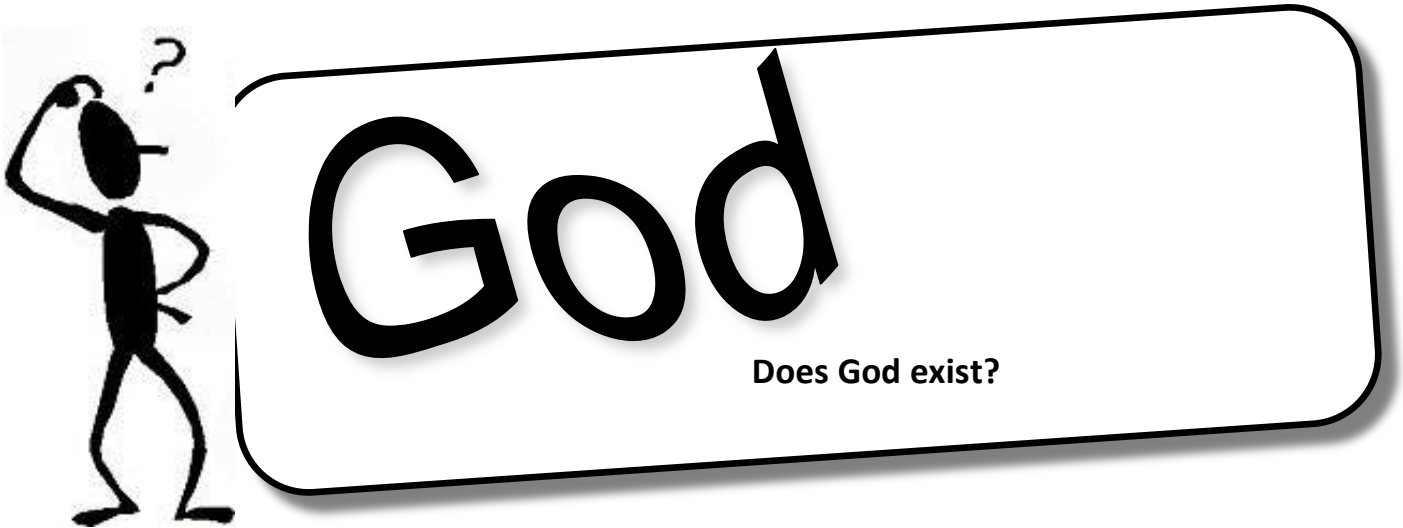


European Resources Worksheets

Topical discussions and bible studies designed to help European students understand Christianity better.

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Some people believe that God doesn't exist...

What reasons do people give that God *doesn't* exist?

Do you find these reasons convincing? Why/ why not?

Some people believe that there are lots of gods...

What reasons do people give that there are lots of gods?

Do you find these reasons convincing? Why/ why not?

Some people believe that there is one God...

What reasons do people give that there is one God?

Do you find these reasons convincing? Why/ why not?

The Bible does not argue about whether or not God exists. It introduces us to God.

Read John 1:18**God introduces himself to us**

¹⁸ No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

How has God made himself known?

How can we know God?

Read John 14:6-9**The one way to know God**

⁶ Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you really knew me, you would know^[a] my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

⁸ Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

⁹ Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

What do we learn about Jesus?

How can we know God?

How do you respond to Jesus' claim that he is the **only** way to God?

Read John 20:24-31- *This account comes after Jesus dying and coming back to life again. The other followers of Jesus have seen him alive again, but Thomas hasn't.*

How to believe in God even if you haven't seen him...

²⁴ Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it."

²⁶ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

²⁸ Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

²⁹ Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

³⁰ Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Why did Thomas eventually believe that Jesus was his Lord and God?

What's the good news for *us today* in verse 29-31?

How can we not see Jesus and still believe him?

Why is John's Gospel written?



Other religions...

Choose five main world religions and fill out the table below:

Religion	Beliefs	Practices

How should we think of the different world religions?

Below are some different views about world religions:

- *Pluralism – all religions are equally true and valid.*
- *Exclusivism – there is only one true religion.*
- *Syncretism – it is good to mix different parts of all the main religions together.*
- *Secularism – all religions are wrong.*

Which of these views is most common in your country? Why?

Which of these views is the most unpopular in your country? Why?

What about Christianity?

In some ways, Christianity is similar to other world religions, but the heart of the Christian message is fundamentally different.

Read 1 Timothy 2:5

⁵ For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all men

What do we learn about Jesus here?

Read Acts 4:10-12

"It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. ¹¹ He is

"the stone you builders rejected,
which has become the capstone.

¹² Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."

What do we learn about Jesus here?

Read John 3:16-20

¹⁶ "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. ¹⁹ This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed."

What do we learn about Jesus, God's one and only Son, here?

Thinking it through

According to the Bible, how is Jesus different from other religious figures?

What is unique about Jesus?

According to the Bible, how can we be made right with God?

How is this message different from what other religions say?

My friend says...

What would you say to a friend who says...

- 'Your belief depends on your culture. If you grew up in Iraq, you would be a Muslim'
- 'Why is the Christian faith so exclusive? Christians are arrogant to say Jesus is the only way to God.'
- 'I think there are many paths to God. Each religion has a different one. You can choose the path you want to.'
- 'Surely God will accept all good, moral, religious people?'



Science

Hasn't science disproved Christianity?

Science vs. religion?

Do you think there are any contradictions between science and religion?
If so, write them down below.

What is the *scope* of science?

Discuss in groups. Can science answer each of these questions? Answer yes/no.

- 1) Why are we alive?
- 2) Why does water evaporate at 100 degrees Celsius?
- 3) How did the universe come into being?
- 4) How can I cook a nice meal for my boy/girl friend?
- 5) Why should children respect their parents?
- 6) How are mountains formed?
- 7) Why do human beings fall in love?
- 8) Why is my friend suffering so much?
- 9) How should we treat those who are weaker than ourselves?
- 10) Why do the stars shine so brightly?

So, what is the *scope* of science?

Science is not an excuse for rejecting God

Read Romans 1:18-20**No excuses**

¹⁸ God shows his anger from heaven. It is against all the godless and evil things people do. They are so evil that they say no to the truth. ¹⁹ The truth about God is plain to them. God has made it plain.

²⁰ Ever since the world was created it has been possible to see the qualities of God that are not seen. I'm talking about his eternal power and about the fact that he is God. Those things can be seen in what he has made. So people have no excuse for what they do.

We see in verse 18 that God is angry with mankind. Why is this?

We see in verse 19 are all without excuse for our wickedness towards God. What proof has God given to everyone that he exists?

What can we know about God from observing the world around us (v.20)?

Therefore, why can't science be used as an argument **against** God?

How can we be right with God?

Read Romans 3:21-25**Right with God**

²¹ But now God has shown us how to become right with him. The Law and the Prophets give witness to this. It has nothing to do with obeying the law. ²² We are made right with God by putting our faith in Jesus Christ. That happens to all who believe.

It is no different for the Jews than for anyone else. ²³ Everyone has sinned. No one measures up to God's glory. ²⁴ The free gift of God's grace makes all of us right with him. Christ Jesus paid the price to set us free. ²⁵ God gave him as a sacrifice to pay for sins. So he forgives the sins of those who have faith in his blood.

Romans 1:18-20 spoke to us about the bad news we need to hear – we are not right with God, because we have rejected him. Science is a wonderful gift from God and teaches us lots about the world we live in, but it can't make us right with God.

How can we become right with God?

How can Jesus make us right with God?



Suffering

Why is there so much suffering in the world?

We live in a world full of suffering...

From news reports around the world, what examples of suffering have you heard about?

From talking to people around you, what are they suffering from?

Is there anything you are suffering from at the moment?

Questions...

When we see the suffering in the world us and in our lives, what kind of questions do we ask? (Write them down below...)

God entered into our world full of suffering... Jesus meets suffering people

During his time on earth, Jesus met many people who were suffering.

Read Mark 1:40-45:

A Man With Leprosy

⁴⁰ A man with leprosy^[f] came to him and begged him on his knees, "If you are willing, you can make me clean."

⁴¹ Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" ⁴² Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cured.

⁴³ Jesus sent him away at once with a strong warning: ⁴⁴ "See that you don't tell this to anyone. But go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them." ⁴⁵ Instead he went out and began to talk freely, spreading the news. As a result, Jesus could no longer enter a town openly but stayed outside in lonely places. Yet the people still came to him from everywhere.

What was the man suffering from?

How does Jesus relate towards the suffering man?

Jesus faces suffering

During his time on earth, Jesus suffered.

Read Mark 15:25-34

The Crucifixion of Jesus

²⁵ It was the third hour when they crucified him. ²⁶ The written notice of the charge against him read: THE KING OF THE JEWS. ²⁷ They crucified two robbers with him, one on his right and one on his left. ²⁹ Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, "So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰ come down from the cross and save yourself!"

³¹ In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! ³² Let this Christ, this King of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

³³ At the sixth hour darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. ³⁴ And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*"—which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

What suffering does Jesus himself face?

Why did Jesus come into our world of suffering?

Read 1 Peter 3:18

The achievement of Jesus' death

¹⁸ For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.

What did Jesus' death accomplish for all those who trust in him?

Read Revelation 21:1-4

The new heavens and the new earth

21 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

What future does Jesus offer to all who trust in him?



Do you think we can trust a religious book to make life decisions? What about the Bible?

Some people say: “The Bible is just a fairy tale!”....

What is a fairy tale? Give an example!

What usually happens?

Why do we like to hear them?

How do we know that Kung Fu Panda is not a true story?

Some people say: “The Bible is not reliable!”....

From Dan Brown's 'Da Vinci Code':

Teabing cleared his throat and declared, "The Bible did not arrive by fax from heaven."

"I beg your pardon?"

"The Bible is a product of man, my dear. Not of God. The Bible did not fall magically from the clouds. Man created it as a historical record of tumultuous times, and it has evolved through countless translations, additions, and revisions. History has never had a definitive version of the book."

"Okay."

"Jesus Christ was a historical figure of staggering influence, perhaps the most enigmatic and inspirational leader the world has ever seen. As the prophesied Messiah Jesus toppled kings, inspired millions, and founded new philosophies... more than eighty gospels were considered for the New Testament, and yet only a relative few were chosen for inclusion -- Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John among them."

"Who chose which gospels to include?" Sophie asked.

"Aha!" Teabing burst in with enthusiasm. "The fundamental irony of Christianity! The Bible, as we know it today, was collated by the pagan Roman emperor Constantine the Great."

What does Teabing say about the Bible? The person of Jesus?

Why can't we trust the Bible, according to him?

Which of Teabing's arguments do you find convincing?

Which of Teabing's arguments do you not find convincing?

Some people say: "The Bible is historical!"....

Read Luke 2:1-12**The Birth of Jesus**

2 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to his own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

The Shepherds and the Angels

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ^[a] the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

How is this passage different from a fairy tale? From an unreliable document?

Look at verses 10-11. What is the good news of the Christian faith?

Read Luke 1:1-4**Introduction to Luke's Gospel**

¹ Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us,
² just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants
of the word. ³ Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it
seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴ so that
you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

From which sources did Luke get his information about Jesus?

What did he do with the information he discovered?

Why did he write this book of the Bible?

Why can we trust what Luke writes about Jesus?