

## Huh? What? You say something? — What I'm covering

You will be encouraged in your faith; you will also face challenges. Some challenges are physical, personal, emotional. Others are more intellectual and academic.

Both are important, but for tonight I will talk about the intellectual challenges. It's Friday and you won't remember a lecture of factoids. I'll overview them casually.

## I've got a funny feeling about this... — Can Christians have doubts?

"The issue is not whether I doubt but how I am going to handle my doubts.", Knechtle, Cliff. Give Me an Answer, p 97

Doubting Thomas

**John 20:25, "Unless I shall see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."**

**John 20:29, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."**

**Jesus preferred Thomas not doubt, but He still responded**

Job

**Questioned God**

**Demanded an answer**

**God responded. He put Job in his place, yet He still responded.**

God desires that we not doubt, but He does not cast us aside when we do

## Apologize? I didn't do anything! — Apologetics

Apologetics is the defense of the Christian faith

From Greek word *apologetikos* = "fit for defense"; *apologia* = "speaking in defense"

Often viewed as a mostly academic affair

1 Peter 3:15, "Always be prepared to give the reason for the hope that you have."

Peter tells us to be ready to explain our hope and salvation in Christ. Because we live in the "Information Age" this may include the intellectual reasons at times.

## Check your brain at the door — Three major intellectual challenges

**1. This is so retro** — Historical Reliability. Is the Bible a reliable historical document? Does it really tell us what happened 2000 yr. ago?

**2. He said, She said** — Gospel Harmonization. Isn't the Bible full of errors and inconsistencies?

**3. Talking after Midnight** — Philosophy "Lite". The Problem of Pain, Only One God, Science v. Bible, Logical Inconsistencies of Theism, etc.

## This is so retro! — Historical Reliability

Is the Bible a reliable document?

Does it really tell us what happened 2000 yr. ago?

Internal - Authors claim accuracy, eyewitness

**Luke 1:3-4 (accuracy), "...it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in consecutive order."**

**John 19:35 (eyewitness), "And he who has seen has borne witness, and his witness is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you also may believe."**

External - Other authors, historians, and archaeology support the NT

**Josephus (Jewish historian for Romans, 100 AD)**

**Jesus was called the Christ**

**Did remarkable things and was a teacher**

**Accused by Pilate and condemned to be crucified**

Bibliographic - Immense manuscript evidence for NT

**Immense manuscript evidence for NT**

**>25,000 whole and partial manuscripts**

**Most w/in 1-2 generations of original**

**Most important from ~350 AD**

## **He said, She said — Gospel Harmonization**

Isn't the Bible full of errors and inconsistencies?

Resurrection narrative most often attacked

1 Cor 15:13, 14, "But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, your faith is in vain."

Resurrection is crux of Christianity

Example: Was it light when the women went to the tomb?

**Mark 16:2, "And very early on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen."**

**John 20:1, "Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw the stone already taken away from the tomb."**

**Is it light out or dark at dawn? Both, depending on your perspective, which is what's communicated in the different accounts.**

**Trivial example**

Indicative of how to resolve many alleged problems

**Assume there is a solution and look for it**

**Just because you can't figure it out, doesn't mean there's no solution**

**Ask others with more knowledge, better resources**

## **Talking after Midnight — Philosophy "Lite"**

Late night talks instead of studying

Typical topics

**Science v. Bible**

**Problem of Pain**

**Only One God**

**Logical Inconsistencies of Theism**

Science v. Christianity

**Consider goals and information of biblical authors compared to contemporary scientists**

**Biblical authors ⇒ historical narrative, teach about God**

**Scientists ⇒ explain how physical processes operate in universe**

**Information: Biblical authors had observations, claimed revelation from God**

**Information: Scientists have observations**

Apparent conflict is often having the same stuff described by people with different information sources and goals

### **My brain's full; may I be excused? — Conclusion**

"Many of these questions are often mind games or smokescreens for people who don't want to change their lifestyles." Knechtle, p 14

"Has anything you've done made your life any better?", "American History X"

Teacher to Neo-Nazi.

Does this work in real life?

Does Christianity work?

### **That number is not available... — Contact Info**

[www.ShoutingMan.com](http://www.ShoutingMan.com)

[dave@ShoutingMan.com](mailto:dave@ShoutingMan.com)

[fischer@optics.rochester.edu](mailto:fischer@optics.rochester.edu)