

Weekly Homework Guide

Week One-Biblical Christianity

What's The Difference?

By Fritz Ridenour

Oxford Dictionary defines a **plumb line** as: a line with a plumb attached to it, used for finding the depth of water or **determining the vertical** on an upright surface. (Powered by Oxford Dictionaries · © Oxford University Press · Translation by Bing Translator)

During our course of study, we are going to use 1st Corinthians 15:3-4 as our *plumb line* for comparing major religions of the world to Christianity.

Questions

1. What three key elements are found in 1st Corinthians 15:3-4?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
2. Read Amos 7:7-9
 - a. Why did God use a plumb line against Israel?
 - b. What did the plumb line indicate?
3. What does John 10:30 say about Jesus' identity?
4. Read Romans 5:12-21
 - a. How does this scripture passage compare Jesus to Adam?
 - b. What is the consequence of sin? Grace?

So What's The Difference

By Fritz Ridenour

Chapter One: Biblical Christianity: A Plumb Line For Comparing Faiths

Definitions

Biblical

- There are many churches, denominations, and groups, all of which have beliefs or interpretations of Scripture they prefer to emphasize.
- But there are **basic** biblical doctrines that center on this plain and simple teaching:
 - Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures...he was buried...he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures (1 Cor. 15:3,4)
- These verses serve as a **plumb line** for measuring the difference between biblical Christianity and other faiths.

Plumb Line



<http://www.boomerinthepew.com/2010/07/the-prophet-amos-the-coming-destruction-of-israel-and-the-plumb-line-of-god.html>.

- Amos 7:8 states, “Look, I am setting a plumb line among my people.”
- God will measure our beliefs by His standards, **His Word**, and no other.
- We will use God’s Word as a plumb line used in this study to define the differences between the basic truths on which **Christianity** was founded and what other faiths believe.

- We will explore the teachings of the Bible on these key points, all contained in capsule form in 1 Cor. 15:3,4.
 - “The person and work of Christ-who He is and what He did for us.”
 - “Mankind’s major problem-all of us are **sinner**s in rebellion against God and in need of a Savior.”
 - “The truth and reliability of the Bible-divine inspiration of Scripture.”

Christ Died



<http://constitutionclub.org/2011/09/14/answering-a-critic-of-christianity-and-god/>

- “By definition the backbone of Christianity is **Christ**. There are two key issues concerning Jesus Christ: who He is and what He did.”
 - “Who is He? Only a man? God disguised as a man? Or was He someone uniquely different?”
 - “What did He do? Teach us how to live? Die for our sins? **Both**?”

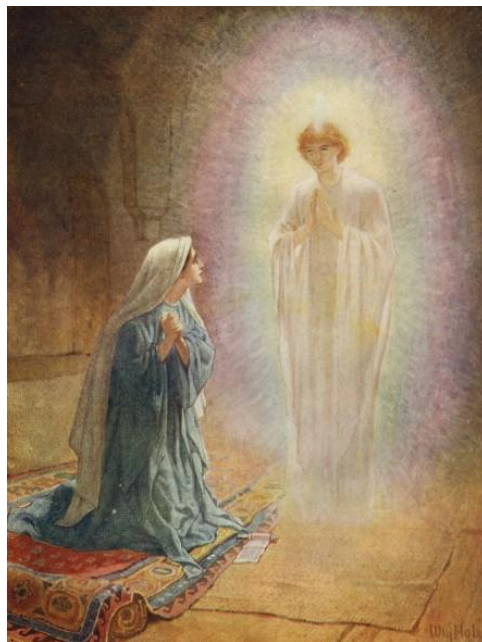
Question One-Was Jesus really **God**, or was He a great teacher and nothing more than that?

- John 1:1-Jesus refers to Christ as the Word-“in the beginning was the Word...and the Word was with God and the Word was God.

- John 1:14-“the Word (God) became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and only, full of grace and truth.”
- John 10:30-“I and the Father are **one**.”
- John 14:9-Jesus tells his disciples that because they had seen Him they had seen the Father.
- John 8:58-“I tell you the truth, before Abraham was born, **I am!**” This was referencing Exodus 3:14 when God said to Moses, “This is what you are to say to the Israelites: “I AM has sent me to you.”
- Jesus told his disciples that if they knew him, they would know the Father as well.
- John 14:5-9 and 20:24-29-“Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.”

In summary: If Jesus Christ was not who He claimed to be (God), but only a man, then Christianity is a **fraud** and Jesus would have to be a liar or a lunatic. As C.S. Lewis said, “He leaves us no other alternative. He did not intend to.”

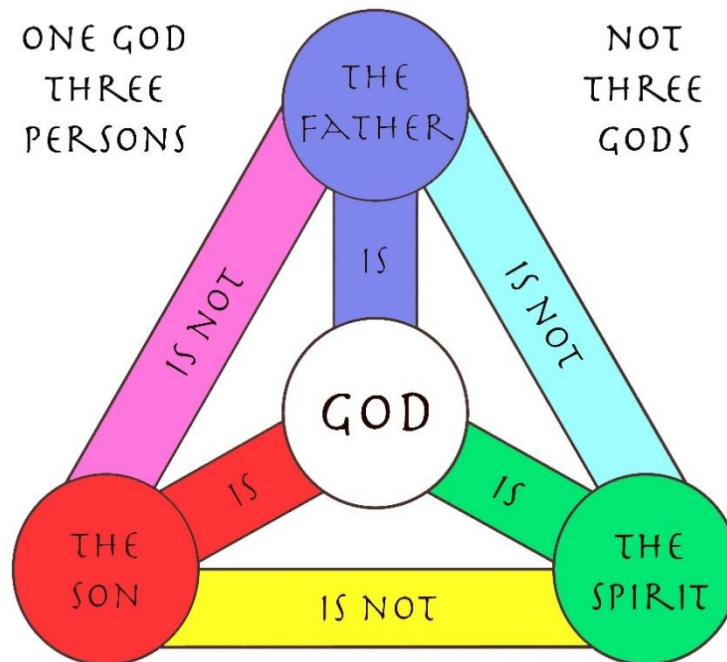
Question Two-Did Jesus’ **virgin birth** actually happen?



<http://thepreciousstone.com/the-virgin-birth/>

- Yes-Grudem writes, “God, in His wisdom, ordained a combination of human and divine influence in the birth of Christ, so that His full **humanity** would be evident to us from the fact of His ordinary human birth from a human mother, and His full deity would be evident from the fact of His conception in Mary’s womb by the powerful work of the Holy Spirit.”

Question Three-Does the Trinity make three gods?



<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/505247651944543036/>

- Deuteronomy 6:4 states, “The LORD our God, the LORD is one.” The Old Testament uses the plural form **Elohim** for the word “God” 2,346 times.
- Most religions reduce Christ to a created being who is “**second-in-command**” at best or just another teacher on the same par with Buddha, Krishna or Moses.
- See references in question one
- The Great Commission-Matthew 28:19 “baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

Question Four-Did Christ actually rise from the dead?



<http://www.australianmarianacademy.blog.com/2011/05/23/christ%E2%80%99s-resurrection-conquered-wall-of-spiritual-death-pope-explains/>.

- “If the Christian’s hope is in a dead Christ who was martyred because He threatened the existing religious establishment, then the Christian is in the same boat with the Muslim, the Buddhist and the follower of Confucius. Mohammed is dead. Buddha is dead. Confucius is dead. But the Bible affirms that Christ is **alive**; and because He lives, the Christian will live also, eternally.”
- How does one explain the total change of Jesus’ followers after they found the empty tomb?
- How did 3,000 devout Jews turn from **1400** years of Judaism and accept Christ in one day (Healing of the blind man)?

Christ Died for our Sins

Question Five-Are we all good, all bad or in between?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OvbyVsFcMew>

- “The Bible teaches that all human beings are born with a crucial flaw in their natures, and that flaw is **sin**.” In Ephesians 2:1 Paul tells us, “You were dead in your transgressions and sins.” Paul states, “Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned” (Rom. 5:12).
- Adam’s act of rebellion plunged all of us into sin, but Christ’s act of **obedience** made it possible for us to be made righteous (see Rom. 5:17-21).

Question Six-Just what is sin? Who decides what is or isn’t sin?



<https://evizone.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/judges-gavel.jpg>

- In our culture it has become generally accepted that truth and morals are **relative**, that there are no objective or absolute truths and morals.
- Without an absolute measuring stick about right and wrong, the ultimate result is moral chaos.
- Romans 1 describes a **universal** moral law placed in each of us.
- Paul states that through nature and the very world around them, they neither glorified God nor thanked Him and instead plunged into idolatry-serving created things rather than their creator.
 - 1 John 1:8 “if we claim to be without sin, we **deceive** ourselves and the truth is not in us”.
 - Many religions do not claim that we are born in sin.

Question Seven-How could Jesus Christ die for everyone’s sins? Isn’t every person responsible for his own sins?

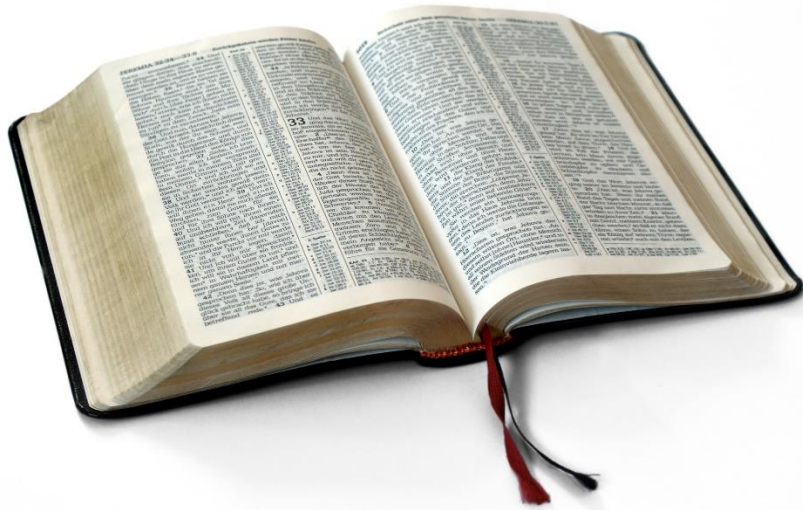


<https://www.globes-and-maps.com/globes/astroreality-raised-relief-globe-earth/p,59661>

- Many religions and cults admit the problem of sin, but their answer is to seek salvation from sin through **good works** or by keeping rules and laws.
- The Christian's Bible teaches that Jesus Christ redeemed us from sin by dying on the cross (Rom. 3:23,24).
- Romans 3:25 states, "God presented Him (Christ) as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood."
- Since Christ is God, no one less than God could make **payment** for the sins of everyone.
- We are saved by grace—"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast" (Eph. 2:8,9)
- Many people have difficulty accepting the concept that they cannot earn God's favor. Deep down, they believe they can earn salvation by being "**good enough**."

Christ Died for our Sins According to the Scriptures

Question Eight-Is the Bible actually "inspired by God"? Why is the Bible supposed to be superior to other books?



<https://www.newtestamentchristians.com/video-bible-studies/about-jesus-and-his-church/why-are-there-so-many-churches/chart-why-are-there-so-many-churches/>

- 2 Timothy 3:16-“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God”

Question Nine-What kind of proof can Christians offer for the Bible’s inspiration and accuracy?

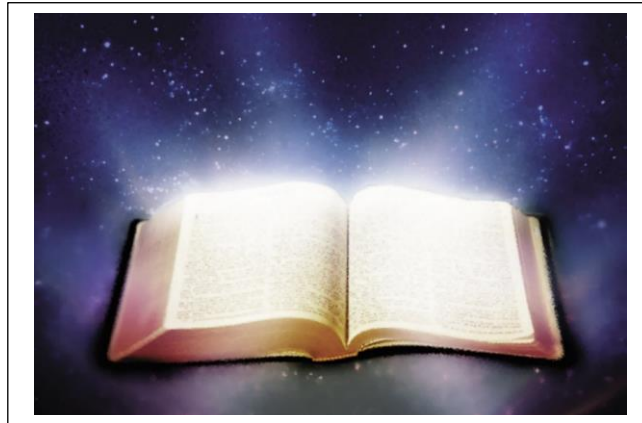


<https://depositphotos.com/stock-photos/quill-pen.html>

- **Historical** and scientific
- The Old Testament contains over 300 references to the Messiah that were fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Fulfilling 8 prophecies would be equal to 1017 power, or 1 in 100 quadrillion.

- **Archaeological** evidence-names of people, places and dates
- The Bible was written by 40 authors over a period of 1,600 years. All writers have a common unity.

Question Ten-How was the canon formed?



<http://www.earthend-newbeginning.com/wholesale-christian-bibles/157-gently-used-christian-bibles/>

- In the Early Church, **apostolic** authorship (or at least close association with a recognized apostle) was one of the chief criteria for deciding what books should be included in the New Testament canon (“group of authoritative books”).

Is Biblical Christianity Right

- To make intelligent comparisons with other faiths, Christians must know what their own faith teaches-what their own **Bible** says.
- These teachings are not to be revised, watered down or “demythologized.”

Group Discussion Questions

Week One-Biblical Christianity

Discussion Questions

1. John 1:1-3 states, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being."

The word "beginning" comes from the Greek word *arches*. In this passage, *arches* is used in the absolute sense. It means before there was any beginning whatsoever. Before the creation of the world there was the Creator-the Word.

- A. Why do so many people have a difficult time accepting the fact that Jesus is God?
 - B. Why do so many people find it difficult to accept that Jesus existed before creation?
 - C. What reasons might someone not want to accept that Jesus created everything?
2. John 1:5 states, "The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it."
 - A. Why do so many people refuse to accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ?
 - B. Why do you feel there so many different religions today?
 3. Romans 3:23 states, "...For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God..."
 - A. What makes it difficult for someone to accept they are a sinner?
 - B. How do many people view the cross of Jesus? What are your feelings about the cross?

