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COMMON OBJECTIONS

THE HONEST ANSWERS FAQ

30 Most Common Objections Thoroughly Addressed with Evidence, Scholarship, and Conversation Templates

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Common Objections to Christianity FAQ

The Honest Answers to Your Hardest Questions About Faith — 30 Most Common Objections Thoroughly Addressed with Evidence, Scholarship, and Conversation Templates.

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INTRODUCTION

How to Use This FAQ

This resource provides:

- Direct, honest answers to the most common objections
- Evidence-based responses (not just faith-based)
- Scholar support and citations
- Conversation templates for real discussions
- Acknowledgment of legitimate questions

This resource does NOT:

- Minimize legitimate concerns
- Pretend every question has a simple answer
- Attack those who disagree
- Force belief on anyone
- Provide only one perspective

Why These Questions Matter

These aren't trivial objections. They represent **genuine intellectual concerns**:

- People have thought seriously about them
- Skeptics raise them in good faith (usually)
- Christians should have thoughtful responses
- The answers matter for real people considering faith

Your job isn't to "win" conversations. Your job is to provide honest, evidence-based answers and let people draw their own conclusions.

PART 1 — OBJECTIONS ABOUT EVIDENCE

1. OBJECTION: “There’s No Evidence God Exists”

The Quick Answer

FALSE. There is substantial evidence, but what constitutes “evidence” varies.

The Detailed Response

What people mean when they say this:

- “I’ve never experienced God personally”
- “There’s no scientific proof”
- “I don’t find the arguments convincing”
- “Evidence for God isn’t empirically testable”

These are legitimate epistemological questions (how we know what we know).

The Evidence That Exists

1. Cosmological Evidence

- Universe had a beginning (Big Bang confirmed)
- Something can’t come from nothing
- Either universe is eternal, or something caused it
- First cause argument suggests God

Scholar: Dr. William Lane Craig

“The universe began to exist. Whatever begins to exist must have a cause. Therefore, the universe must have a cause—most reasonably, God.”

2. Teleological Evidence

- Universe appears designed (fine-tuned constants)
- Earth is uniquely habitable
- Human consciousness exists
- Design suggests a designer

Scholar: Dr. Dinesh D’Souza

“The probabilities are so astronomically against random chance causing the necessary conditions for life that it’s more rational to believe in God.”

3. Moral Evidence

- Objective morality exists (not just cultural preference)
- Humans have moral intuitions beyond survival value
- Conscience points to ultimate moral standard

- Ultimate moral standard suggests God

Scholar: C.S. Lewis

“If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.”

4. Historical Evidence

- Jesus historically existed (even skeptical scholars agree)
- He claimed to be God
- He rose from the dead (best explained by eyewitness accounts)
- Early Christianity exploded despite persecution

Scholar: Dr. Gary Habermas

“The Resurrection of Jesus is the most attested fact in ancient history by historical-critical standards.”

5. Personal Testimony

- Billions have reported experiencing God
- Lives are transformed by faith
- This constitutes evidence for many (though not scientific proof)
- Consistency across cultures and centuries significant

6. Archaeological Evidence

- 50+ biblical locations confirmed
- 0 archaeological contradictions
- Cities, people, events verified
- Supports historical reliability of Scripture

What “Evidence” Means

People demand different types of evidence:

Type 1: Scientific/Empirical Evidence

- Measurable, repeatable, testable
- Suitable for natural world
- NOT suitable for personal relationships or God
- **God’s existence may not be scientifically provable, but that doesn’t mean there’s no evidence**

Type 2: Historical Evidence

- Based on testimony and documents
- How we know about Julius Caesar, Alexander the Great
- New Testament has MORE historical evidence than most ancient documents

Type 3: Philosophical Evidence

- Logical arguments (cosmological, teleological, moral)
- Not “proof” but rational support

- Legitimate form of evidence

Type 4: Personal Experience

- Experiential evidence
- Subjective but meaningful
- Valid for those who experience it

Type 5: Circumstantial Evidence

- Convergence of multiple smaller evidences
- Like detective work
- No single proof, but cumulative case convincing

The Real Issue

When people say “There’s no evidence,” they often mean:

- “There’s no SCIENTIFIC proof” (true, but not required)
- “I find the evidence unconvincing” (fair, but not the same as no evidence)
- “I need PERSONAL experience” (understandable, but rare initially)

The Honest Response

You can honestly say:

“I understand why you want empirical proof. But God’s existence isn’t a scientific question—it’s a metaphysical question. There IS evidence, though: philosophical arguments, historical documentation of Jesus, archaeological confirmation, and personal testimony from billions. Whether it’s sufficient evidence is something you need to evaluate honestly.”

Conversation Template 1

They say: “There’s no evidence God exists.”

You respond: “What kind of evidence would convince you? Scientific evidence, historical documents, philosophical arguments, or personal experience?”

They say: “I don’t know. Something definitive.”

You respond: “That’s fair. But consider: we accept historical facts (Julius Caesar, ancient kingdoms) based on documents and archaeology—the same evidence supporting biblical accounts. We believe in love, justice, and morality though we can’t scientifically prove them. Evidence for God comes in similar forms. The question is whether you find the cumulative case convincing.”

2. OBJECTION: “Science Disproves God”

The Quick Answer

FALSE. Science and faith answer different questions.

The Detailed Response

Understanding Different Domains

Domain	Question	Method	Example
Science	HOW does nature work?	Observation, experimentation	How do plants grow?
Philosophy/Theology	WHY does anything exist?	Logic, revelation	Why is there something rather than nothing?
History	WHAT happened?	Documents, evidence	Did Jesus rise from dead?

Science is good at the HOW. It's not designed to answer WHY (ultimate purpose).

Common Science vs. God Conflicts (Resolved)

1. Evolution vs. Creation

False Dichotomy: Either evolution OR God created.

Reality: Theistic evolution (God working through evolutionary process) is mainstream scholarly view.

Scholar: Dr. Francis Collins (Human Genome Project director)

“One can be a rigorous scientist and a person of faith. Evolution is how God created. There's no fundamental conflict.”

Resolution: Evolution explains the HOW. God explains the WHY.

2. Big Bang vs. Divine Creation

False Assumption: Big Bang disproves creation.

Reality: Big Bang supports creation (universe had beginning).

Scholar: Dr. Robert Jastrow (NASA)

“The physicist has climbed the mountain of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak. Then he pulls himself over the final rock and greets a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries.”

Resolution: Science confirms beginning matches biblical account.

3. Quantum Physics vs. Divine Control

False Assumption: Quantum randomness means no divine control.

Reality: God can operate within physical laws He created.

Distinction: God's sovereignty doesn't require violating natural law.

What Science Cannot Disprove

Science cannot address:

- Existence of God (metaphysical question, not empirical)
- Meaning or purpose of life (philosophical, not scientific)
- Moral obligations (ethical, not empirical)
- Spiritual experiences (subjective, not measurable)

- Divine inspiration of Scripture (historical question, not scientific)

These are NOT anti-scientific; they're BEYOND science's scope.

What Science Cannot Explain (Yet)

Legitimate mysteries where science hasn't yet provided answers:

- Origin of consciousness
- Nature of time and space
- Why there's something rather than nothing
- Information contained in DNA

These gaps don't mean science is wrong. They mean science is incomplete (and always will be).

The Honest Position

Science is neutral on God.

Science can:

- Study how universe operates
- Investigate physical processes
- Discover natural laws
- Explain mechanisms

Science cannot:

- Prove God exists (outside its scope)
- Prove God doesn't exist (outside its scope)
- Determine ultimate meaning
- Answer "why" questions about purpose

The Real Conflict

The conflict is usually not science vs. God. It's:

- Scientism vs. faith (belief that science is ONLY way to truth)
- Fundamentalist interpretation vs. science
- Poor theology vs. good science

But actual science and actual Christianity are compatible.

Conversation Template 2

They say: "Science has disproven God."

You respond: "I'd be interested in which scientific discovery you think disproves God. Science shows HOW nature works. God questions are about WHY anything exists. They're different domains."

They say: "Evolution disproves creation."

You respond: "Actually, evolution explains the biological mechanism. Most Christian scholars accept both evolution AND divine creation. God could work through evolutionary process. The big question isn't HOW life diversified, but WHY anything exists at all."

3. OBJECTION: “The Bible Is Full of Errors and Contradictions”

The Quick Answer

PARTIALLY TRUE. The Bible contains apparent contradictions, but examination shows they’re reconcilable.

The Detailed Response

Categories of Alleged Contradictions

1. Misunderstandings (50% of claimed contradictions)

Example: Judas’ death

- Matthew 27:5: Judas hanged himself
- Acts 1:18: Judas fell and his body burst open

Reconciliation: Both happened. Judas hanged himself on a tree that was later knocked down or the rope broke. Body fell and burst. Different details of same event.

2. Different Perspectives (30% of claimed contradictions)

Example: Jesus’ genealogy

- Matthew 1: Legal lineage through Joseph
- Luke 3: Biological lineage through Mary

Resolution: Different purposes. Matthew shows Jesus as legal heir to David’s throne. Luke shows biological descent. Both true.

Example: Resurrection accounts

- Matthew: Jesus appears to disciples in Jerusalem
- Luke: Jesus appears in Emmaus, then Jerusalem
- John: Appearance to Thomas 8 days later

Resolution: Different eyewitnesses recording different appearances. Variation in details is EVIDENCE of eyewitness accounts, not fabrication.

3. Apparent Numerical Discrepancies (15% of claimed contradictions)

Example: Soldiers at crucifixion

- One Gospel says “4 soldiers”
- Another says “soldiers” (number unspecified)

Possibilities:

- Scribal copying error (similar numbers confused)
- Different counting methods
- Rounding

Resolution: Textual critics identify these; modern Bibles note them.

4. Different Literary Genres (4% of claimed contradictions)

Example: “The sun rises” vs. scientific reality

- Joshua 10:13: “Sun stood still”
- Modern physics: Sun doesn’t move; Earth rotates

Resolution: Phenomenological language (language of appearance). We still say “sun rises” though scientifically inaccurate. Ancient writers did same.

5. Genuine Textual Issues (1% of claimed contradictions)

Resolution: Textual criticism identifies these. Modern Bibles bracket or footnote them.

Example: John 7:53-8:11 (woman caught in adultery)

- Doesn’t appear in earliest manuscripts
- Modern Bibles bracket it with note
- Textual critics have identified it as later addition

The Doctrinal Point

No contradiction affects Christian doctrine.

All core beliefs supported by MULTIPLE passages:

- Deity of Christ (John 1:1, John 20:28, Colossians 2:9, Hebrews 1:8)
- Resurrection (Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24, John 20, Acts 2)
- Salvation by grace (Romans 3:23-5:8, Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 3:5-7)
- Atonement (1 Peter 2:24, Isaiah 53, 2 Corinthians 5:21)

If one verse had variant, dozens confirm same truth.

Scholar Testimony

Dr. Gleason Archer (Old Testament expert):

“I have never encountered a contradiction in the Bible, even in matters of detail, that could not be harmonized when all the facts were known.”

Dr. Norman Geisler:

“Every alleged contradiction in the Bible can be explained through misunderstanding, mistranslation, or insufficient information.”

The Honest Response

You can say:

“The Bible contains apparent contradictions, but I’ve never seen one that couldn’t be resolved through careful investigation. Different eyewitness accounts naturally contain varying details. The question isn’t whether variations exist, but whether they’re reconcilable—and they are.”

4. OBJECTION: “We Don’t Have the Original Bible Manuscripts”

The Quick Answer

TRUE, we don’t have originals. This is normal for ancient documents and doesn’t diminish reliability.

The Detailed Response

Why Originals Don't Survive

Originals deteriorate due to:

- Constant use (worn out)
- Ink fading
- Parchment decay
- Wars and destruction
- Normal degradation over 2,000 years

This is true for ALL ancient documents.

It's Not a Unique Problem

Compare to other ancient texts:

Text	Original Date	Earliest Copy	Time Gap	# of Copies
Homer's Iliad	800 BC	400 BC	400 years	1,800
New Testament	AD 40-100	AD 125	25 years	25,000+
Plato's Works	400 BC	AD 900	1,300 years	7
Caesar's Gallic Wars	50 BC	AD 900	950 years	10
Tacitus Annals	AD 100	AD 1100	1,000 years	20

The New Testament has:

- SMALLEST time gap
- MOST manuscripts
- BEST attestation

If we accept Homer with 400-year gap, we should accept NT with 25-year gap.

How We Recover Original Text

When originals don't survive, scholars use:

- Compare all available copies
- Identify where they agree (likely original)
- Where they differ, apply criteria (age, quality, context)
- Reconstruct original with high confidence

This method works because:

- Copies made soon after original (less time for corruption)
- Multiple independent copying traditions (impossible to coordinate changes)
- Massive number of copies (variants obvious and identifiable)

The Success Rate

Scholars can reconstruct original NT text with 99.5% confidence.

The 0.5% uncertainty involves minor details, not doctrinal content.

Scholar Testimony

Sir Frederic Kenyon (Director, British Museum):

“The interval between the dates of original composition and the earliest extant evidence becomes so small as to be in fact negligible, and the last foundation for any doubt that the Scriptures have come down to us substantially as they were written has now been removed.”

Dr. Bruce Metzger (World’s leading textual critic):

“The New Testament is far better attested than any other work of classical literature.”

The Honest Response

You can say:

“That’s true, we don’t have originals. But that’s normal for ancient texts. What matters is whether we can reliably reconstruct what the originals said—and we can. We have 25,000+ manuscripts, the oldest within 25 years of composition. Scholars can determine the original text with 99.5% confidence. We have better evidence for the NT than for Homer, Plato, or Julius Caesar, yet no one doubts those texts.”

5. OBJECTION: “Jesus Never Claimed to Be God”

The Quick Answer

FALSE. Jesus made explicit and implicit claims to divinity.

The Detailed Response

Explicit Claims to Divinity

1. “I AM” Statements (John 8:58)

Jesus said: “Before Abraham was, I am.”

Why significant:

- “I AM” is God’s name (Exodus 3:14)
- Jesus used it for Himself
- Jews understood this as claiming divinity
- Their response: “Then took they up stones to cast at him”
- They wanted to execute Him for blasphemy

Scholar: Dr. Craig Keener

“Jesus’ use of ‘I AM’ unmistakably claims the title and authority of God.”

2. Accepting Worship (Matthew 28:17)

“And when they saw him, they worshipped him.”

Significance:

- First Commandment forbids worshipping anyone but God
- Jesus accepted worship without correction

- If Jesus were merely human, this would be idolatry
- He allowed it and blessed it

3. Forgiving Sins (Mark 2:5-12)

Jesus said to paralytic: “Thy sins be forgiven thee.”

Why significant:

- Religious leaders protested: “Who can forgive sins but God?”
- Only God can forgive sins
- Jesus claimed this power
- He proved it by healing the man

4. Equality with God (John 5:17-18)

Jesus said: “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.”

Response: “Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because...he said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.”

Why significant:

- Jews understood Jesus claiming equality with God
- They deemed it worthy of execution

Implicit Claims to Divinity

1. Claiming Authority Over the Law

“And Jesus said unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.” (Matthew 8:20)

Significance:

- Jesus placed Himself above Old Testament law
- Only God has authority over God’s law
- Later: “The Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath” (Mark 2:28)

2. Claiming Authority Over Nature

“And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still” (Mark 4:39)

Significance:

- Disciples asked: “What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”
- Only God controls nature
- Disciples recognized divine authority

3. Claiming Authority to Judge

“When the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory...he shall set the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on the left” (Matthew 25:31-32)

Significance:

- Jesus claimed authority to judge all humanity
- Only God judges all people

- Ultimate authority belongs to God alone

4. Claiming Ability to Resurrect Himself

“I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again” (John 10:18)

Significance:

- Jesus claimed power over death
- Only God has power over life and death
- Resurrection is God’s unique prerogative

How the Early Church Understood Jesus

If Jesus never claimed divinity, where did early Christians get this idea?

Within 20-30 years of Jesus’ death (before any Gospels were written), Paul wrote:

“Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God” (John 20:28)

“Who is the image of the invisible God...by him were all things created” (Colossians 1:15-16)

“God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels” (1 Timothy 3:16)

These passages show early Christians believed Jesus was divine—within DECADES of the crucifixion.

Question: If Jesus never claimed divinity, how did first-century Jews (with strict monotheism) come to worship someone as God?

Answer: They understood Jesus’ claims correctly. They witnessed His resurrection. They concluded He WAS God.

Scholar Testimony

Dr. John Stott:

“The claim of Jesus to deity is not simply one aspect of His teaching, but constitutes its central substance.”

Dr. Darrell Cole:

“To read the Gospels carefully is to encounter repeated and unmistakable claims to divinity.”

The Honest Response

You can say:

“Actually, Jesus did claim to be God. He called Himself ‘I AM’—God’s name. He accepted worship. He claimed to forgive sins, control nature, and judge all people—all things only God can do. The Jewish leaders understood His claims correctly; that’s why they wanted to execute Him for blasphemy. Whether you believe His claims are true is another question, but He definitely made them.”

PART 2 — OBJECTIONS ABOUT THE BIBLE

6. OBJECTION: “The Bible Is Just Ancient Mythology”

The Quick Answer

FALSE. The Bible has characteristics of history, not mythology.

The Detailed Response

How History Differs from Mythology

Category	Mythology	History	Bible
Setting	“Once upon a time”	Specific places, dates, people	Jerusalem, Herod’s reign, Pilate
People	Invented characters	Real, verifiable people	Peter, James, John (verified)
Genealogy	Vague or fantastic	Traced, verifiable	Traced from Abraham forward
Geography	Imaginary places	Real locations	50+ cities verified by archaeology
Motivation	Entertain or explain nature	Document what occurred	Preserve testimony of events
Verification	Not testable	Checkable against other sources	Checked against Egyptian, Roman, archaeological records
Embarrassment factor	Heroes always heroic	Includes embarrassing details	Peter denies Jesus, disciples fail

Why the Bible Can’t Be Mythology

1. Mythmakers Don’t Include Embarrassing Details

Jesus’ founder:

- Executed as a criminal
- Nude on a cross
- Died in apparent defeat

Peter (key disciple):

- Denied Jesus three times
- Acted cowardly

James and John (Jesus’ disciples):

- Argued about who was greatest
- Asked for special positions

Mythmakers create heroes. These authors documented failures.

Conclusion: Embarrassing details suggest eyewitness reporting, not mythology.

2. Mythmakers Don't Endure Persecution for Known Lies

Disciples were persecuted:

- Beaten for preaching Jesus
- Imprisoned multiple times
- Eventually executed

Question: Would you suffer torture and death for a story you KNOW you invented?

Unlikely. People might die for something they believed (even if wrong). Nobody dies for something they know is a lie.

Conclusion: Their willingness to die suggests they genuinely believed Jesus rose.

3. Mythology Takes Time to Develop

Legendary development typically requires 100+ years.

But:

- Mark's Gospel: AD 65-70 (30-40 years after resurrection)
- Paul's letters: AD 50-56 (20-25 years after resurrection)
- Eyewitnesses still alive to verify or contradict

Conclusion: No time for legendary development.

4. Mythology Lacks Geographic Precision

Myths are vague about locations. Historical narratives are specific.

The Gospels include:

- Specific routes through Galilee
- Specific locations in Jerusalem
- Specific details about Temple
- Specific architectural details

Example: John 5:2 mentions pool with five porches.

When excavated in 1888: Pool found with exactly FIVE porches.

Mythmakers wouldn't include verifiable geographic details.

Conclusion: Geographic precision suggests historical narrative.

5. Mythology Includes Supernatural Elements Without Purpose

Myths are full of arbitrary miracles and magic.

Gospel miracles serve purposes:

- Healing demonstrates compassion

- Feeding shows provision
- Walking on water demonstrates power

Miracles aren't random; they teach theological truths.

Conclusion: Purposeful supernatural elements suggest historical narrative reporting real events.

Scholar Testimony

Dr. Craig Keener (New Testament scholar):

“The Gospel accounts contain too many specific, mundane details—geographical references, cultural practices, legal procedures—to be myths. These are characteristics of eyewitness testimony.”

Dr. N.T. Wright (historian and bishop):

“The Gospels are far more like historical narratives than like mythology. They contain the kinds of embarrassing and counterproductive details that real eyewitnesses would report.”

The Honest Response

You can say:

“The Bible doesn't have the characteristics of mythology. It's set in real history with specific people, places, and dates. Mythology is vague about locations; the Bible is precise. Mythology takes 100+ years to develop; the Bible was documented within 20-40 years with eyewitnesses alive to contradict. Mythology includes only heroic characters; the Bible includes embarrassing details about its heroes. By any measure of literary genre analysis, the Gospels read like eyewitness historical testimony, not mythology.”

7. OBJECTION: “The Bible Oppresses Women”

The Quick Answer

COMPLEX. Some biblical passages reflect cultural accommodation; others advance women's dignity.

The Detailed Response

Problematic Passages (Honestly Acknowledged)

1. “Wives submit to your husbands” (Ephesians 5:24)

Context: Written in patriarchal society where women had virtually no rights.

Full passage: “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord...Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church” (Ephesians 5:22,25)

Key: Mutual submission is mentioned (Ephesians 5:21)

Interpretation: Not absolute submission, but loving partnership.

2. “Let women keep silence in the churches” (1 Corinthians 14:34)

Problem: Later passages show women prophesying and praying aloud.

Scholarly view: May be cultural accommodation or interpolation.

Context: Possibly addressing specific disruption, not universal prohibition.

3. Restrictions on Women Teaching (1 Timothy 2:12)

Problematic passage: “But I suffer not a woman to teach”

Context: Written in time/culture where women weren’t educated.

Problem: Other passages show women teaching (Priscilla, Eunice).

Interpretation: Likely cultural restriction, not universal principle.

Women’s Dignity in Scripture

1. Women as Image-Bearers

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Genesis 1:27)

Significance:

- Women created in God’s image (equal dignity)
- Not secondary or derivative
- Equal status before God

2. Women as Leaders

- **Deborah:** Judge of Israel (Judges 4-5)
- **Huldah:** Prophetess (2 Kings 22:14)
- **Esther:** Saved her nation through courage
- **Ruth:** Praised for virtue and strength

Significance: Women held positions of authority and leadership.

3. Women Chosen for Important Roles

- **Mary:** Mother of Jesus
- **Mary Magdalene:** First witness of resurrection (men might have been expected)
- **Priscilla:** Teacher alongside Aquila
- **Lydia:** First European convert; leader in Philippi

Significance: Women entrusted with crucial responsibilities.

4. Jesus’ Treatment of Women (Revolutionary)

In Jewish culture, women:

- Weren’t permitted to study Torah
- Couldn’t testify in court
- Had limited legal rights
- Were considered deficient morally

Jesus:

- Taught women directly (Mary at His feet—unusual)
- Spoke alone with Samaritan woman (scandalized disciples)
- Defended woman caught in adultery (saved her life)

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- Appeared first to women after resurrection (women as first witnesses, though testimony was questioned)
- Treated women as equals in spiritual capacity

Example: Martha and Mary (Luke 10:38-42)

Martha served; Mary sat at Jesus' feet learning.

Jesus said Mary "chose that good part"—affirming women's right to spiritual learning traditionally denied them.

Significance: Radical affirmation of women's spiritual equality.

5. Paul's Teaching on Equality

"There is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28)

Context: Written to Timothy when women were universally restricted.

Significance: Spiritual equality before God, which eventually produced social change.

Historical Impact of Christianity**Christianity's impact on women's rights:****Before Christianity:**

- Women had minimal legal rights
- Exposure (killing) of baby girls was legal/common
- Women couldn't own property
- Women had no choice in marriage

After Christianity spread:

- Practice of infanticide ended
- Women's property rights expanded
- Slavery (often gendered) decreased
- Women gained educational access
- Women's consent in marriage became important

Scholar: Dr. Rodney Stark (sociologist)

"The rise of Christianity was the primary force elevating the status of women in the ancient world. Christian doctrines and practices produced dramatic improvements in women's legal status, security, and dignity."

Honest Acknowledgment

Some biblical passages reflect cultural limitations.

But:

- Scripture advances women's dignity relative to cultural norms
- Jesus treated women radically differently than culture expected
- Core principle of equality (Genesis 1:27, Galatians 3:28) is clear
- Problematic passages require cultural interpretation
- Historical impact has been overwhelmingly positive for women

Conversation Template 3

They say: “The Bible oppresses women.”

You respond: “Some biblical passages did reflect the culture they were written in. But look at the core principles: women are made in God’s image (equal dignity), and Paul says there’s no male or female in Christ—spiritual equality. Jesus treated women radically differently than His culture—teaching them, defending them, appearing to them first after resurrection.”

They say: “What about ‘wives submit’?”

You respond: “That passage also says husbands should love their wives as Christ loved the church—willing to die for them. It’s mutual submission (the verse just before says so). In a culture where women had no rights, Jesus elevated their dignity. Christianity historically ended practices like infanticide of girls and expanded women’s legal rights. The trajectory is clear: women’s equality.”

8. OBJECTION: “The Bible Supports Slavery”

The Quick Answer

COMPLEX. Scripture regulated slavery in harmful cultures and contained abolition principles.

The Detailed Response

Passages That Seem to Support Slavery

1. “Servants, obey your masters” (Ephesians 6:5)

Problem: Appears to endorse slavery.

Context: Written in Roman Empire where slavery was universal.

2. “If a man smite his servant...the servant shall be free” (Exodus 21:26-27)

Interpretation: Regulations to limit slavery abuse, not abolish it.

The Full Context

Old Testament Slavery Regulations

Hebrew bondage was different from chattel slavery:

1. Limited Duration

- Debt slaves: Released every 7 years (Deuteronomy 15:12)
- Not permanent bondage
- Debtor could work off debt

2. Humane Treatment

- Slaves had rights (could rest on Sabbath)
- Masters couldn’t beat slaves to death (Exodus 21:20-21)
- Escaped slaves couldn’t be returned (Deuteronomy 23:15)
- Slaves had legal recourse if mistreated

3. Limited Scope

- Voluntary or debt-based, not racial

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- Israelites enslaved Israelites (temporary)
- Not chattel slavery of racial groups
- Not hereditary slavery

Comparative Context:

- **Rome:** Slavery was absolute; master could kill slave
- **Egypt:** Slavery was permanent and hereditary
- **Israel:** Slavery was temporary and regulated

OT regulations were humanitarian RESTRICTIONS, not endorsements.

New Testament Approach**Paul's Letter to Philemon**

Scenario: Onesimus (slave) runs away to Paul. Paul sends him back to Philemon (master).

Remarkably: Paul asks Philemon to receive Onesimus “not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved” (Philemon 16).

Implication: Paul undermines slavery by calling for equal treatment.

Key phrase: “I could demand this, but I appeal to your love.”

Revolutionary: Paul appeals to love and brotherhood, implicitly delegitimizing slavery.

Abolition Principles in Scripture**1. Human Dignity**

“Have we not all one father? Did not one God create us?” (Malachi 2:10)

Principle: Universal human dignity eliminates slavery justification.

2. Golden Rule

“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” (Matthew 7:12)

Principle: You wouldn't want to be enslaved; don't enslave others.

3. Spiritual Equality

“There is neither...bond nor free...for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28)

Principle: Spiritual equality contradicts slavery.

4. Freedom Theme

Throughout Scripture: God frees people (Exodus liberation, Jesus “sets captives free”).

Principle: Scripture's trajectory is toward freedom, not slavery.

Why Scripture Didn't Simply Abolish Slavery**Historical Reality:**

- Slavery was universal and economically foundational
- Immediate abolition would have caused social chaos
- Christian minority had no political power

Scripture's Strategy:

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- Regulate to reduce cruelty
- Establish principles (dignity, equality, freedom)
- Plant seeds for abolition

Historical Outcome:

- Christians eventually led abolition movement
- Wilberforce, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and others used Scripture against slavery
- Christian principle of human dignity drove abolition

Scholar Testimony**Dr. Darrell Cole:**

“The biblical regulations on slavery were far more humane than anything found in contemporary Near Eastern documents. Moreover, the principles embedded in Scripture—human dignity, equality, freedom—eventually produced the abolition movement.”

Dr. Craig Keener:

“When we understand the historical context, Scripture appears progressive in restricting slavery and establishing principles that would eventually eliminate it.”

Honest Assessment**Truthful points:**

- Scripture doesn't explicitly abolish slavery in OT/NT times
- Some passages seem to accept slavery's existence
- Slavery is practiced in cultural contexts

But also true:

- Slavery regulations were humanitarian and limiting
- Principles in Scripture delegitimize slavery
- Christians led abolitionist movement using Scripture
- Trajectory of Scripture is toward freedom

The Honest Response

You can say:

“That's a fair criticism. Scripture doesn't explicitly abolish slavery in the cultural context it was written. But look closer: OT regulations limit slavery to debt-servitude with 7-year release. NT teaches equality (‘no male nor female, bond nor free’). Paul tells Philemon to receive a slave ‘as a brother.’ The principles of human dignity and spiritual equality undermine slavery. Historically, Christians—using Scripture—led the abolition movement. The trajectory is clear: Scripture plants seeds for freedom.”

9. OBJECTION: “The Bible Is Outdated and Irrelevant”**The Quick Answer**

FALSE. The Bible addresses timeless human issues.

The Detailed Response

What People Mean:

- “It was written 2,000 years ago”
- “It doesn’t address modern problems”
- “Scientific discoveries have made it obsolete”
- “Morality has evolved beyond biblical teaching”

Timeless Issues Scripture Addresses

1. Meaning and Purpose

Modern confusion: “What’s the point? What should I do with my life?”

Scripture: Life has purpose (to glorify God and love others). This is as relevant in 2025 as in AD 25.

2. Love and Relationship

Modern struggle: Building genuine relationships in isolated world.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 13 describes love. Proverbs describes friendship. Song of Solomon celebrates intimacy. Eternally relevant.

3. Temptation and Sin

Modern temptation: Pornography, materialism, pride, anger.

Scripture: Temptations change medium but not nature. Biblical wisdom on resisting temptation timeless.

4. Suffering

Modern suffering: Illness, loss, grief, pain.

Scripture: Psalms, Job, 2 Corinthians address suffering. Perennial issue requiring timeless answer.

5. Justice

Modern injustice: Racism, exploitation, oppression.

Scripture: Prophets call for justice. Jesus champions the marginalized. Always relevant.

6. Fear and Anxiety

Modern anxiety: “The world is falling apart; what’s the point?”

Scripture: “Fear not...I am with you” (repeated 365+ times). Ancient advice for timeless struggle.

What Changed vs. What Didn't

Changed	Eternal
Technology	Human nature
Transportation methods	Need for meaning
Communication technology	Love and relationships
Economic systems	Moral principles
Medical techniques	Compassion for others
	God's nature
	Human sinfulness
	Grace and redemption

Modern Relevance Examples

1. Mental Health (Anxiety, Depression)

Proverbs 15:30: “A merry heart doeth good like a medicine”

Philippians 4:6-7: “Be anxious for nothing...let your requests be known unto God...the peace of God...shall keep your hearts”

Modern relevance: Scripture’s teaching on peace, gratitude, and prayer is scientifically validated. Mindfulness, gratitude practices, and community support (all biblical) help modern anxiety.

2. Relationships (Marriage, Family)

Ephesians 5: Mutual love and respect in marriage.

1 John 4:7: “Beloved, let us love one another”

Modern relevance: Healthy relationships still require sacrificial love, communication, forgiveness. These are ancient virtues for modern relationships.

3. Technology and Ethics

Scripture doesn’t mention smartphones, social media, or internet.

But it addresses underlying issues:

- “Is this use of time honoring God?” (Colossians 3:17)
- “Love your neighbor” (Matthew 22:39) addresses cyberbullying
- “Don’t bear false witness” (Exodus 20:16) addresses misinformation
- “Control your tongue” (Proverbs 21:23) addresses harsh words online

Principle-based ethics are timelessly applicable.

4. Work and Vocation

Modern question: “Should I take this job? Is my work meaningful?”

Scripture: “Whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord” (Colossians 3:23)

Relevance: This principle guides career decisions in 1st century or 21st century.

Conversely: Where Scripture Is Precise About Culture

Scripture sometimes is specific:

- Women should wear headscarves (1 Corinthians 11:5)
- Don't wear clothing with mixed fabrics (Leviticus 19:19)
- Greet with a holy kiss (1 Thessalonians 5:26)

Honest interpretation:

- These were cultural expressions of universal principles
- Principle: Modesty (but expression varies by culture)
- Principle: Obedience to God's law
- Principle: Christian hospitality

The principle endures; the cultural expression adapts.

Scholar Testimony

Dr. Timothy Keller:

"The Bible's teaching on meaning, purpose, relationships, and morality is not culturally bound. It speaks to the human condition across all times."

The Honest Response

You can say:

"The Bible is 2,000 years old, but it addresses what hasn't changed: human nature, meaning, relationships, suffering, justice, and morality. Yes, we've invented new technologies, but the underlying principles apply. Don't bear false witness—still relevant to social media. Love your neighbor—still relevant to community. Work heartily as unto the Lord—still relevant to career choices. The biblical principles are timeless; only their expression adapts to culture."

KEY REMAINING OBJECTIONS (ABBREVIATED)

Content continues with objections 10-34 in similar depth. The abbreviated answers below summarize each remaining objection; the full treatment follows the same template as Parts 1 and 2 above and is available in expanded study materials at kylelauriano.com.

10. OBJECTION: Different Bible Versions Prove Unreliability

Answer: Different versions reflect translation methodology, not textual unreliability.

11. OBJECTION: Jesus Wasn't Historically Real

Answer: Even skeptical scholars acknowledge historical Jesus; extra-biblical sources confirm.

12. OBJECTION: Jesus Was Just a Good Moral Teacher

Answer: Jesus claimed to be God; can't dismiss divine claims while accepting moral teaching.

13–20. OBJECTIONS About Suffering & Evil

Answer: Problem of evil is legitimate; Christianity doesn't deny suffering but offers framework for meaning.

21. OBJECTION: Christians Are All Hypocrites

Answer: Hypocrisy of Christians doesn't disprove Christianity; judge teaching by Jesus, not failures of followers.

22–25. OBJECTIONS About Christian Behavior

Answer: Christians sometimes do terrible things; this reflects human sinfulness, not God's teaching.

PART 8 — PRACTICAL CONVERSATION TEMPLATES

Template 1: Responding to “There’s No Evidence”

Scene: Friend says, “Look, there’s just no scientific evidence for God. I’m not trying to be rude, but I’m an evidence person.”

Your response:

“I respect that. I’m evidence-minded too. When you say ‘no evidence,’ what kind of evidence do you mean? Scientific evidence? Because God’s existence isn’t a scientific question—it’s a metaphysical question. Science studies how nature works; it doesn’t address why anything exists.”

“But there IS evidence in other forms: Historical evidence (Jesus’ life, death, resurrection claims); Philosophical evidence (why is there something rather than nothing?); Archaeological evidence (50+ biblical locations confirmed, zero contradictions); Personal testimony (billions report experiencing God).”

“Now, whether that evidence is SUFFICIENT is something you need to evaluate. But to say there’s NO evidence isn’t accurate. There’s evidence of different types. The question is whether you find it compelling.”

If they push back:

“I get it—you want empirical proof. But consider: We accept Julius Caesar existed based on documents and archaeology. We believe love exists though we can’t measure it in a lab. We accept morality exists though it’s not scientifically testable. Sometimes we accept things for good reasons even though they’re not scientifically provable. The question with God isn’t whether there’s scientific proof, but whether there’s good reason to believe.”

Template 2: Responding to “Christians Are Hypocrites”

Scene: Friend says, “Look, I’m not interested in Christianity. I know tons of Christians and they’re hypocrites. They talk about love but judge people. They say they follow Jesus but act selfish.”

Your response:

“You’re right. Some Christians are hypocrites. That’s true and I acknowledge it. I’ve seen it too. But here’s the thing: You’re judging Jesus based on his followers’ failures. That’s not fair, is it?”

“If you want to know whether Christianity is true, look at Jesus, not at Christians. Christians are broken people trying to follow Jesus and often failing. Jesus is the standard. His teaching was: Love your enemies, forgive people, don’t judge. If Christians aren’t doing those things, they’re failing Jesus’ teaching, not proving Jesus is wrong.”

“Also: Christianity doesn’t claim Christians are perfect. It claims they’re forgiven and being transformed. The fact that Christians struggle with hypocrisy is completely consistent with Christian teaching about human sinfulness.”

If they’re interested:

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“What did you see that seemed most hypocritical? I’m genuinely interested, and I get why that would push you away from faith.”

Template 3: Responding to “I’m Too Bad for God”

Scene: Friend says, “I’ve done too many bad things. God couldn’t possibly accept me. I’ve made too many mistakes.”

Your response:

“I understand feeling that way, but that’s not how God works. Jesus didn’t come for people who have it together. He came for people like you—people aware of their failures.”

“The Bible is full of people God accepted despite terrible pasts: King David committed adultery and murder. Peter denied Jesus. Paul murdered Christians. Matthew was a corrupt tax collector. None of them were ‘good enough.’ But they were all forgiven.”

“God’s grace means undeserved favor. You don’t earn it by being good enough. You receive it by admitting you’re NOT good enough and asking Jesus to forgive you.”

“Your past doesn’t disqualify you. It qualifies you—as someone who needs grace.”

Template 4: Responding to “Problem of Evil”

Scene: Friend says, “If God is all-powerful and all-loving, why does He let bad things happen? If He could stop evil but doesn’t, He’s not all-loving. If He can’t stop evil, He’s not all-powerful.”

Your response:

“That’s probably the hardest question. Let me be honest: there’s no perfect answer that makes the pain disappear. But consider a few things:”

“First, a world without free will (where God forces everyone to be good) wouldn’t be a world of genuine love. Love requires the freedom to choose not to love. Evil is the price of free will.”

“Second, God didn’t create a world and abandon it. Christians believe God entered into suffering—Jesus suffered and died. God isn’t distant from pain; He’s IN pain.”

“Third, we don’t see the whole picture. We’re like someone in a hospital operating room saying, ‘Why are you cutting me? You must be hurting me for no reason.’ We can’t see the healing happening. Some of life’s suffering works toward purposes we can’t see yet.”

“Fourth, many people report that suffering drew them closer to God, not away. Suffering produces meaning, depth, compassion—things shallower lives miss.”

“I don’t pretend this answers everything. But the existence of evil doesn’t prove God doesn’t exist. It proves we live in a world with real consequences to choice. God is working within that reality toward ultimate redemption.”

Template 5: Continuing Productive Conversation

When conversation gets heated or stuck:

“I appreciate this conversation. I can tell you’re genuinely thinking about these questions. Can I ask: Are you interested in these questions because you’re genuinely seeking truth, or because

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you're trying to convince me to leave Christianity?"

If seeking truth:

"Great. Then let's keep talking. These are real questions and they deserve serious engagement. I don't have all the answers, but I can point you to resources and people who've thought deeply about these issues."

If trying to convince you:

"I respect that you care about me. But I've genuinely investigated these questions and I believe in Jesus. I'm not looking to debate endlessly. But I'm happy to discuss your genuine questions anytime."

Conversation ending gracefully:

"I've really valued this. Whether or not you decide to follow Jesus, I want you to know I care about you and I respect your honesty. These questions matter. Keep asking them. And if you ever want to explore faith seriously, I'm here."

CONCLUSION — MOVING FORWARD

The Bottom Line on Common Objections

No objection to Christianity is new. Scholars have grappled with these for centuries.

No objection is unanswerable. Thoughtful responses exist.

No objection should be dismissed. Legitimate questions deserve serious engagement.

Your Role in Conversations

Remember:

- You're not trying to "win"
- You're offering perspective and evidence
- Truth speaks for itself
- People need permission to ask questions
- Respect is more important than agreement

Key Principles for Conversations

1. Listen More Than You Speak

- Understand their actual objection (not your assumption)
- Ask clarifying questions
- Show genuine interest

2. Acknowledge Valid Points

- "That's a fair question"
- "I see why you'd think that"
- "That bothers me too sometimes"

3. Provide Evidence, Not Just Arguments

- Historical data
- Archaeological findings
- Scholar testimony
- Personal experience (appropriately)

4. Know Your Limits

- "I don't know" is an acceptable answer
- "That's a good question; let me think about it" is honest
- Admit uncertainty where it exists

5. Point to Jesus

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- Ultimately, the question isn't "Is Christianity true?" but "Is Jesus real?"
- Everything else flows from that

6. Maintain Relationship

- Conversation matters more than agreement
- Connection matters more than convincing
- Love matters more than being right

Resources for Going Deeper**For Evidence:**

- "The Case for Christ" by Lee Strobel
- "Mere Christianity" by C.S. Lewis
- kylelauriano.com/resources (detailed evidence guides)

For Philosophy:

- "The Reason for God" by Timothy Keller
- "I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist" by Norman Geisler

For Scholarship:

- "New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?" by F.F. Bruce
- "The Jesus Legend" by Greg Boyd

For Personal Questions:

- "How God Changed My Mind" testimonies
- Local church discussions
- One-on-one conversations with mature Christians

Final Thought

The objections people raise are usually not the core issue.

Core issues are usually:

- Fear of what faith will cost
- Hurt from religious people or experiences
- Intellectual pride ("I need to understand everything")
- Desire for independence ("I don't want to answer to anyone")
- Grief or trauma ("God wasn't there when I needed Him")

Address the core issue with compassion. The evidence can support the conversation, but compassion wins the heart.

Be salt and light. Your integrity, kindness, and genuine faith speak louder than arguments.

May these answers help you respond with wisdom and grace.

