

DOUBTERS WELCOME

WHY ARE CHRISTIANS SO JUDGEMENTAL?

by David Stiles



Why are Christians so judgmental?

A Doubters Welcome resource
for spiritual discussion

by

David Stiles

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About

Doubters Welcome provides free resources for Christian discussion.

Each resource guide is broken into four discussion sections (with twenty questions in each section) to help facilitate spiritual discussion.

For More Information

For more information visit our website:

www.dstyles.com

Resources in this Series

All Christians are idiots, right?

Why doesn't God act like I think He should?

Why are Christians so judgmental?

Isn't Christianity just a crutch to get through life?

About the Author

David Stiles is a minister in the Anglican Church. He holds a B.A. from Miami University of Ohio and an M.A. in religion from Reformed Theological Seminary.

His resources can be found at:

www.dstiles.com

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Discussion One

Limits to our Efforts

Introduction

Thanks for joining this *Doubters Welcome* discussion. We hope you'll enjoy your time discussing matters of life and faith with others!

Why are we doing this?

Doubters Welcome was started in 2012 to help facilitate discussion and dialog about life and spiritual matters. By providing free resources, such as this one, our hope is to foster inspiring discussions about faith and life.

Discussion Guidelines

In discussions such as this, we desire to genuinely understand the perspectives of all participants while also providing a clear presentation of Christian teaching.

The purpose of this resource is not to encourage division or to attack different religious views but rather to clarify Christian beliefs¹ and foster discussion. We encourage discussions to:

- be respectful of other backgrounds and perspectives
- allow people to “pass” on answering questions if they feel uncomfortable
- be a safe place to ask questions
- stay on track with time and subject, not diverting into tangents too far off topic

Setting and Achieving Goals

Before we explore the specific question of “*Why are Christians so judgmental?*”, let’s spend some time getting to know others in your discussion group by exploring the topic of setting *goals*.

Aspirational goals are those things we *aspire* to become, achieve or acquire. By their definition, they describe a *desired future state* – something different than our current state of being.

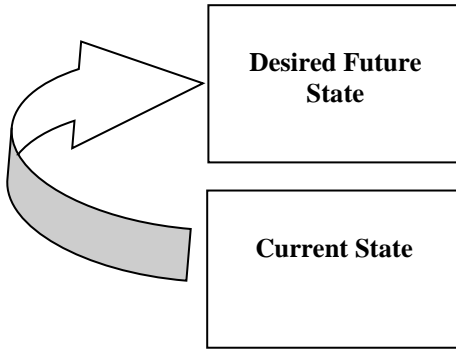


Fig. 1.1 – Current State vs. Desired Future State

Aspirational goals differ for each individual. Some people have goals regarding their physical health. Still others have goals related to educational or vocational dreams while others have goals regarding time management or finances.

Questions 1.1 through 1.3 that follow will help you think more about your goals for the future. After reading the statement that follows each question, simply select the answer that best describes your answer.

How would you answer these statements about aspirational goals?

Question 1.1 :: Have you identified dreams and goals for your life?

I have identified goals for my life.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 1.2 :: Is it easy to identify goals?

It is easy for me to identify goals and picture myself accomplishing goals.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 1.3 :: How do you feel about imagining the future?

Questions 1.1 and 1.2 asked about your views regarding setting aspirational goals.

Question 1.1 asked if you had set some goals for your life.

- **How did you respond to Question 1.1?**
- **What examples come to mind as you to think about goals for your life?²**

Next, Question 1.2 asked if it is easy to identify goals.

- **How did you respond to Question 1.2?**
- **In what ways is it easy or difficult to identify goals and picture yourself accomplishing new things?**

If you feel comfortable, share your responses to Question 1.3 with others in your *Doubters Welcome* discussion. How were your responses similar or different to others in your *Doubters Welcome* discussion?

Taking Steps to a Better Relationship

Many times as we think about our goals, we think about our *relationships*.

We might think of relationships with:

- family members
- co-workers
- friends

....that we would like to improve.

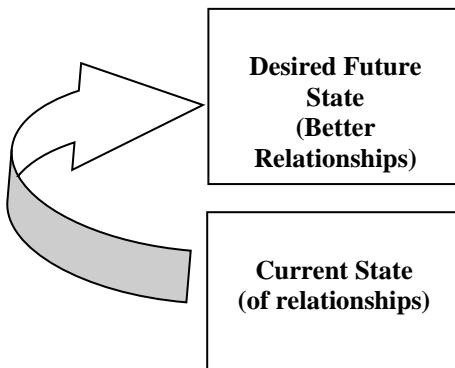


Fig. 1.2 – Desiring Better Relationships

Questions 1.4 through 1.6 that follow will help you think more about specific relationships that you might have considered. After reading the statement that follows each question, simply select the answer that best describes your answer.

How would you answer these statements about relationships?

Question 1.4 :: Is it easy to identify relationships that could be improved?

It is easy for me to identify relationships that could be improved.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 1.5 :: Is it easy to identify steps that you could take to grow in those relationships?

It is easy for me to identify steps for growing in those relationships.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 1.6 :: How do you feel about identifying steps to accomplish your goals?

As you noticed, Questions 1.4 and 1.5 asked about your views about relationships.

Question 1.4 asked if it was easy to identify relationships in your life that could be improved.

- **Is it easy for you to identify relationships that could improve?**
- **What relationships did you consider for your response?**

Next, Question 1.5 asked if you could easily identify steps that could help you grow in those relationships.

- **How did you answer Question 1.5?**
- **What steps did you consider?**

If you feel comfortable, share your responses to Question 1.6 with others in your *Doubters Welcome* discussion. How were your responses similar or different to others in your *Doubters Welcome* discussion?

Assessing a Relationship with God

Just as people think about their relationships with others, people also think about their relationship with God. The phrases “*knowing God*” and “*having a relationship with God*” are commonly used by people today.

Questions 1.7 through 1.12 that follow will help you reflect on your thoughts on “knowing God” and having a “relationship with God”. After reading the statement that follows each question, simply select the answer that best describes your answer.

How would you answer these statements about having a relationship with God?

Question 1.7 :: Is it possible to have a relationship with something that doesn't exist?

There is no God, so I cannot have a relationship with something that does not exist.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 1.8 :: Is it possible to have a relationship with something unknowable?

The existence of God is unknowable, so I cannot have a relationship with God.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 1.9 :: Is it possible to have a relationship with a God who is so far beyond us?

God is so far above us that we cannot really know Him.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 1.10 :: Is it possible to have a relationship with God?

People are designed to know God.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 1.11 :: Is the relationship with God broken?

Even though it is possible for people to know God, the relationship between people and God is broken.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 1.12 :: How would you recap your views?

Questions 1.7 through 1.11 asked about your thoughts on having a relationship with God. Place a checkmark in the table below to summarize your thoughts on each proposed theory.

Table 1: Theories about Relating to God

Theory	Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree	Proposed By
There is no God so I cannot have a relationship with Him	1.7						Atheism
The existence of God is unknowable, so I cannot have a relationship with Him	1.8						Agnosticism
God is so far above us we cannot have a relationship with Him	1.9						Deism
People are designed to know God	1.10						Many religions
Even though it is possible for people to know God, their relationship with God is broken	1.11						Christianity and some other religious groups

Overview of Popular Beliefs about Knowing God

Many different views have developed over the centuries about people's ability to know and relate to God. Let's spend a moment to review some of these:

A God who does not exist

Atheists assert that God does not exist. Therefore, the notion of having a "relationship with God" is irrelevant.

Existence that cannot be known

Agnostics believe that the existence of God cannot be known – so, God may exist or may not. Therefore, like the view of Atheists, the notion of having a "relationship with God" is irrelevant.

A God who is transcendent

Deists believe in a Creator God who is no longer involved in the world. This belief in a God who stepped aside to let the world run its course does not accept a belief in a "relationship with God".

People are designed to know God

Many religions believe that people can know God and relate to Him in a personal way.

A broken relationship

Christians hold the belief that even though it is possible to know God, the relationship between people and God is broken.

Review the chart again on page 18 and then answer the following questions:

- **Which of these religious views have you heard?**
- **Do you hold to any of these views now?**
- **Why do you hold your views?**

If you feel comfortable, share your responses with others in your *Doubters Welcome* discussion.

Fixing a Broken Relationship with God

It is common to have (as Christians maintain) a sense that there is a “*broken*” relationship with God – a feeling that there is a *disconnect* between God and yourself.

It is also very common to look to one’s *efforts* (those things that we could do) to make things right with God. Just as we might look to our own efforts to achieve our aspirational goals or fix broken relationships (as we discussed earlier) we look to our efforts to make right a broken relationship with God.

If you have ever had thoughts that your efforts could fix a broken relationship with God, you would not alone. We learn in the Bible that 2,000 years ago people asked Christians,

- “What must *I* do to be saved?”³

And on another occasion, a rich young man approached Jesus and asked,

- “Teacher, what good deed must *I* do to have eternal life?”⁴

The following might be a picture of this approach:

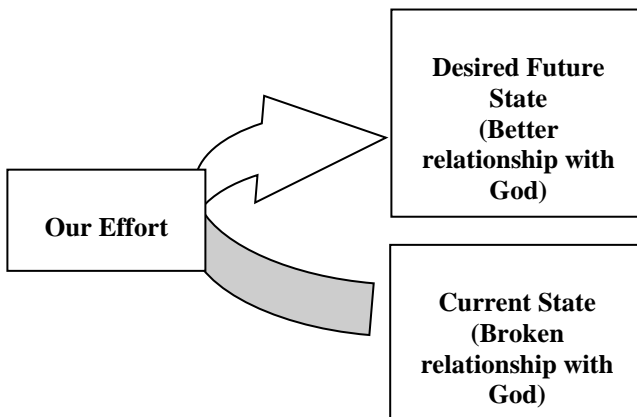


Fig. 1.3 – Common belief that our Efforts can attain a Better Relationship with God

Questions 1.13 and 1.14 that follow will help you think more about the things that you might have considered to fix your relationship with God. After reading the statement that follows each question, simply select the answer that best describes your answer.

Question 1.13 :: Have you thought of things that you could do to fix a disconnected relationship with God?

I have considered specific things I could do to fix my broken relationship with God.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 1.14 :: What things did you consider to help fix a broken relationship with God?

Question 1.13 asked if you thought about specific things to fix a broken relationship with God. As you answered Question 1.13,

- **What things did you consider?**

Generally, these things fall into one of two categories:

- stop doing bad things
- start doing good things

Are these categories similar to things that you considered?

If you feel comfortable, share your responses to with others in your *Doubters Welcome* discussion.

Jesus' Teaching on Fixing a Broken Relationship with God

In response to the rich young man's question about what he must do, Jesus told the man,

- "If you want to enter life, keep the commandments."⁵

The commandments Jesus referred to are what are called God's *Law*. God's Law, as defined in the Old Testament (located in the first part of the Bible), describe a person's *obligations* to God.

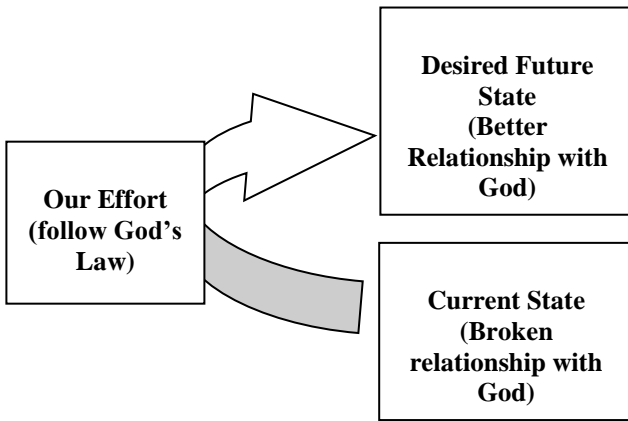


Fig. 1.4 – Obtaining a Better Relationship with God by Following God's Law

Questions 1.15 through 1.19 that follow will help you think more about your efforts in keeping God's Law. After reading the statement that follows each question, simply select the answer that best describes your answer.

How would you answer these statements about God's Law?

Question 1.15 :: Have you sought other gods?

**I have sought gods other than the God
described in the Bible.**

Yes | No | Unsure

**Question 1.16 :: Have you loved God with all that you
are?**

**Throughout my entire life I have loved God with all of my heart
and with all of my soul.**

Yes | No | Unsure

Question 1.17 :: Have you loved God in all of your thoughts?

I have always loved God with all of my mind.

Yes | No | Unsure

Question 1.18 :: Have you loved others as you have loved yourself?

I have always loved others as much or more than I love myself.

Yes | No | Unsure

Question 1.19 :: Have you kept God's laws to perfection?

I have kept God's laws perfectly.

Yes | No | Unsure

Question 1.20 :: How have you responded to God's Law?

As you noticed, Questions 1.15 through 1.19 asked about keeping God's Law.

Question 1.15 asked if you had sought gods other than the Lord described in the Bible. This statement is from the first of the Ten Commandments⁶ found in the Old Testament where God said:

- "I am the Lord your God...you shall *have no other gods* before (besides) me."⁷

- **How did you respond to Question 1.15?**

- **Why did you chose that response?**

Next, Question 1.16 asked if you had loved God with all that you are. This question was drawn from Jesus' summary of God's Law that we must:

- "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul"⁸

Jesus was quoting a passage from the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy where God said,

- "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."⁹

- **How did you respond to Question 1.16?**

- **What examples from your life came to mind as you made your response?**

Question 1.17 asked if you had loved God with all of your thoughts. This question was also drawn from Jesus' summary of God's law where He said:

- "Love the Lord your God...with all of your mind"¹⁰

- **How did you respond to Question 1.17?**

Next, Question 1.18 asked if you had loved others as much or more than you love yourself. This statement was also drawn from Jesus' summary of God's law:

- "...love your neighbor as yourself"¹¹

- **How did you respond to Question 1.18?**

Lastly, Question 1.19 asked if you had perfectly followed God's Law. This statement was drawn from another of Jesus' responses to the young man inquiring about salvation, where Jesus explained:

- "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor"¹²

We see here, and throughout the Bible, God's definition of following His laws meant following them perfectly.¹³

- **How did you respond to Question 1.19?**

- **Why did you select the response you chose?**

If you feel comfortable, share your responses to Question 1.20 with others in your *Doubters Welcome* discussion. How were your responses similar or different to others in your *Doubters Welcome* discussion?

Our Inability to Keep the Law

As we compare our lives (our thoughts, our words and our actions) to *God's Law* – those obligations that God requires – we are bound to say:

“My life falls far short of God’s standards.”¹⁴

Failing to keep God’s law is what the Bible calls *sin*. As one Christian council explained:

- “Sin is any (lack) of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God”¹⁵

Sin is our natural inclination to do things apart from God. The Bible describes sin in two ways:

- Original Sin – the sin that all people inherited from Adam and Eve when they first sinned in the Garden of Eden and brought sin into the world.¹⁶
- Actual Sin – actual sins that each person commits against God’s Law

Christians believe that when God allows us to make an honest assessment of our lives (assessing our thoughts, our words and our actions) we will come to the conclusion that we are guilty of breaking God’s Law because we have sinned.

So What's the Big Deal?

After reading the previous pages, you may wonder,

“So, what's the big deal with committing a sin?”

The problem, according to the Bible, is that sin is completely contrary to what God desires.

The Bible explains that a proper response to God is one of:

- Obedience
- Trust
- Love and
- Worship

God's expectation is that these responses would be performed *perfectly* and at *all times*.

Sin, rooted in rebellion to God and God's Law, prevents us from having a relationship with God that is marked by obedience, trust, love and worship.

The Bible speaks of three ways that sin is problematic for people:

- the *power* of sin
- the *presence* of sin
- the *penalty* for sin

Let's look at these problems in more detail...

Three Problems with Sin

1 The Power of Sin

The Bible explains that all people are under the power of sin. Using words such as “prisoner” and “slave”, the Bible explains that sin oppresses and enslaves by working “death” in people.¹⁷

Because of the power of sin, people do not have the ability on their own to stop sinning.¹⁸

2 The Presence of Sin

The Bible also explains that sin dwells in *every* person. “There is no one righteous, not even one...no one who seeks God. All have turned away.”¹⁹

The presence of sin is problematic for people because of who God is and how He views sin.

God, we learn in the Bible, hates sin. The Bible also explains that God is perfectly *holy*, righteous and without sin – meaning that no sin can be in His presence.²⁰

3 The Penalty for Sin

God, as one who is perfect and righteous, will perfectly judge the world and rid it of every evil and sin. God, according to the Bible, will punish rebellion and disobedience to His Law.

Therefore, sinful people are under God’s:

- judgment
- wrath and
- condemnation²¹

Implications of Our Discussion

As you reflect on the previous pages and the:

- the problem of sin
- our inability to keep God's Law
- how our efforts have no effect in mending a broken relationship with God

.....you might wonder:

“If sin has caused so many problems, and my efforts can't fix a broken relationship with God, what can?”

We will look at a Christian response to that question in our next discussion.

2

Discussion Two

Who Speaks the Truth?

Introduction

Welcome to our second *Doubters Welcome* discussion where we will continue discussing matters of life and faith.

In our first discussion we compared our lives (our thoughts, words and actions) to God's standards and found that the effects of sin had rendered us unable to *fix a broken relationship with God*.

We ended our last discussion by asking the question:

“If my efforts can’t gain salvation or make a right relationship with God, what can?”

For this discussion, let's begin with a hypothetical situation. Let's imagine that there is a person (or being) called:

Person A

Let's imagine that *Person A* has seen that people have a *broken* relationship with God and has willingly come forward to help *restore* their relationship with God.²²

We might asked ourselves,

“To help people, what would *Person A* need to know or be able to do?”

One basic thing that many would agree on, is that *Person A* would need to know what was *truly* going on. To help us (and others), *Person A* could not be confused about spiritual matters or uncertain about how to help. In other words *Person A* would need to:

know what is *true*

Let's look at our ideas about truth in more detail...

Discussion Two

Questions 2.1 through 2.5 that follow will help you identify some of your views about knowing the truth. After reading the statement that follows each question, simply select the answer that best describes your answer.

Question 2.1 :: Is there absolute truth?

There is absolute truth.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 2.2 :: Is all truth relative?

Truth is relative to each person's opinions or cultural sensibilities.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 2.3 :: Is truth logical?

All truth is logical.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 2.4 :: Is truth something that you can know?

Truth is something that I intuitively “know”.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 2.5 :: What is your opinion about truth?

The first two questions in this discussion asked if you believed that truth was absolute or if it was relative to each person or culture.

Question 2.1 asked if you believed that truth was “absolute”. Before now, you might not have heard of the term “absolute truth”, but it is the idea that there is objective universal truth in our world.

- **How did you respond to Question 2.1?**
- **Why did you select that response?**

Next, Questions 2.2 asked if you believed that truth was relative to each person’s opinions or cultural sensitivities.

- **How did you respond to Question 2.2?**
- **Why did you select that response?**

To Be or Not Be

In response to critics who claim that all truth is “relative” and simply a construct of cultural or social norms, Christian scholars have frequently pointed to the “*Law of Non-Contradiction*”.

The “Law of Non-Contradiction” is a statement in the field of philosophy and logic that says that a true statement cannot be both true and not-true at the same time. It can be stated in the following formula:

“*B cannot be B and not-B at the same time.*”

An example would be, “Grasshoppers cannot be both grasshoppers and whales (not grasshoppers) at the same time and in the same relationship.”²³

Many years ago Augustine made a similar point,

- “if there is (only) one sun, there are not two; one and the same soul cannot die and still be immortal; man cannot at the same time be happy and unhappy ...we are now either awake or asleep; either there is a body which I seem to see or there is not a body.”²⁴

Thus, the Law of Non-Contradiction helps us see that a fact is either true or not true. It cannot be both.

The Law of Non-Contradiction also sheds light on a significant flaw in the reasoning of those who assert that truth is only a cultural construct or something relative to each individual. By claiming that the statement: “*All truth is relative*” is a true statement, relativists are actually asserting that there is objective truth in our world.

- **How does the “Law of Non-Contradiction” help your thinking about truth?**

If you feel comfortable, share your response to Question 2.5 and the questions that follow with others in your *Doubters Welcome* discussion.

Question 2.6 :: What is your opinion about truth?

The next set of questions in this discussion asked additional questions about your views of truth.

Question 2.3 asked if you believed if truth was “logical”.

- **How did you respond to Question 2.3?**
- **Why did you select that response?**

Next, Question 2.4 asked if you believed if truth was something that you would intuitively “know”.

- **How did you respond to Question 2.4?**
- **Why did you select that response?**

Effects of Sin in Knowing the Truth

Christians believe that truth is logical and can be known by individuals. We learn in the Bible that God has revealed Himself to creation so that people can know and worship Him. However, instead of acting on this revealed truth, people suppress this knowledge.²⁵

You may wonder,

Why would people suppress the truth about God?

The Bible explains that people suppress their knowledge of God because of sin.

Not only has sin caused a rift in our relationship with God (because we have not followed God's Law - as we discussed earlier), it has also negatively affected our minds. This is what is called the "noetic" effects of sin. Sin has negatively affected how we think about:

- God
- Others
- Ourselves

Thus, because we do not always think clearly, we need someone other than ourselves – like *Person A* that we imagined earlier – who clearly knows the truth.

- **Do you perceive that your thoughts about *God* have been wrong or misguided at times?**
- **Have your thoughts about *others* been wrong or misguided?**
- **When have your thoughts about *yourself* been wrong or misguided?**

If you feel comfortable, share your responses with others in your *Doubters Welcome* discussion.

Speaking the Truth

As we think about *Person A* in our hypothetical situation, we can quickly see that because our thoughts are misguided, not only would it be important for *Person A* to have a clear understanding of *knowing* the truth but *Person A* would also need to be able to:

speak what is true

...so that we could *also* know what is true and understand (to some degree) *Person A's* plans to help us.

As you reflect upon the need for our hypothetical helper (*Person A*) to communicate the truth, you may begin to wonder,

“If someone like Person A was going to help me, how would I know that they were speaking the truth?”

There might be several reasons you might trust that someone was speaking the truth.

You might consider:

- their own statements
- statements from others
- statements from an authority

Their Own Statements

If someone:

- said, “truly, truly I say to you” (recorded over 80 times in a historical book)
- called themselves a *prophet* (someone who speaks God’s words)

....would you consider what he said to be true?

Statements from Others

If many people said words such as:

- “Surely this man is the Prophet” (someone who speaks God’s words)
- “I can see you are a prophet”
- “This is indeed the prophet who has come into the world”
- You are “one of the prophets”

....would you consider what he said to be true?

Statements from an Authority

If God was recorded as saying words such as...

- “This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!”
- “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.”
- “This is my beloved Son, listen to him.”

....would you consider what he said to be true?

Discussion Two

Questions 2.7 through 2.13 that follow will help you reflect on listening to someone who could speak the truth.

Question 2.7:: Would you listen to someone who claimed to speak the truth?

I would listen to someone who claimed to speak the truth.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 2.8:: Would you listen to someone whom others claimed to speak the truth?

I would listen to a person if others claimed he spoke the truth.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Who Speaks the Truth?

Question 2.9:: Would you listen to someone if God claimed the person spoke the truth?

If God claimed someone was speaking the truth I would listen to the person.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 2.10:: Is it encouraging that someone could speak the truth to you?

I am encouraged that there might be someone who can speak the truth to me.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 2.11:: Would you like to learn from someone who could speak the truth to you?

I would like to learn from someone that could speak the truth to me.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 2.12:: Do you need someone who could speak the truth?

I need to rely on someone who can speak the truth to me.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 2.13 :: What is your reaction to someone speaking the truth?

The previous questions touched on your response to someone speaking the truth.

Question 2.7 asked if you would listen to or examine the claims of someone who claimed to speak the truth.

- **How did you respond to Question 2.7?**
- **What could a person do or say to help remove doubts that they were telling the truth?**

Question 2.8 asked if you would listen to if *others* claimed the person spoke the truth.

- **How did you respond to Question 2.8?**
- **How would the claims of others help remove doubts that a person was telling the truth?**

Question 2.9 asked if you would examine the statements of someone if *God Himself* claimed the person spoke the truth.

- **How did you respond to Question 2.9?**
- **What about this question was challenging to answer?**

Discussion Two

Next, Questions 2.10 asked if you were encouraged that someone could speak the truth to you.

- **What is encouraging that someone could speak the truth to you? Why?**

Question 2.11 asked if you were interested in learning more from someone who could speak the truth to you.

- **What would you like to learn more about?**

Question 2.12 asked if you needed to rely on someone who spoke the truth to you.

- **How did you respond to Question 2.12?**
- **Why did you respond the way you did?**

If you feel comfortable, share your responses to Question 2.13 with others in your *Doubters Welcome* discussion. How were your responses to the questions similar or different than the responses of others?

Not a Hypothetical Ideal

Thus far we have imagined a person (or being) who we called *Person A*. We imagined that *Person A* was someone who saw our condition of having a broken relationship with God and was willing to help us. In our discussion we noted that in order to help us, *Person A* would need to:

- *Know* the truth – so that *he* would know what was truly happening
- *Speak* the truth – so that *we* would know (to some degree) the truth and how they were helping us

For Christians, we do not believe that someone like *Person A* is a theoretical concept. Rather, we find in the Bible a witnesses to the very things that we have been describing – in the person of:

Jesus

Jesus, we learn in the Bible, saw our condition (of our relationship with God broken by sin) and willingly came to earth 2,000 years ago to help us.

Not only did He *know* the truth, He was willing to *speak* the truth. He claimed many times He was speaking truthful words. He also claimed that an important part of His task was to serve as a *prophet* – to speak God’s words to people.²⁶ Others who heard Him confirmed that he was speaking the truth and called Him a prophet.²⁷ And the Bible recounts that God Himself declared that Jesus knew the truth and should be listened to.²⁸

Questions 2.14 through 2.17 that follow will help you reflect on Jesus knowing and speaking the truth.

Question 2.14:: Are you encouraged that our helper is not hypothetical?

It is encouraging to me that our helper is not a hypothetical concept.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 2.15:: Are you encouraged that Jesus is our helper?

It is encouraging to me that Jesus is our helper.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 2.16:: Are you encouraged that Jesus knows what is truth?

It is encouraging to me that Jesus knows what is true.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 2.17:: Are you encouraged that Jesus speaks what is true?

It is encouraging to me that Jesus speaks what is true.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Truth Itself

As we conclude our discussion, it is important to note that not only does the Bible describe Jesus as one who:

- *knows* the truth and
- *speaks* the truth

...the Bible goes further in describing Jesus as *The Truth*.

Jesus described Himself by saying, “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.”²⁹ This means that not only does Jesus *know all things* – all that happened in the past, all that is currently happening and all that will happen in the future³⁰ - it also means that all truth comes from Him. As the Bible explains:

- “*All things* were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made”³¹
- “For from him and through him and to him are all things.”³²
- In Jesus “is hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge”³³

As one author explained,

- “There is, then, no truth in the world which does not come from him... Every fragment of truth which they reveal to us comes from him who is the Truth, and is rendered great and holy as a revelation from and of him.”³⁴

Thus, all truth comes from Jesus. He is the very expression of God and the One who makes God and His truth known to the world.³⁵

Who Speaks the Truth?

Questions 2.18 through 2.20 that follow will help you reflect on the person of Jesus who is the Truth.

Question 2.18:: Are you encouraged that Jesus knows all things?

It is encouraging to me that Jesus knows all things.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 2.19:: What does Jesus being The Truth indicate?

Jesus being the Truth tells me a lot about who He is.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 2.20:: What is your reaction to Jesus?

The previous questions in this section asked about Jesus.

Question 2.14 and 2.15 asked if it was encouraging that our helper is not a theoretical concept but Jesus.

- **How did you respond to Question 2.14 and 2.15? Why?**

Questions 2.16 and 2.17 asked if you found it encouraging that Jesus knows and speaks what is true.

- **How might it be encouraging that Jesus knows and communicates the truth?**

Question 2.18 touched on your views about Jesus knowing all things.

- **How might it be encouraging that Jesus knows all things?**
 - **What is easy to accept about this idea?**

Who Speaks the Truth?

Question 2.19 asked what Jesus being The Truth indicates about Him.

- **How did you answer Question 2.19?**
- **What does it tell you that Jesus is the Truth?**
- **What is easy to accept about Jesus being the Truth – from whom all truth comes from and who reveals God’s truth to the world?**

If you feel comfortable, share your responses to Question 2.20 with others in your *Doubters Welcome* discussion. How were your responses to the questions similar or different than the responses of others?

For Further Reflection

1. What is challenging about accepting help from someone outside of yourself?
2. What additional things about Jesus would you like to learn about or reflect upon?

3

Discussion Three

Who Takes Care of Sin?

Introduction

Welcome to our third *Doubters Welcome* discussion where we will continue discussing matters of life and faith.

In our first discussion we compared our lives (our thoughts, words and actions) to God's standards and found that the effects of sin had rendered us unable to *fix a broken relationship with God*.

We ended that discussion by asking the question:

“If my efforts can’t gain salvation or make a right relationship with God, what can?”

In our second discussion we began with a hypothetical situation, imagining a person (or being) called:

Person A

We imagined that *Person A* saw people's *broken* relationship with God and was willing to come forward to help them *restore* their relationship with God. We asked ourselves,

“To help people what would *Person A* need to know or be able to do?”

We concluded that *Person A* would need to:

- **know what is true**
and
- **speak what is true**

As we continue reflecting on someone willing to help us (someone like *Person A*) and what they must be able to do, we might quickly come to conclusion that not only would they need to know what is true and speak what is true, they would also need to address:

the issue of sin

Who Takes Care of Sin?

As we discussed earlier, *sin* is the reason we have a broken relationship with God.

Sin is defined as breaking God's Law. We noted that *original sin* is the sinful nature that each person inherited from Adam and Eve, while *actual sins* are the sins that each person commits.

We also discussed how sin affects not only our actions but our thoughts, rendering many misunderstandings about:

- God
- Self
- Others

With sin being the reason for a broken relationship with God and others, we could easily imagine that this would be *the critical issue* for someone who wanted to help us – someone like *Person A* – to address.

Because sin keeps us from God, we might come to the conclusion that if someone like *Person A* were to help us, they would need to serve as a *mediator* – someone outside of ourselves who could represent us before God.

Questions 3.1 through 3.7 that follow are based on your reaction to a need for a *mediator*. After reading the statement that follows each question, simply select the answer that best describes your answer.

Question 3.1 :: Do you see the need for a mediator?

I am _____ that I have a need for a mediator – someone to represent me before God.

Very Uncertain | Uncertain | Certain | Very Certain

Question 3.2 :: Would the mediator need to be willing to stand before God?

My mediator – the person who represented me – would need to be *willing* to stand before God.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 3.3 :: Would your mediator need to be able to stand before God?

My mediator – the person who represented me – would need to be *able* to stand before God.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 3.4 :: Would the mediator need to know your needs?

My mediator – the person who represented me before God – would need to know my needs.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 3.5 :: Would your mediator need to be without sin?

Because sin separates me and other people from God, my mediator would need to be without sin to be able to stand before God.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 3.6 :: Would the work your mediator did need to be effective?

The work of my mediator would need to be effective in satisfying any demands that God required.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 3.7 :: How would you recap your views?

Questions 3.1 through 3.6 asked about your thoughts regarding a *mediator* – someone who represented you before God.

Question 3.1 asked if you saw a need for a mediator to represent you before God.

- **How did you respond to Question 3.1? Why?**

Next, Questions 3.2 asked if your mediator would need to be *willing* to stand before God.

- **How did you respond to Question 3.2**
- **What does it mean to be willing to stand before God on behalf of others?**

Question 3.3 asked if your mediator would need to be *able* to stand before God.

- **How did you respond to Question 3.3? Why?**
- **What does it mean to be able to stand before God on behalf of others?**

Discussion Three

Question 3.4 asked if your mediator would need to know your needs.

- **How did you respond to Question 3.4?**
- **What needs did you consider as you answered the question?**

Question 3.5 asked if your mediator would need to be without sin.

- **How did you respond to Question 3.5? Why?**

Lastly, Question 3.6 asked if your mediator's work would need to be effective in satisfying God's requirements and demands.

- **How did you respond to Question 3.6? Why?**

If you feel comfortable, share your responses to with others in your *Doubters Welcome* discussion.

Our needs for a Mediator

As we reflected on our need for a mediator, we discussed how a mediator would need to be:

- *willing* to stand before God
- *able* to stand before God
- someone who knows *our needs*
- *without sin*
- someone who's work is *effective* and *accepted* by God

Table 2: Our need for a Mediator

Our Need for a Mediator	Met by your Mediator?	Short Description
<i>Willing</i> to stand before God		Someone who <i>willingly</i> stands before God for His people.
<i>Able</i> to stand before God		Someone <i>able</i> to stand before God.
Knows <i>our needs</i>		Someone who <i>understands</i> our sins, temptations and needs.
Work <i>accepted</i> by God		Someone who's work is fully accepted by God – accomplishing all that is required to satisfy God's judgment against sin.

Jesus the Mediator

We find good news in the Bible that there really was someone who fulfilled each of these requirements. That person is Jesus.

The Bible describes Jesus as both fully God and fully man. Because of His two natures, Jesus was able to perfectly represent people before God and satisfy all of God's requirements to remove the punishment of sin on His people.

The following table summarizes Jesus' work as a mediator.

Table 3: Jesus' ability to be a Mediator

Our Need for a Mediator	Met by Jesus	Short Description
<i>Willing</i> to stand before God	✓	Because Jesus... ...desired to obey His Heavenly Father and had great love for people He willingly stood before God on behalf of His people.
<i>Able</i> to stand before God	✓	Because Jesus... ...is without sin He is able to stand before God.
Knows <i>our needs</i>	✓	Because Jesus... ...is fully human He understands our temptations and needs.
Work <i>accepted</i> by God	✓	Because of Jesus' work on the Cross... ...His work was accepted by God – accomplishing all that was required to satisfy God's judgment against sin.

Let's look at these in more detail...

Jesus the Perfect Mediator

1

Jesus was *willing* to stand before God

Different phrases are used in the Bible to describe the work that Jesus set out to do:

- “seek and save the lost”³⁶
- “take away the sin of the world”³⁷
- “give His life for the ransom for many”³⁸

Jesus was willing to fulfill this mission and stand before God as our representative.

You may wonder,

Why would He do this?

One important reason is His *obedience*. Jesus frequently said that His will was to do the will of God His Father.³⁹ God’s plan was to send His Son (Jesus) into the world. And Jesus (the Son) desired to be obedient to His Father.

In addition to being obedient to His Father, we also learn in the Bible that Jesus was motivated by His *great love* for people. We can read about Jesus’ love and His Father’s love throughout the Bible:

- “For God so *loved* the world that He *gave* his Son that whoever believes in him will not perish.”⁴⁰
- “But God demonstrates his own *love* for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”⁴¹
- “This is love: not that we loved God, but that *he loved us* and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.”⁴²

2

Jesus was *able* to stand before God

Unlike sinful people, who are separated from God because of sin, we learn in the Bible that Jesus was sinless. Because He was pre-existing as God, He was not subject to *original sin*. And because of His perfect obedience to God’s Law, he committed no *actual sin*.

Jesus’ pre-existence to creation and *divinity* is described throughout the New Testament. John, for example called Jesus ‘the Word’, explaining that:

- “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”⁴³

Jesus’ *sinlessness* is also written about extensively in the New Testament:

- Peter, in his first letter, explained that Jesus committed no sin⁴⁴
- Likewise, Paul in his letter to the Romans reiterated that Christ perfectly obeyed all of God’s commands⁴⁵
- John, in his letter said in Jesus “is no sin”⁴⁶
- Similarly, the writer of Hebrews explained that Jesus was tempted in every way, yet was without sin⁴⁷
- And Jesus himself asked if anyone could find him guilty of sin⁴⁸

Because Jesus was sinless (having perfectly followed God’s Law) He was able to stand before a holy God.

3

Jesus Knows our Needs

In addition to being completely God, we also learn in the Bible that Jesus is also completely human (in all ways except for sin). Because Jesus is completely divine and completely human, He completely understands our needs.

As God, Jesus knows all things.⁴⁹ He knows all that happened in the past, all that is currently happening and all that will happen in the future. He also knows each person thoroughly. Even small details like the number of hairs on our heads are not outside the knowledge of God.⁵⁰

Because Jesus came humbly as a servant to earth and is completely human, he understands our trials and temptations.⁵¹ The writer of Hebrews explained, we have High Priest who was tempted just like we are.⁵²

4

Jesus' Work Accepted by God

The work Jesus accomplished on the Cross (something that we will discuss more in a few pages) was perfectly accepted by God.

At His death, Jesus' last words were "It is finished" – indicating that not only was his body soon to be dead, but that His offering and sacrifice was perfect and complete.

Because His work was perfectly accepted by God, there was nothing more that He needed to do to *restore* His people to God. His work powerfully and perfectly undid the effects of sin and restored His people's relationship with God.

Questions 3.8 through 3.13 that follow are based on your reaction to Jesus being a perfect *mediator*. After reading the statement that follows each question, simply select the answer that best describes your answer.

Discussion Three

How would you answer these statements about Jesus' ability to be a Mediator?

Question 3.8 :: Are you encouraged that Jesus is willing to stand before God on behalf of people?

I am encouraged that Jesus was *willing* to stand before God on behalf of His people.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 3.9 :: Are you encouraged that Jesus is able to stand before God?

I am encouraged that Jesus *is able* to stand before God.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 3.10 :: Are you encouraged that Jesus knows you?

I am encouraged that Jesus knows me.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 3.11 :: Are you encouraged that Jesus knows your needs?

I am encouraged that Jesus knows my needs.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 3.12 :: Are you encouraged that Jesus's work is perfectly accepted by God?

I am encouraged that Jesus's work was accepted by God.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree

Question 3.13 :: How would you recap your views?

Questions 3.8 through 3.12 asked about your thoughts on Jesus being a perfect mediator – someone who represented people before God, because He is both fully God and fully man.

Question 3.8 asked if you were encouraged that Jesus was *willing* to stand before God on His peoples' behalf.

- **How did you respond to Question 3.8? Why?**
- **How does Jesus' willingness to stand before God display his obedience to His Father?**
- **How does Jesus' willingness to stand before God display his love for people?**

Next, Question 3.9 asked if you were encouraged that Jesus is *able* to stand before God .

- **How did you respond to Question 3.9? Why?**
- **How does Jesus' ability to stand before God display His pre-existence, divinity and sinlessness?**

Question 3.10 asked if you were encouraged that Jesus knew you.

- **How did you respond to Question 3.10? Why?**
- **What does it mean that Jesus knows you?**
- **How does Jesus' divinity explain how much He knows about you?**
- **How does Jesus' humanity explain how much He knows about you?**

Who Takes Care of Sin?

Similarly, Question 3.11 asked if you were encouraged that Jesus knows your needs.

- **How did you respond to Question 3.11?**
- **What needs did you consider as you answered the question?**

Lastly, Question 3.12 asked if you were encouraged that the work that Jesus did was *accepted* by God in satisfying God's requirements.

- **How did you respond to Question 3.12? Why?**
- **What does it mean that Jesus accomplished all that was required to satisfy God's judgment against sin?**

If you feel comfortable, share your responses with others in your *Doubters Welcome* discussion.

Jesus' Priestly Work

In an earlier discussion we noted that an important role in Jesus' ministry was to serve a *prophet*. A prophet, we explained, is someone who knows and speaks God's words.

In this discussion, we have seen another important role in Jesus' ministry – Jesus' serving as a:

Priest

A *priest* is someone who represents people before God.⁵³

Like a priest at the Temple in Jerusalem (as described in the Old Testament), Jesus went into God's presence to offer a sacrifice, but the sacrifice He offered was not a grain or an animal sacrifice to appease God's wrath. Instead, Jesus offered *Himself*.

Out of obedience to God (His Heavenly Father) and because of His great love for His people, Jesus willingly:

took the penalty for sin

As we learned earlier, because of sin, His people were under God's:

- judgment
- wrath and
- condemnation

At the cross, God (the Father) perfectly judged the sin of His people. Instead of pouring His wrath out on His people as a punishment for their sins, He poured out His wrath on Jesus.

Because Jesus took the punishment for sin, His people no longer have to face or fear punishment for their sins. As Martin Luther observed,

- "If He has made my sin to be His sin then I do not have it and I am free."⁵⁴

Jesus the Redeemer

Jesus' mission to *redeem* His people from the penalty of sin was something that was predicted many centuries prior to His birth.

- At the very beginning of the Old Testament, God promised to bring someone to break Satan's power. ⁵⁵
- Likewise, a number of Old Testament prophets pointed to a redeemer that was to come. ⁵⁶

The New Testament has a number of passages that make it clear that Jesus' mission was to take the penalty for sin, so that His people would be reconciled with God:

- When John the Baptist first saw Jesus he said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world" ⁵⁷
- Jesus explained that He shed his blood for the remission (or forgiveness) of sin ⁵⁸
- Later in the New Testament, Paul explained that "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" ⁵⁹

Jesus was given the title of "Christ" or the Messiah because the work that He did was as a Redeemer – someone who redeemed people and reconciled them with God.

How was Redemption Accomplished?

As you've read the previous pages you might have wondered,

What did Jesus do to accomplish this redemption for His people?

Simply put, the Bible explains that Jesus:

- lived a perfect life and
- died a perfect death

He lived the life that we should have lived – had we not sinned – and died the death that we deserved.

We learn in the Bible that Jesus willingly accepted persecution, suffering and even death by crucifixion on a Cross.

Jesus was betrayed, arrested and brought to the religious and political leaders in Jerusalem. He was falsely accused, mocked and scourged.

Pontius Pilate, the local Roman official, proclaimed that he “did not find this man guilty of any of your charges against him”, yet he still sentenced Jesus to death.

Jesus was forced to carry a wooden cross to a place called The Skull (also called Calvary), where he was crucified. (Crucifixion was an ancient punishment where a victim was nailed to a large wooden cross or other piece of wood).

On the cross, Jesus spoke several phrases, including, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do”⁶⁰ and “It is finished.”⁶¹

Question 3.14 :: What does Christ's death show?

I am _____ that Christ died because of His great love for people.

Very Uncertain | Uncertain | Certain | Very Certain

Question 3.15 :: What does Christ's death show?

I am _____ that Christ died because of His obedience to God His Father.

Very Uncertain | Uncertain | Certain | Very Certain

Question 3.16 :: Did Jesus deserve to die?

I am _____ that Jesus did not deserve to die.

Very Uncertain | Uncertain | Certain | Very Certain

Question 3.17 :: Did Jesus die for His people?

I am _____ that Jesus died to take the penalty for sin for
His people.

Very Uncertain | Uncertain | Certain | Very Certain

Question 3.18 :: What are the implications of Jesus' death?

I am _____ that Jesus' people are no longer under condemnation by God because Jesus took the punishment they deserved.

Very Uncertain | Uncertain | Certain | Very Certain

Question 3.19 :: Is there anything people could do to repay Jesus?

I am _____ that there is nothing people could do to repay Jesus for dying on the Cross.

Very Uncertain | Uncertain | Certain | Very Certain

Question 3.20 :: What have you learned about the work of Christ?

In this lesson we explored:

- our need for a mediator
- the work of Christ

In reflecting on these areas, consider these questions:

- **What is difficult about understanding a need for a mediator?**
- **What is challenging about learning more about the work of Christ?**
- **What new things did you learn about God in this discussion?**
- **What new things did you learn about yourself in this discussion?**

If you feel comfortable, share your responses with others in your *Doubters Welcome* discussion.

References

¹ Phrases such as “Christian beliefs” and “what Christians believe” are referenced throughout this booklet. While people who profess to be Christian may hold many different beliefs than those documented here, the beliefs described in this resource might commonly be classified as *orthodox* (or common to a traditional understanding of Christianity). Others might describe the views presented in this booklet as evangelical or reformed.

² Examples of aspirational goals are seemingly limitless: vocational development plans, physical fitness goals, financial goals, etc.

³ Acts 16:30, emphasis added

⁴ Matthew 19:16, emphasis added

⁵ Matthew 19:17

⁶ The Ten Commandments are found in Exodus 20:

First Commandment: “You shall have no other gods before me.” (Exodus 20:3)

Second Commandment: “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.” (Exodus 20:4-6)

Third Commandment: “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.” (Exodus 20:7)

Fourth Commandment: “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. (Exodus 20:8-11)

Fifth Commandment: “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.” (Exodus 20:12)

Sixth Commandment: “You shall not murder.” (Exodus 20:13)

Seventh Commandment: “You shall not commit adultery.” (Exodus 20:14)

Eighth Commandment: “You shall not steal.” (Exodus 20:15)

Ninth Commandment: “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.” (Exodus 20:16)

Tenth Commandment: “You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's.” (Exodus 20:17)

⁷ Exodus 20:2-3

⁸ Matthew 22:37

⁹ Deuteronomy 6:5

¹⁰ Matthew 22:37

¹¹ Matthew 22:39

¹² Matthew 19:21

¹³ See Galatians 3:10, where Paul explains, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by *all things* written in the Book of the Law, and do them” (emphasis added).

¹⁴ This is what Reformed scholars call “The First Use of the Law” – the ability for God’s Law to serve as a Teacher to show us that we (and all people) have sinned by comparing our lives to God’s standards.

¹⁵ Westminster Shorter Catechism, Question #14

¹⁶ see Genesis chapter 2 and Galatians 5:12-21. The Anglican Church’s Articles of Religion explains that “Original sin...is the fault and corruption of the Nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam; whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit; and therefore in every person born into this world, it deserveth God’s wrath and damnation. (Article IX, 39 Articles of Religion)

¹⁷ See for example Galatians 3:22, Galatians 4:3 and Romans 7:5.

¹⁸ Augustine has greatly influenced Christian thinking in understanding the totality of sin. Augustine explained that sinful people have a propensity to sin at all times. Because of original sin, people have lost their ability or

References

power to *not* sin (*posse non peccare* in Latin) and only have the ability or power to sin (*posse peccare*).

¹⁹ Romans 3:10-12

²⁰ See for example Psalm 5

²¹ See for example John 3:36, Romans 5:16, Romans 5:18, Ephesians 2:3 and Ephesians 5:6

²² By using our hypothetical “Person A” I am following J.B. Phillips’ example of a hypothetical helper from his book “*Your God is Too Small*” where he hypothesized the incarnation (of God coming to earth) in *Baby A*.

²³ Example from R.C. Sproul who has written extensively on the law of non-contradiction. This example and more about the law of non-contradiction can be found on the following webpage:

<http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/law-noncontradiction/>

²⁴ Augustine, *Contra Academicos*, III, XIII, 29

²⁵ See for example Romans chapter 1.

²⁶ See for example Luke 13:33.

²⁷ See for example others saying:

- “Surely this man is the Prophet” (John 7:4)
- “I can see you are a prophet” (John 4:19)
- “This is indeed the prophet who has come into the world” (John 6:14)
- You are “one of the prophets” (Matthew 16:14)

It is important to note that while a number of people perceived that Jesus was a prophet, there were also people who did not. The “Rejected Prophet” theme (of people attributing Jesus’ words and works to Satan) can be found in the New Testament books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

²⁸ See for example God saying words such as...

- “This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!” (Luke 9:35)
- “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.” (Matthew 17:5)
- “This is my beloved Son, listen to him.” (Mark 9:7)

References

²⁹ John 14:6

³⁰ See for example John 21:17

³¹ John 1:3

³² Romans 11:36

³³ Colossians 2:3

³⁴ B.B. Warfield, Sermon on Incarnate Truth. From “Selected Shorter Writings of Benjamin B. Warfield, vol. 2, Edited by John E. Meeter, published by Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1970. Originally from *Princeton Sermons*, 1893, pages 94-114.

³⁵ See John 1:18

³⁶ See Luke 19:11

³⁷ See John 1:29

³⁸ Matthew 20:28

³⁹ See John 4:34

⁴⁰ John 3:16, emphasis added.

⁴¹ Romans 5:8, emphasis added.

⁴² I John 4:10, emphasis added.

⁴³ John 1:1

⁴⁴ I Peter 1:19, 2:22

⁴⁵ Romans 5:18-19

⁴⁶ I John 3:5

⁴⁷ Hebrews 4:15

⁴⁸ John 8:46

References

⁴⁹ See John 21:17 for example.

⁵⁰ Luke 12:7

⁵¹ See Philippians 1:2

⁵² Hebrews 4:15

⁵³ Until now we have called that person a *mediator* – which is technically correct, but as we look at the work that Jesus did we see that there is much more to explore. For more on Jesus' priestly role, refer to the New Testament book of Hebrews.

⁵⁴ Luther WA 56:204.14-25; LW 25:188

⁵⁵ See Genesis 3:15

⁵⁶ See Isaiah 59:20 and Jeremiah 50:34 for example.

⁵⁷ John 1:29

⁵⁸ Matthew 26:28

⁵⁹ I Corinthians 15:3

⁶⁰ Luke 23:34

⁶¹ John 19:30