

Conversations with a Skeptic: Christianity is arrogant and narrow-minded

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[0 : 01] Father, when we consider what you have done for us in Jesus Christ, Lord, it is our joy to rehearse it. It is our joy to live in the blessings that we receive through it.

And it is our joy to seek to understand it more. And we ask, Lord, that you would help us to understand more of your truth and what you've done for us.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Friends, please take a seat. We are doing things a little bit different tonight and for the next, including tonight, five weeks, total of five weeks.

We are starting a new series entitled Conversations Between a Skeptic and a Christian. Now, what we're going to do on these nights is Aaron Roberts and I are going to sit up here and we're going to have a conversation that you guys get to, you know, listen in on.

And we're going to look at five different difficulties that people often have with Christianity. Now, they're not the only five difficulties. They're not even necessarily the five difficulties that are most difficult for you.

[1 : 20] But they're, nevertheless, five areas that people often find challenging when it comes to Christianity. Christianity. And tonight, we're going to look at the theme, Christians are arrogant and narrow-minded.

And Aaron Roberts and I are going to have this conversation. Aaron, why don't you jump up here? And we are, we're going to talk about this a little bit. And Aaron's job is to try to articulate the question and the difficulty as best he can.

We're both Christians here, you know, full disclosure here. Both, I think, Aaron, are you a Christian? Yeah, yeah. I do wait for the church. Okay, yeah, that's good.

We hope so. We hope so. Although he's been articulating, he's been working on these questions for a little while. So I don't know, you might be a little bit more skeptical. It depends on whether or not you've convinced yourself.

But anyways, Aaron's job is to try to articulate the question and the difficulty. And my job is to... Is to give the definitive answer to all of these questions.

[2 : 32] Exactly. And this is where the disclaimer comes. The disclaimer is, we are not going to put these questions to rest entirely. But this is an invitation for all of us to have these questions and these conversations.

These are issues, whether you're a Christian or you're not a Christian, they're relevant issues that all of us face. And so this is an invitation to look into that.

And then once we have the conversation, I'm going to look at a Bible reading with you together.

Okay? Okay, well, should I kick us off, shall I? Yeah, man. Okay. Give it a go. So, Jim, if Christianity went to...

The leaders of Christianity worldwide, whoever they were, right? Went to an advertising agency and said, can you help us market our gig? We want to promote the faith.

Particularly in the West, which is lagging a bit. My gut tells me that an advertising agency would say to Christianity that you have a really fundamental problem in your communication strategy.

[3 : 43] And that what you communicate is incredibly off-putting. Because what you communicate is that you are right and therefore everybody else is wrong.

And I think an advertising agency would probably recommend that you pull back on this kind of exclusive claim to truth. Right.

And that you sort of say something like, Christianity is one of a number of really great options. We think it's a really, really great option. But, you know, there's a few out there.

But... Like Mac or PC. Yeah, yeah. You should probably pull back on the exclusive truth claim and sort of go, hey, we just want some really great options out there. I think that... I think an ad agency would say that is a far more attractive message than what you've got going right now. Yeah. Yeah, one of the things... When you live in Vancouver, this comes up a lot. Not just Vancouver, but, you know, the West.

[4 : 49] This comes up a lot. I've had a lot of conversations with people. Where halfway through... I mean, oftentimes when people find out that I'm a pastor, the conversation ends right there.

I mean, they're just kind of like... First of all, half of them don't even know what that is. But then when they do, they're not very interested in talking to me anymore. But when the conversation does last a little bit longer, when we come to these sorts of issues, I have become very familiar with the look of...

I mean, they're very polite, but I'm pretty sure they're thinking in their head, you're a Martian. Like, where are you coming from with all this? So, yeah, no, I can imagine a marketing agency saying that we should pull back on that.

But let me ask you a question. Why do you think this is so uncomfortable for people? What about it is kind of repellent to people?

Well, I think it's just these... There's not many other groups or organizations making these kind of claims. And so it just comes across as very arrogant. It comes across as narrow-minded. It creates a kind of...

[5 : 58] You think you're better than me. You have this special gig. You have this special knowledge. I don't have this. And you're looking at me thinking, you know, if you had what I know, it would be really great.

And so I sort of feel left out. I think you're arrogant. And also, I think you're divisive. And it kind of puts me on the outside. Right. Right. And I mean, there's a fair sense to which that makes a lot of sense.

I mean, one of the funny things about humanity, the world over, for as long as history has been able to record it, is that humans have had this sneaking suspicion that there's a thing called a god. You know, most people aren't atheists. Atheists exist, but most humans aren't them. So most of humanity has tended to believe in God.

But it is remarkable how there's a uniformity or a unity in terms of our suspicion that God exists, but there's an enormous amount of disunity or diversity with regard to our actual perspective.

[7 : 08] So I can see why. You know, there's lots of different perspectives on God. Why would one perspective claim to be the perspective? Yeah. Because what people would probably say to you is this, is that there's a really great Hindu fable about, and I'm sure you guys probably heard it, about the king who sends off three blind beggars to find out what...

Is that a gentleman? Yeah, yes, please. Who find out what an elephant... Find out what an elephant is. So he sends these blind beggars out, and the first blind... So they find this elephant, and the first blind beggar grabs it around its legs.

The second one grabs it around its trunk, and the third one, I think, grabs it on its side, I think. And the one that grabs it around its legs says, See, look, elephants are like a tree.

And the one that grabs it has just grabbed it by the trunk, is saying, Oh, look, elephants are just like a... Elephants are like a snake. And the one that grabs it on its side says, Elephants are like a giant wall.

And so they all have these different kind of perspectives on the elephant, which aren't necessarily wrong, just different perspectives. And I think an ad agency, or I think the world would say, if Christianity could just take that perspective and say, We've got this little view on God, on this elephant, and it's no better than anybody else's.

[8 : 36] We like it. You might like it too, but you might have a different idea. I think people would say that is a far better strategy, and that would lead to a much better and safer world.

Yeah. Yeah. The elephant analogy, or the metaphor, it makes a lot of sense in a lot of respects. Like, it sounds very, very plausible.

Like, it strikes me as having potentially a lot of explanatory power. So, absolutely, I'll grant that. The observation that I'd want to make, though, is that in the metaphor itself, of all these blind men who are, you know, they're unable to see the fullness of the elephant, but they can kind of touch different pieces of it, the metaphor still assumes that there is a full elephant.

Right? The metaphor still assumes that beyond or behind all of these different perspectives, there is one truth behind all the other truths, one, you know, yeah, true truth.

Yes, right? Yeah, but how can we know that? Like, how could we ever say, we actually know that? You know, it just seems, I think people would, it seems very reasonable to say that that sounds just incredibly arrogant to say, we see the elephant, and everyone else gets a tail or a trunk or something like that.

[10:06] Yeah. Absolutely. I can see that. I mean, the first thing I want to say is, if there, that being said, if there is an elephant, if there is a truth behind the truth, then it makes a lot of sense for us to do whatever we can to pursue that truth.

Yeah. As far as we can, right? That makes sense, right? Yeah, but people, I mean, I think people do pursue that. And they come up with different answers. Exactly. And so, like, I've been out to Richmond, and, you know, Me too.

That's my argument. I have been to Richmond, and I managed to find my way back to East Virginia. There you go. There you go. I went on this thing called a temple tour, because there's all these honking great temples out of Richmond, right?

So there's a mosque and a Hindu temple and a Buddhist temple, and there's probably some other stuff there as well. So I did this tour, and you can meet all these, you can meet all the people that are kind of running these things, right?

Lovely, lovely people. Really nice people. The Hindus feed you, by the way, which was good. And they all really believe strongly in their perspectives.

[11:24] Right. And these people, they work for these organizations. And so you have all of these people that represent millions of people in the world, really strongly believing that they are right, and this, people will argue, leads to conflict.

This, people would argue, leads to war. And I think, I'll stop this part here, because I think we're talking about that next week. So, back to your original thing. Maybe there is one big truth.

Maybe there is one big elephant, people would say. But how could we be certain that we are seeing the whole elephant and we just don't have the trunk or the leg or the tail or anything like that, when there seem so many options supported by so many millions of people and maybe, I don't know, like maybe not a huge amount of evidence for any particular one that outweighs the other ones.

Do you know what I'm saying? Sure, absolutely. When I was an undergrad, excuse me, I took a term in Jerusalem. And I studied Judaism and Islam and Christianity.

And, you know, you can't be in Jerusalem for any length of time without being confronted by each of these religions. I mean, the three great monotheistic religions are all, you know, right there.

[12:54] And the remarkable thing, you're absolutely right. I mean, you know, I met brilliant, fantastic Muslims and brilliant, fantastic Jews and brilliant, fantastic Christians and they have irreconcilable beliefs.

I mean, you know, there's no reconciling the Trinity and the Muslim or the Jewish conception of God. Remarkably incongruent beliefs. Lots of things that we agree on.

But the thing that struck me as an undergraduate there, studying there, is how in the world, I mean, how in the world am I supposed to have a clue which one's right or if any of them are right?

I risk my case. There you go. The defense risks you. However, this story... No. But one of the reasons, one of the reasons that actually drew me to Christianity and actually, I came away from Jerusalem with an increased confidence in Christianity and more specifically in Jesus, is that Christianity agreed.

The thing about Christianity is it agreed with the problem. The problem was I couldn't figure out how I could know the differences, how I could figure out God, how I could have any perspective on God that I'd have any confidence in.

[14:20] And it was Christianity that actually said, you're right. You can't have any clue about God. I mean, God is way bigger, way beyond us, all that kind of stuff. And what Christianity says, and it made a lot of sense to me, is that the only chance, the only hope we have of knowing anything real about God is not if we try to figure out God.

It won't happen if we reach up. It has to be if God comes to us. And the big, crazy, audacious claim of Christianity, and if anything's going to offend anybody, I mean, this should offend somebody.

The big, crazy, audacious claim of Christianity is that humanity cannot reach God, can't figure out anything valid about God, but God has chosen, in His grace and mercy and love, to come to us in

the person of Jesus Christ, so that when you look at Jesus, you see God in His fullness. As you could argue, God came to Muhammad and He wrote some stuff down and started this huge movement as whoever spoke to Buddha, as an angel spoke to the Mormon guy, Joseph Smith, as God has spoken to, as people claim, many different people and brought a new message, a new idea, a new concept.

Yeah. So it's, like by itself, it doesn't strike me as a solid argument against a skeptic. All the rest. Yeah. Yeah, no, but the thing is, the thing to keep in mind, all the different religions are going to have...

[15:57] You okay? Yeah. Okay. Yeah. I was just looking around. You have a funny look on your face. I'm just seeing what people are thinking about this. Are you reading minds? I think they're into it. Okay.

Yeah, avert your eyes, everyone. The thing that's different about Jesus as opposed to all the different religious leaders and prophets, Christianity makes a bigger and a more audacious claim. Muhammad is a prophet. Moses is a prophet. All these different religions, most of the different religions, certainly all the monotheistic religions, believe in prophets that have come and spoken and have given insights about who God is.

religious teachers have given valuable thoughts and perspectives on who God is. The big audacious claim of Christianity is that when Jesus shows up, he is not just another prophet. He is actually God himself. So when other prophets have been able to give us insights about God, when you look at Jesus, he actually is God. So it's God showing up personally, which is a different thing than...

[17:06] You may think it's crazy, but it's a different thing than all the other kind of prophetic tradition. But how... I guess this takes us to the issue of certainty. Like, you are making a case that Jesus is God, which is a huge...

which is a huge call. Mm-hmm. And you're asking people to believe that over and against other belief systems. and you're asking them to be certain about that, like, really trust in that, going, yep, this is definitely it.

With all of the options out there, with all what seem to be, for a lot of people, would seem very reasonable options, including just not believing anything, yep. Like, how can somebody...

how can somebody be certain that Jesus is God? I mean, is it possible to believe that? Is it necessary? Is it... I mean, you're probably pretty certain about this. Like, how...

You know, at an age where we're skeptical, at an age of skepticism, how can we be certain about this stuff? Well, I think it brings... That question is the question.

[18:15] The question, you know, with regard to Christianity, there's lots of different issues within Christianity that you can like or dislike or whatever.

all that kind of stuff. The central issue in Christianity, the issue that is the... It's the key to everything. If it's true, everything's true.

If it's not true, nothing's true within Christianity. It's the claim that Jesus makes to be God. If that is true, everything's true. If it's not, nothing is. So, the key...

Your question is, how can we be certain that Jesus is God? That is the big, crazy question that all of us have to figure out. And the thing that you need to do is actually investigate Jesus.

You need to sit down and you need to read the things that Jesus said. You need to read the things that Jesus did. You need to sit with Jesus on his own turf for a little while. Look at him, investigate him, and ask yourself the question, is this guy a ridiculous loony or is he who he claims to be?

[19:19] And he makes big, crazy claims. The thing is that, you know, down through the last 2,000 years, there have been literally billions of people, very, very smart people, many of them, not all of them probably, but you know, very, very smart people who have come to the conclusion that Jesus is qualitatively different than all the other competitors.

And so the invitation, a Christian's invitation is not, you know, you gotta believe what I believe, you know, my perspective is the right perspective, whatever. The claim and the call that a Christian makes is look at Jesus, investigate Jesus.

Is he who he claims to be? And the only way to do that is to sit down and really go through the Gospels, which, I mean, we're not gonna be able to do right now, but that's what needs to happen. Somebody needs to sit down with Jesus, read him, and come to the conclusion, ask the question, is this guy who he claims to be? So, so this takes us back to the, back to the start, the very first

question.

If somebody did this and, and they decided, yes, Jesus is God, then they would have to then believe that every other religion is wrong.

[20 : 32] And they would stake their claim of Christianity and say, Buddhists and Hindus and, and whatever, you are wrong, I am right. So it's back to the question of, of, of arrogance and narrow-mindedness, you know?

Because that, I think to people, sounds very arrogant. Yeah, yeah. Well, what it means, it doesn't, it's, obviously, I mean, that's not exactly the way I would frame it.

The way I would frame it is this, that when you come to the conclusion that Jesus really is the Son of God, that he really is God in human form, so that when you look at Jesus, you see the, you see God the way God thinks of himself, then what that means is you can take a lot of valuable insights from all the other religions.

Like, we don't have to be reactionary against other religions. We don't have to be frightened by them or, or kind of weird about it. But it means that where the other religions contradict or disagree with Jesus, we're going to go with Jesus.

Not because we think we're the stuff, but because we believe that Jesus is God in a way and presents God with a pristine clarity that no other religious prophet can do.

[21 : 46] And so, when there's a disagreement, we're going to opt for Jesus. The thing to, I mean, getting back to the issue of arrogance and narrow-mindedness, the reality is that there are a lot of very, very arrogant and narrow-minded Christians.

anybody who has spent any time with Christians knows this. But the actual claim of Christianity, the actual, what we call the gospel, the center message of Christianity is a very, very humble claim. It's a humble claim because it says, I cannot figure out God in any valid way. my only hope is to trust in Jesus.

My only hope is to cling to someone else. And trusting someone else is not arrogant. You may think it's foolish. You could describe it in a lot of other ways, but it's not arrogant.

To trust someone else is a very, very humble thing. And what we believe is that when you trust in Jesus, when you look at Jesus, He opens up God for us in a remarkable way.

[23 : 01] C.S. Lewis, who's a Christian writer and thinker, he put it this way. He goes, I believe in Christianity like I believe the sun has risen. Not because, not simply because I can see it, but because by it I can see everything else.

And that's exactly what Christians believe about Jesus. We look at Jesus and in Him we find everything that there is to know about God. and that's what we're so excited about.

Agree to disagree. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Now we're going to continue our conversation next week, right? Yeah, that sounds very good. What's the topic next week? Next week, we are going to talk about that Christianity on the whole has had a negative impact on humanity because of the divisiveness that it has caused and lack of creativity and the homogenous way of thinking and so forth and so forth.

Yeah, cool. It's going to be good. Okay, cheers, John. Thanks, Aaron. Everybody, grab your service sheets for just a second and look at the second page.

What I want to do real briefly is look at this reading in Hebrews. It's Hebrews chapter 1 and what I want to do is read it and then talk about it just real briefly and flesh out one of the things that actually already came up.

[24 : 35] So, I'll try not to repeat myself too much. But I want to flesh out this big audacious claim of Christianity. The big audacious claim of Christianity is that we as humans, we do not have the ability to figure out God.

We're blind men around the elephant, that kind of thing. But the big audacious claim is that God has come to us in Jesus in such a way that when you look at Jesus, you gain access to God's perspective about himself.

Okay? Look at the text. Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets. But in these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed as the heir of all things, through whom he also created the world.

He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high.

Now, take a look at verse 1, right at the top. Long ago, many times, and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets. Now, this issue of prophets, Aaron and I already talked about this a little bit.

[25 : 56] The issue of prophets is something that all monotheistic religions agree on, right? Judaism, Islam, Christianity, we all believe that God has spoken to humanity through prophets.

And prophets are fantastic. Prophets are not so much someone who tells the future. A prophet is primarily someone who speaks and describes God, what God likes, what God does, things like that. And prophets are fantastic, but they are very, very limited. The reason they're limited is that fundamentally they're human beings. And they are always describing God second hand.

So when you read a prophetic literature, it might be perfectly true. I mean, we believe, you know, we've got prophets all through the Bible and we think they're perfectly accurate, but they're really giving a portion of who God is.

They're not giving us access to the full deal about who God is. Now, Christianity claims, and this reading claims, that God has now done something bigger and better than giving us another prophet.

[27 : 09] Look at verse 2. But in these last days he has spoken to us by his son. Now, the question is, why is, the text is saying that God used to speak to us through prophets?

That was great, but it was limited. Now God has spoken to us by his son. And the question that comes up is, why is that any different? Why is God speaking through his son different than God speaking through the prophets?

And the answer is, according to this text, the son of God is the exact imprint of God's nature.

If you look at the text, in verse 2, it says that through the son God created all things.

So the son created all things, then God says that he is the heir of all things, he owns all things, the son does. And then in verse 3 it says that he sustains all things.

[28 : 11] So the son is creating, he owns all things, he's sustaining all things in every way the son of God is exactly like God himself. So that if we were able to look at the son of God, we would have access, we would be able to see the full perspective on who God is.

Because he's the exact imprint of his nature. Now, the remarkable thing that Christianity says and that the scriptures teach is that even though God and God's son are far beyond anything that we could imagine or understand, they're infinite, we're finite, we'll never be able to get a decent perspective on who God is.

God's son has become a man in Jesus Christ. Now, here's the thing. We might not be able to grasp God, but we can grasp another human being.

Right? You can know another human being. You can talk to him. You can enter into a relationship with him. You can, over time, grow in that relationship with that person so that you understand more and more about who they are.

And so, what this passage is saying and what the big audacious claim of Christianity is that the only way we could, the only hope we have to know who God is is if God, God's son, becomes a man so that we can look at him, a historical figure, we can read about him, we can read what he said, we can watch what he did, how he reacted, and through looking at him, we end up getting God's perspective on who God is.

[29 : 51] Think about the blind guys and the elephants for a second. You know, these guys, they have these, just a little sliver of the truth about what the elephant is, but they don't have the full picture.

Christianity claims that Jesus is the elephant in human form so that when you look at him, you can see the whole thing. I mean, it's an audacious claim. But I think it's reasonable to say that the only way we could ever know anything about God is if God did that.

And if he has done that, then it means he is a remarkable God full of grace and mercy. Let me give you one more example.

I don't know anything about the medical industry or the medical field, like medical science. I don't have a clue. I'm not a doctor. I'm the son of a doctor. I'm not a nurse or the son of a nurse.

You know, I don't know anything. But, my doctor does. I have no access to the latest insights in medical science.

[30 : 55] But my doctor does. And by knowing my doctor, by speaking to my doctor, by hearing what my doctor says, my relationship with him gives me access to this sphere of knowledge that I have no direct ability to connect with.

That's exactly what God has done in Jesus. We can't reach God, but God has come to us in Jesus, so when you look at him, he opens up an access to God.

Now, if we get this clear, once this gets in us, it actually undermines arrogance and narrow-mindedness in us. In Vancouver, in the West, there's usually kind of, I'm going to caricature here, but there's kind of two approaches to spirituality and religion.

There's more than this, but I'm going to caricature. So, on the one hand, you've got your kind of conservative religionist. Okay? And on the other hand, you have your liberal pluralist relativist. Now, the conservative religionist says, I have, one way or the other, I have an insight about God, God is in my back pocket, I know everything there is to know about God, therefore, I don't need to talk to anybody, I don't need to hear anybody other, anyone else's perspective on God, because I've got it covered.

[32 : 17] Okay? Now, you can hear the arrogance in that, right? On the other hand, though, you have your liberal pluralist, and the funny thing about them is that they frame it better, but there's a sense to which they end up in a very similar spot.

It goes something like this, the liberal pluralist will say, I know that, you know, nobody can have the full perspective on God. So, we're all equally right and equally wrong.

But, I am a very enlightened person, because I know that. I have the knowledge the kind of key to all the knowledge that is most important about God, namely, that he can't be fully known and that all the perspectives are equally wrong and equally valid.

And therefore, because I've got the, I'm very enlightened and I've got the, kind of the secret knowledge that unpacks the whole thing, what I can do then is to go around to the different perspectives and I can kind of pick and choose the things from the different religions that I like and that I agree with.

Now, can you see that at the bottom, at the end of the day, both of them end up in a very, very similar spot. They're both saying, I've got the, kind of, enlightenment, I've been able to figure out the enlightenment, the key knowledge that you need to know about God and I really don't need to be challenged by anybody else because, for the conservative religionist, his opinion is all that matters and for the liberal pluralist, his opinion is how he judges all the, what he takes and what he leaves from all the different perspectives.

[34 : 00] So at the end of the day, they both end up arrogant and they both end up narrow-minded. It's all about their insights and their opinions and their perspectives on God. Jesus comes and he says, both of you are deeply, deeply mistaken.

It's true that as humans, we cannot at all by ourselves reach up and get the insight on who God is but God has come to us so the Christian says, I can never figure out God but I trust in Jesus and that means that Jesus is always challenging our opinions.

As a Christian, you are narrow-minded if Jesus has not challenged your perspectives and your opinions about God recently. it's a very humble place.

We say, we cannot understand God, therefore, we trust in Jesus and we allow Jesus to challenge us at every level. Because he challenges us, it's not narrow-minded. Because we're trusting someone else, it's not arrogant.

Okay. If you're not a Christian here, the thing really to do, and Aaron and I were already talking about it, is you need to investigate Jesus because either he was a deluded, arrogant freak or he was who he said he was and he said he was the son of God and the embodiment of God himself.

[35 : 22] So you need to investigate that and there's no better way to do that than through Christianity Explored, which Aaron Roberts can tell you more about that. If you are a Christian, you need to ask yourself, are you an arrogant, narrow-minded Christian?

Because I love you, friends, but a lot of us are. And you need to ask the question, do you listen? Do you listen to God and to other people in such a way that your perspectives and your opinions are challenged? Do you listen to Jesus in such a way that he challenges and replaces your perspectives and your opinions with his perspective and his opinions?

If you have not been challenged by Jesus recently, it probably means you're arrogant and narrow-minded and you need to cut it out and learn to trust in Jesus and be challenged by him.

Okay, I'm done. How are we doing? Good. Should we take some questions? Does anybody... Aaron, come on up. From the floor.

[36 : 36] So a question is something that if you wrote it down, we'd have a question mark on the end of it as opposed to a comment. Okay, so... So, anyone got any questions?

What I might do is I might take a few and pick my favourite one just to cut down on the time. Okay, any questions at all? Any questions?

Yes? Yes? Just for proper prayer, I heard the author Charles Stanley say handing it all over to Jesus, but I always thought you have to pray to the Heavenly Father and then the prayer in Jesus so proper prayer to the members of the Holy Trinity.

How is it supposed to be done handing it over to the Lord? Is it handed over to the Father or to the Son? I couldn't hear very well. Is this... Who are we supposed to pray to?

The Father or the Son? Yeah. Yeah. Well, because as Christians we believe in the Trinity that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are all equally God. You can pray to any of the three.

[37 : 41] But generally speaking in the Bible, usually prayers are directed to the Father. Okay. Any questions? Lady.

Just a young redhead just in the front row here. How as Christians what is the best way to listen to Jesus and have Him challenge us?

Good question. We'll take that one. Good question. We'll take that question. Yeah. Very good. Very good. I think a couple things. Jesus, you know, we believe that Jesus is not...

I mean, He's a historical figure but He's not dead. Right? We believe that Jesus died but then three days later He rose again. He ascended to the Father's right hand. That's actually in the reading. And because of that we believe that Jesus is even now challenging us. He can speak to us directly here now.

[38 : 48] And the main ways He does that is first of all through the Scriptures. As we read the Scriptures, we read who Jesus is. We read the different prophets and we read the prophets in light of what we know about Jesus and that gives us kind of the full picture.

You'll find Him challenging you. So, reading Scripture is one. The other way is... Another way, the critical way, is living life together with other Christians and letting other Christians...

You know, each of us have grown and been challenged by Jesus in different ways. Some of us are further along in certain areas and not as far along in other areas. And so, as we hang out like in home group and just as friends in the church, things like that, we share our lives together and from time to time, hopefully regularly, Christians will challenge one another.

Saying, hey, you're a little off the mark on this issue. Jesus says this about that and so, let's get in the line. Another way is through prayer. As we pray and speak to God, speak to Jesus, undoubtedly, I mean, it's remarkable how God ends up challenging us in a variety of ways.

And then another way, it's very important, is interacting with people that disagree with us. People who aren't Christians. Because as a Christian, when you interact with non-Christians, with people who disagree with you, people from other perspectives, it will...

[40 : 19] they'll ask the really hard questions and that will motivate you to go back to Jesus and seek greater clarity. And so, that's why I found, I mean, when I was in Jerusalem, Jesus challenged me in ways that I just wouldn't want to live without.

Precisely through interacting with people who didn't agree with me at all. Anyway, there's just a few that come to mind. There's a lot more. Yes.

Yes, the young man with the moustache. Let me come over. Let me come over. When the Bible says that we can know God just as He fully knows us, does that not imply that we can actually know Him?

Yes. Yes. It implies that we know Him, but the way the Bible says we know Him is through Jesus. Yeah.

Morris is referring to a particular Bible passage where it says that we can know God, but the wider context and wider context of the New Testament, the way you know God is by coming to Jesus.

[41 : 35] Any other questions? Going? Yes. Yes. Yes.

The motorcyclist with the ponytail up the front. As far as I know, there's only one time that Jesus invites us to sit down with Him, but He gives us a lot of commands.

Follow me is not an invitation. That's a command. There's others like that. So, why does He command us like that?

Like with the rich young man. Yeah. He says, sell all you have and follow me. Yeah. Follow me is still a command. Yeah, absolutely.

I, there might be more to your question, but if the question is, why does Jesus give commands? I mean, I think the simplest reason is that He loves us.

[42 : 48] I, I have a son. Now, it doesn't quite work because He's not really old enough to take commands just yet. But I anticipate, I'll use like my godchildren.

You know, when I'm hanging out with my godchildren and, and, and I tell them, you know, at times I'll tell them a command out on the playground and usually it's because it's for their safety.

It's because I care about them. The gun. Like, put down the gun. Put, put, put down the bullets, put down the gun. Don't. I don't know really how to respond to that, but, you know.

Am I helping? Yeah, yeah, yeah, you're helping a lot, Aaron. No, I, I mean, I, I, I command them, uh, not because I'm on a power trip, but because I love them. Hopefully I'm not on a power trip.

I don't think I'm on a power trip. Anyways, God isn't. Um, Jesus gives us commands because he loves us. When he says, follow me, he's, he's saying, follow me, don't follow any other alternatives because they lead to bad places and I will lead you to the best place.

[43 : 54] Knowing God. That's why we were created. That's why we all want to know God. No?

Um, okay, we might, maybe we'll finish up the question time there, but we will likely do this every week, question and answer time.

So, when, when we are having our dialogue, um, start thinking about, start thinking about questions or objections you might have or whatever during that time and, uh, we'd be happy to sort of engage those questions.

Okay. Good deal. Thanks. Um, let's, um, on page three in your service sheet, um, Thank you.