

# Where Do I Start?

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## **What Are Our Website Goals?**

There is an old saying: If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there. That's why we think it is important for you to know, right up front, our website goals. Simply put, our primary goal is to provide you with the information you need to make an informed and conscious decision on whether or not you want a vital and fulfilling relationship with Jesus Christ, and the steps you need to take should you decide you do want that relationship.

If you are already a follower of Jesus Christ, and thus already have a vital and fulfilling relationship with Him, our secondary goal is to help you deepen and strengthen your faith in Christ by learning a lot more about Him, His ministry, and His teachings.

If, after reading the information on our website, you decide that having a vital and fulfilling relationship with Christ is not for you, our remaining goal is to at least make sure you know what you are missing out on.

## **What Is the First Thing I Need to Know?**

Well, actually, there are three "first" things you need to know: "What Is the Bible?", "Who or What is God", and where did everything come from. It is impossible to become a believer in Christ if you do not fully understand and accept the answers to these three vital questions.

### **What is the Bible?**

The Bible is the inerrant and occasionally metaphorical Word of God. Inerrant means without error. There are no errors in the Bible because it was sourced directly by God. We use the term "Word of God" because while the Bible was written by men, it was done so with the assistance of God's Holy Spirit. The Apostle John confirms this in John 14:26 when he shares with us what Jesus told His disciples:

***"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."*** (Remember: When quoting Scripture, we use bold blue italicized text. When it is God or Jesus speaking, we use bold red italicized text. And, unless otherwise noted, we quote from the NASB 2000 Updated Edition version.)

The Bible starts with a description of creation and tells the early history of the Jewish people – God's chosen people. The Bible is also an explicit manual on how we should behave towards one another if we want to experience peace, love and joy in our everyday lives. The Bible also lays out how you can experience eternal life – or not – and what the end of days will look like for those who will, and for those who won't, have eternal life.

We use the term "occasionally metaphorical" for two reasons:

1. Sometimes symbols and figures of speech are used which are intended to be interpreted symbolically rather than literally. For example, Christ is often referred to as a shepherd and His believers are often referred to as His sheep.
2. Some of the Bible's content is in the form of parables which are used to teach a point metaphorically.

However, wherever the Bible is intended to be taken symbolically rather than literally, it is obvious. In the example we've mentioned, Jesus is not a literal shepherd of sheep, but rather a shepherd of people who are willing to trust in and believe in Him, and follow His teachings; and who, as a result, will be blessed with eternal life and Fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Many will argue that the Bible isn't true, that it was never written down, that it was only passed on verbally from generation to generation, and that much of the Bible, especially its history of creation, never really happened. We deal with these falsehoods in our next PDF document: [\*Can I Trust the Bible?\*](#) We strongly suggest you read this critical document – and read it all the way through – because if you do not believe the Bible is real and accurate, you will be unable to believe in God as we (and the Bible) portray Him, and the concept of being blessed with eternal life and the Fruit of the Holy Spirit will have no meaning for you.

### **Who or What is God?**

In the simplest terms, God is a “spirit” with unimaginable and incomprehensible powers. These descriptive words are chosen for very specific reasons. First, we believe that in His natural state, God is a spiritual power, and while He possesses personal attributes including intellect, will and emotions, He is not, in His natural state, a physical person - at least not as we define a physical person, i.e., with two arms, two legs, etc. Jesus states this in John 4:24, as He speaks to the Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well:

***“God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”***

Second, given God’s unimaginable and incomprehensible powers, it is important to understand that God can clearly “be” whatever or whoever He chooses to be. For example, while at Mount Horeb (possibly Mount Sinai), Moses witnessed God as a burning bush; in leading the Jews to the Promised Land, evidence of God’s promise to lead them was witnessed by Moses and the people as a pillar of fire in the night and a pillar of cloud in the day (Exodus 13:21). And, most importantly, we know that Jesus, the Son of God, is also the physical representation of the invisible God, i.e., God incarnate (of the flesh).

Last, we believe humanity cannot even begin to imagine the power of God. Oh, we can try, but in so doing, we are just putting our own self-imagined limitations onto God. But that makes God’s power imaginable and something we can comprehend, and it is neither of these.

If you feel the need to describe God’s power, you can start with “limitless”, “omnipotent” and “omnificent” and add that God is “eternal” and “infinite” and thus not limited by space, time or dimension. You can list all the characteristics you can think of, and they will still be insufficient to describe God’s power. God was there before the beginning, and God will be there after the end; and if you find that hard to fathom, then you can begin to see why God’s power is unimaginable. You can end your description of God with simply understanding that God is the All-Powerful Eternal Creator of all things including the earth and the universe, mankind after His own image, the past, present and future, the dimensions of space and time, and yes, dimensions we don’t even know about yet.

### **Where Did Everything Come From?**

Many argue that God, even as an unimaginable power, is not the Creator of all things, and some argue that God doesn’t even exist. To them we say: “Fine You go out and create a universe.” We suggest that you not get caught up on labels. If you believe that some kind of force created the universe and all things in it, what you choose to label that force is just that - your choice. As Biblical Christians, we chose to follow the Bible, and thus we call that force God. If you are unable to call your force God, we ask that you simply explore what might be keeping you from that.

Many people argue that with respect to Creation, we have no “scientific” proof that God did the things the Bible says He did. Aside from the rather obvious – we do have light, a universe with stars, planets, and a sun, and an earth with seas, vegetation, creatures, and humans. Yes, technically speaking, there is no “scientific” evidence that they all necessarily came from God. But that is only because (1) science wasn’t even a concept until millions, if not billions, of years after creation, and (2) science is limited because it cannot replicate the unimaginable and incomprehensible; it can only attempt to replicate what it can define. Except for God, everything had to come from somewhere and oddly enough, unlike science, the Bible tells us from where.<sup>1</sup>

Some will then argue that well, the universe came from nothing and thus there is no “Divine Intelligence” behind creation. Oxford University mathematical physicist and 2020 Nobel Prize winner in physics for his work on black holes, Sir Roger Penrose concluded otherwise. He calculated that the odds of the universe, as we know it today, being created by “chance”, i.e., coming from nothing, are: “1 part in 10 to the power of 10 to the power of 123. That is 1 followed by 10 to the 123rd power zeros (or 10<sup>10123</sup> ).”<sup>2</sup> Penrose tells us this number is so large, i.e., the odds of the universe happening by chance are so impossible, that if you put a zero on every particle in the universe, you would have enough zeros to represent the number. We can conclude from Sir Penrose’s work that for something as complex as the universe to have come into existence, it must have a causation, i.e., it cannot come about randomly, from nothing.

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<sup>1</sup> Yes, Hubble is credited with the “Big Bang” theory; but even he says that in the beginning, there was a “molten mass”. Hmmm. Wonder where the molten mass came from? Except for the Bible, all other theories of creation suffer from this same “initial cause” or as we call it, the “from scratch” problem.

<sup>2</sup> The Emperor’s New Mind, pg. 341-344

The Bible tells us that God is the one “cause” necessary for everything else to exist. The incredible complexity and design of all that exists argues for a Creator beyond our imagination and comprehension in every respect; hence our description of God’s powers as being “unimaginable” and “incomprehensible”.

Because of the ever-growing complexity of the universe, the second law of thermodynamics – that everything tends toward greater disorder – tells us that there has to be a supernatural Creator beyond all the natural laws that are currently evident in the universe – otherwise, we would be diminishing in capacity and not be growing in complexity.

Because of their absolute refusal to believe in God, some have even postulated that because the universe’s natural laws cannot account for the complexity and design evident in the universe, the universe itself must be eternal. Modern science has reportedly debunked this theory and concluded that the universe had a beginning – a big bang which caused a “singularity” event to occur resulting in a dense hot molten mass to suddenly explode and expand into what became our universe. Okay, but who created this dense, molten mass? Since it could not have come randomly from nothing, we conclude it came from a Creator with unimaginable and incomprehensible powers.

Why is all this important? Because inside of our relationship with Jesus Christ, we need to fully appreciate that with God, all things are possible. Jesus even confirms this in Matthew 19:26:

*“And looking at them Jesus said to them, ‘With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible’.”*

### **How We Approach Information**

We do our best to use information based on facts, not opinions or simple traditions. If we state a position, we will back it up with either facts and/or logic. This can get somewhat cumbersome at times, but we would rather you be filled with known facts or logical conclusions than with our opinions. If we cannot back up a belief with fact or logic, we will tell you that it is just that – a belief and not fact.

We will always start with the assumption that the Bible is accurate. When something in the Bible doesn’t match up with what we think makes sense or what tradition has us believe, we assume our thinking, not God’s word, is incorrect, and that we are the ones who need to explore alternative and more logical explanations that would align with Scripture. Which, again, is why it is critical that you read our PDF *“Can I Trust the Bible?”*.

An example of our assuming God and His word, the Bible, are always right can be seen in our statements above on God being neither a “physical” person nor of a male gender. Can you imagine a two-eyed, two-handed, two-legged “human, physical male” creating something as immense as the universe – a space with trillions (yes, trillions<sup>3</sup>) of suns? Simple logic tells us no; it would be highly unlikely that a “human, physical male” could accomplish such a feat.

Ah, but many would tell us that the Bible says otherwise, and they quote the Bible as saying God created man in His own image – implying that God is male. Yes, the Bible does say this, but it is only part of the actual Scripture reference. Here is what the entire Scripture reference (Genesis 1:26 – 1:27) actually says:

*“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”*

First, let’s note that God says “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness”. These are plural references. So Who, besides Himself, was God referring to? Where does this “plurality” stem from? Because they were the only forces existing at the time, we think God was referring to the three Persons of the Holy Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit<sup>4</sup>.

Also, God first refers to “man”, but then He uses the phrase “let them rule ...”. This dichotomy is also repeated when God refers to creating the genders. In these instances, we think God is referring to man as humanity or the human race. This makes sense given the reference to making them “male” and “female”.

*Note: The New English Translation confirms our conclusion as it states in Genesis 1:26: “Then God said, ‘Let us make humankind in our image, after our likeness, so they may rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move on the earth.’”*

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<sup>3</sup> See the 2016 paper, *THE EVOLUTION OF GALAXY NUMBER DENSITY AT  $Z < 8$  AND ITS IMPLICATIONS* by Christopher J. Conselice, et. al., from the University of Nottingham, School of Physics and Astronomy.

<sup>4</sup> See our PDF document *“Who Are the Important Characters?”*

Scripture does indeed go on to say *“God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”* So, then, exactly what “image” and “likeness” was God likely referring to, and did the genders “male” and “female” apply to the Persons of the Holy Trinity, or were they meant to apply only to humanity?

Thanks to Michelangelo and his famous painting on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, we have been taught throughout history to assume that God must look like Adam – a man. After all, the Bible does say God made man in His own image. But what if the quoted Scripture is not talking about a “physical” image, but rather a “spiritual” image? And what “spiritual” image, if any, did all three of the Persons of the Holy Trinity have in common? Well, They shared at least the following things in common: They are all three sinless, and all three share unimaginable capacities for love, intellect, will, and emotion. Originally, Adam and Eve were also sinless, and, over time, they and their progeny exhibited capacities for love, will, intellect and emotion. Could this be what God is telling us when He says *“Let “Us” make man in “Our” image, according to “Our” likeness;”*? Yes, we think so, but of course this is pure speculation on our part.

So, we believe this portion of Scripture is not telling us that God looks like a man, but rather that God created humanity as sinless, as male and female, and with a capacity for love, will, intellect and emotion. That explanation makes more sense and aligns much better with the rest of Genesis as well as one of the key tenets of Biblical Christianity – that Christ died to pay the penalty for humanity having sinned against God and to forever forgive humanity of those sins so that humanity could be reunited with God and welcomed back into His kingdom if we choose to have a faithful relationship with His Son, Jesus Christ.

### **Summary**

So, where do you start your exploration of possibly having a life in Christ? First, you need to believe that the Bible is completely trustworthy and reliable. Second, because He sourced the Bible, you need to believe in God. Last, you need to believe that God also sourced creation. Our next PDF document, *“Can I Trust the Bible?”*, addresses the reliability of the Bible. The rest of our PDF documents address God and why it’s vital for us to believe in Him and His Son, Jesus Christ, and in what they did for all of us.