)! However, after man sinned, suffering, pain, and death entered into God's good creation. We refer to this as the Fall of man (Gen 3:16-24).

b) Suffering is meant to bring about good to man

Suffering in this world reminds us of God's holy wrath against sin (Rom 1:18-20) and it creates a longing in man to be delivered from sins and its consequences (Rom 8:20-21). Suffering is thus used by God to remind us that the world in its current state is not what was originally meant to be and that the sin which causes all the suffering also resides in us. Suffering humbles us and reminds us that we need to be saved in order to be reconciled to the God who created us and wants the best for us. For the believers, suffering helps us grow (Jas 1:2-4), strengthens our hope (Rom 5:3-5), proves our faith (1 Pet 1:7), helps us to depend more on Christ (2Co 12:9), and equips us to comfort others (2Co 1:4-6).

c) Suffering is meant to bring glory to God

When man turns to God in repentance, God is glorified when He saves man from sin and its consequences by His grace (Eph 1:3, 6-12). We see God's holiness, wrath, sovereignty, power and love in sending His Son to redeem man from sin. Jesus Himself suffered at the hands of His persecutors, but God used man's evil act to glorify Himself as Jesus' sacrifice on the cross provided atonement and salvation for all who believe in Him. Those redeemed by His grace will continue to glorify God and sing His praises through all eternity. For the believer, suffering brings glory to God when we rely on Him and when we maintain our trust in Him. God is glorified through our perseverance of faith and the grace we experience as He strengthens us in our trials.

2. Why will a good God send anyone to Hell?

God is good, but this does not mean that He overlooks sin. He is holy and just and therefore must punish sin. His goodness is a holy goodness. All of us are sinners who rebelled against an infinitely holy and glorious God, and so we deserve eternal punishment in Hell. However, God is good, and He showed us His love by sending His Son to die for our sins (Rom 6:23). He now offers salvation to anyone who will repent and believe in Jesus. In summary, people are punished in Hell for their sins because they reject God, but God in His goodness offers salvation to those who believe in His Son. Rejecting God is effectively choosing to bear the consequences of our sin ourselves in Hell.

3. How can a good God let unreached people groups / unborn children / mentally handicapped go Hell?

Everyone who does not know Christ, whether he lives in the city or in the jungle, is by nature a sinner (Rom 1:20-21). He may be aware of God's existence from observing nature (Rom 1:20-21), and even though he may not have a Bible or access to God's Law, his conscience nonetheless pronounces him guilty (Rom 2:14-15). Therefore every person is without excuse. He is a sinner who will be damned for His sins. That is why there must be urgency for the church to go into all the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Unborn children (or the severely mentally handicapped) may not necessarily be going to Hell. There are different biblical views held by different scholars. Some say these individuals will go to Heaven because they do not have the capacity to discern right from wrong and exercise faith, and God will

not hold them accountable for sin (2Sa 12:23). Some say all will be damned because they cannot believe and thus are nevertheless guilty of original sin inherited from Adam and Eve (Rom 5:12, Psa 51:5). Some others say we don't really know since there is a lack of clear and explicit teaching in this area. Regardless, the just and loving God will always do what is right (Gen 18:25).

4. Do I have to abandon ancestral worship to be a Christian?

A Christian is someone who believes in Jesus Christ. A person is not saved by only abandoning other "gods" or idols. When a man believes in Jesus Christ, he will be given a new heart to love God and he will not worship other gods or idols. However, this does not mean he should be disrespectful towards the customs and practices of others. Discernment of what constitutes acts of respect as opposed to acts of worship is needed.

5. Do I have to give up some of my habits / practices / LGBT lifestyle to be a Christian?

Nobody is saved by changing his or her lifestyle. Everyone is saved through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. A person saved by Jesus is a new creation with new desires (2Co 5:17). He will forsake sinful habits, practices and lifestyles like practicing homosexuality (Rom 1:26-27) because he loves God and wants to live a pure and holy life to please and honour Him.

6. What is the "Health & Wealth" or the "Prosperity" gospel?

The Gospel is about Jesus dying and rising from the dead to save us from our sins in order to reconcile sinful man to a Holy God. As such, the Gospel is primarily about reconciliation with God. The so-called Prosperity Gospel, on the other hand, is primarily about gaining health and wealth for oneself rather than reconciliation with God. It teaches people to come to God not for God Himself, but for the "goodies" they think He will give them. This leads people to idolatry, and ultimately to destruction (1Ti 6:10). The Prosperity Gospel is to be rejected as false gospel.

* These references are correct as of 27 April 2017. These referenced articles are considered to be informative and helpful for the specific topic but they do not represent an endorsement of their entire website and all other contents therein.