

BEYOND REASONABLE DOUBT

TEACHER'S GUIDE Questions and Answers

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PROGRAM 1

Introduction and Preliminary Considerations

1. What are the four things all humans need for happiness and fulfillment?

ANSWER:

- a) Love
- b) Value
- c) Forgiveness
- d) Hope.

2. How does a Christian find each of these? John 3:16 states these.

ANSWER:

- a) Love — understand that “agape” love is independent of age, looks, race, sex, or even what you have done. We are commanded to love one another (1 John 4:7–20; John 13:34).
- b) Value — God sent his Son to save us. We must be of great value.
- c) Forgiveness — Matthew 6:12–16; Ephesians 1:6–7
- d) Hope — The hope of eternal life

3. How does an atheist find each of these?

ANSWER:

- a) Love — The agape type of love is not available to an atheist. Physical love is all there is.
- b) Value — Survival of the fittest means only the fit have value.
- c) Forgiveness — Since evil does not exist in their view, there is nothing to forgive.
- d) Hope — An atheist has only the hope of more material blessings and pleasures. In the end, there is no hope because death ends one's existence.

4. What are three essentials for having a beneficial religion or faith?

ANSWER:

- a) It must be real, not hearsay or one personal's opinion. See 1 Corinthians 15:6.
- b) It must be relevant. It needs to have use in our lives. See Matthew 11:28.
- c) It must be rewarding. See 1 Peter 1:3. What does your faith do for you? Does it make your life and your relationships better?

5. What is the significance of the different definitions of “faith” in the dictionary and the definition in the Bible?

ANSWER: Webster says “faith is unquestioning belief that does not require proof or evidence. The Bible tells us that “we can know there is a God through the things he has made” (Romans 1:20). Jesus dealt with Thomas's doubt by showing him his hands and his side. Having evidence does not eliminate faith, it just strengthens it.

6. In Acts 26:25, 26 Paul speaks to King Agrippa about what was happening. To what did Paul appeal?

ANSWER: The facts. “These things were not done in a corner.” Evidence is the key.

7. What are some of the references that show that the authors of scripture knew that they were writing the Word of God?

ANSWER: 1 Corinthians 14:37; 1 Thessalonians. 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:16–17.

8. How might people's backgrounds and beliefs affect their acceptance and interpretations of archaeological finds?

ANSWER: An atheist will ignore factual data that supports belief, and a believer may exaggerate the find.

9. What are some of the limitations we face in the field of archaeology and the Bible?

ANSWER: Many sites are not excavated; many sites are under modern cities; many sites are in countries now opposed to Christianity and/or Judaism. The cost of excavations is huge, making it difficult to do digs. Artifacts have great market value, and people sit on them and hold them in private collections.

10. What should you gain from this study?

ANSWER: A stronger personal faith in God and in the Bible. A better ability to defend your faith — see 1 Peter 3:15. Answers to some of your own personal questions and/or doubts.

PROGRAM 2

The Textual Reliability of the Bible

1. Why is having a reliable Bible important?-0

ANSWER: Otherwise you have to rely on a human. We have to know that the Bible we have is from God and is totally true.

2. Give three ways knowing how we got the Bible is important.

ANSWER:

- a) Helps us understand when it was written and the world situation at that time.
- b) Gives us the language and the customs of the times.
- c) Helps us understand versions of the Bible from early manuscripts.

3. What is the current arrangement and dates for the original Bible books?

ANSWER:

- a) Old Testament: 39 books between 1400–400 B.C. mostly Hebrew
- b) New Testament: 27 books between A.D. 50 to 100 in Greek

4. What is the importance of the “Dead Sea Scrolls”?

ANSWER: Contain Old Testament books 1000 years earlier than KJV manuscripts.

5. Who were the Essenes and why is that important?

ANSWER: Considered to be a Jewish sect in the Qumran community who hid most of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Great Teacher was said to be Jesus, but they opposed marriage and there is no support for a connection with Christ.

6. Why is it important to have early manuscripts for the New Testament?

ANSWER: To see if there have been changes that affect our modern translations.

7. There are two types of Greek manuscripts. What are they, how many are there?

ANSWER:

- a) Uncials — around 300 copies, all capital letters.
- b) Minuscules — over 4,000 copies, like handwriting (lower case letters)

8. There are three important sources for creating a reliable New Testament. List them.

ANSWER:

- a) Early manuscripts
- b) Versions from other languages
- c) Quotations from early Christian writers

9. How are errors in manuscripts found and corrected?

ANSWER: Compare manuscripts. Corrections are obvious.

10. What are the “big three” Greek manuscripts for the New Testament?

ANSWER:

- a) Codex Vaticanus
- b) Codex Sinaiticus
- c) Codex Alexandrinus

11. Where are these found?

ANSWER:

- a) Codex Sinaiticus is in the British Museum having been bought in 1933 from the Communist government of Russia.
- b) Codex Vaticanus is in the Vatican Library.
- c) Codex Alexandrinus is in the British Library in London.

PROGRAM 3
Archaeology and the Old Testament, Part 1

1. Why should students of the Bible care about archaeology and the Old Testament?
ANSWER: To understand the culture of the first century; the language and meaning of words; and the places that are in biblical accounts.
2. What is the difference between a “minimalist” and a “maximalist” in archaeology?
ANSWER: A minimalist will tend to claim finds are not relevant, and a maximalist will tend to exaggerate the significance of a find. There are power struggles and attempts to claim recognition in this discipline like many others.
3. What are three limitations that exist in biblical archaeological research?
ANSWER:
 - a) Only a small number of sites have been excavated.
 - b) Many sites have had modern cities built over them, in some cases several times.
 - c) Excavations are expensive and getting money to do a dig is hard.
4. What is the importance of the Merneptah Stele?
ANSWER: It is the earliest non-biblical reference to “Israel.” Dates to 1230 B.C.
5. What is the importance of the Shishak Relief? See 2 Chronicles 12:1 – 12.
ANSWER: It verifies the biblical account.
6. What is the importance of the “house of David” inscription at Dan?
ANSWER: It is the earliest find that has David’s name on it. Attempts to say that David was not a real person have been proven to be wrong.
7. What is the importance of the Moabite Stone?
ANSWER: Mentions Omri king of Israel 850 B.C. Verifies the Bible.
8. How do we know there were many villages around Jerusalem at the time of David?
ANSWER: The discovery at Khirbet Qeiyafa which shows the organization of many towns.
9. Eliat Mazar believes she has found something significant in Jerusalem. What is it?
ANSWER: The palace of King David or at least a royal building from that time.
10. How do the backgrounds of people working on digs affect what they find?
ANSWER: If they are biased against the Bible they will denigrate a find that supports the biblical record. Like all humans, they tend to interpret what they find in terms of how they live today. Interpretations and acceptance are easily affected by the background of the researcher who is making the find.

PROGRAM 4
Archaeology and the Old Testament, Part 2

1. What is an inscription?

ANSWER: A tablet of some kind with a wax or mud seal that has the signature, ring imprint, or silhouette of a king or person of stature.

2. What is a “stele”?

ANSWER: An upright stone or pillar bearing an inscription or design telling of an accomplishment, or a victory. It is a monument.

3. What is a relief?

ANSWER: A rock face on which an historical accomplishment has been carved. These can be huge — the size of a football field — or smaller. They can be written on by symbols (hieroglyphs or cuneiform) or letters.

4. What is an obelisk?

ANSWER: A 4-sided tapered monument which usually has writings on all sides.

5. What have been the major methods of recording information?

ANSWER: Oldest are clay tablets. Stones with scratched messages. Skins — usually with charcoal letters. Papyrus — Plant material processed to preserve scratches or burns on sheets of plant material.

6. What was the significance of the Rosetta Stone?

ANSWER: It allowed the deciphering of Egyptian hieroglyphics.

7. What was the importance of the “Darius Inscription” at Behistun?

ANSWER: A different language could be compared and deciphered.

8. What Bible king is mentioned on the Taylor Prism of the Assyrian king Sennacherib?

ANSWER: King Hezekiah of Judah.

9. What did the Siloam Inscription detail about a tunnel to get water to Jerusalem?

ANSWER: How they dug from each end and met in the middle.

10. What did the Black Obelisk show that is unique?

ANSWER: A picture depicting a King of Israel.

11. What was different about the way the Babylonians treated their Israelite prisoners and what the Persians did with their prisoners?

ANSWER: Babylonians took prisoners back to their cities and adopted them (Daniel and Jehoichin food rations). Persians (Cyrus Cylinder) allowed them to return to their cities and rebuild (Nehemiah).

PROGRAM 5
Archaeology and the New Testament, Part 1

1. Why is archaeology important in studying the validity of the New Testament?

ANSWER: The Bible's statements of geography, wars, historical figures and events can be verified showing that the biblical record is not a fabrication.

2. What are the major changes that took place in the 400 years between the Old Testament and the New Testament?

ANSWER: The fall of Babylon to Persia; Persia to the Greeks; the Greeks to the Romans; and the exile and return of the Jews.

3. What are five sites in Jerusalem that confirm the biblical account?

ANSWER: Bethesda, The Garden Tomb, Golgotha, the steps to Herod's temple. The Wailing Wall would be the most significant one.

4. What was Masada and how does it fit into the history of Israel?

ANSWER: Over 900 Jews committed suicide there rather than surrender to the Romans. It showed the determination of many Jews to reject pagan control.

5. What was Caesarea Maritima?

ANSWER: It contained Herod's palace, a huge man-made harbor, a theater, and an aqueduct. The "Pilate Inscription" was also found there.

6. What was the "Pilate Inscription" and why is it significant?

ANSWER: It had his seal and shows that he was a historical figure during the time of the New Testament period.

7. Where was Herod's tomb and where was it found?

ANSWER: It was a cone shaped hill built by Herod and located at Herodium.

8. Who was Caiaphas and how do we know he was a real person?

ANSWER: He was the High Priest during the life of Jesus. His ossuary with his name on it has been found. No one questions the historicity of the biblical account about him.

9. What was the "Nazareth Inscription"?

ANSWER: The reaction of Emperor Tiberius to the claim that someone stole the body of Jesus.

10. Why is it that skeptics claim that the resurrection did not happen but that the disciples stole the body, a poor explanation of why Jesus' tomb does not exist.

ANSWER: Robbing a grave carried the death penalty by the Romans, and if Jesus was not resurrected the disciples would have had no reason to steal the body.

PROGRAM 6
Archaeology and the New Testament, Part 2

1. Why is archaeological evidence about Paul and his journeys significant?

ANSWER: It proves that Paul was a real person and that the history of Acts is accurate.

2. Why is the claim that Paul fabricated everything in his life and writings a poor explanation?

ANSWER: Paul was an educated man who had already achieved notoriety among the Jews. He had everything to lose by following Jesus and by fabricating his story.

3. What is the significance of the “Sergius Paulus Inscription”?

ANSWER: This is mentioned in Acts 13:7 and is the story from Cyprus. It shows this was a real governmental official and not something that Paul made up.

4. What has been found to back up the biblical account of Paul’s visit to Philippi?

ANSWER: It has been shown that Philippi was the major city of Macedonia, that it was a colony and had a major marketplace where merchants like Lydia would come to sell their wares. Purple was a sought after commodity in Philippi and there was no synagogue in the city. The description in Acts 16:12-40 fits all the evidence.

5. What is the “Erastus Inscription” and why is it significant?

ANSWER: It contains reference to a man named “Tertius” who is mentioned by Paul in Romans 16:22. It verifies the integrity of the account given in Acts.

6. Why is the “Gallio Inscription” found at Delphi of significance?

ANSWER: Gallio only ruled for one year, so it gives us a date for the events described in the book of Acts.

7. What was “Mars Hill” referred to in Acts 17:19–34?

ANSWER: A small hill northwest of Athens covered with stone seats. It was used by the rulers of Athens for trials and debates. Much of the hill has been excavated by archaeologists.

8. Why is it significant that Paul was allowed to speak there.

ANSWER: Only well educated and significant people were allowed to be a part of whatever went on in the Areopagus.

9. What was the Areopagus?

ANSWER: The word Areopagus is a combination of two Greek words “Ares” meaning Mars and “Opagus” meaning rock. It was the central meeting place of the Greeks and has been verified by archaeology.

10. In Acts 17:22–23 Paul makes reference to the abundance of idols in Athens. Why is this of significance?

ANSWER: Because excavations in Athens have verified that Athens was a focal point for an idolatrous people with massive numbers of idols being found.

PROGRAM 7

The Inspiration of the Bible

1. What are the five reasons that affirm the inspiration of the Bible?

ANSWER: Unity, historical accuracy, foreknowledge, influence, scientific insights.

2. How does the Bible show unity?

ANSWER: Forty men over a period of 1500 years wrote it and there are no conflicts between any of these authors.

3. How does the Bible show historical accuracy?

ANSWER: The previous lessons verified one historical event after another. There are too many cases of verification to contradict the claim of historical accuracy.

4. How does the Bible show positive influence?

ANSWER: Many things are done in religion which actually oppose what Jesus taught, but when the principles of Christ have been followed the result has always been great progress of all kinds for the human race. Contrast that with a literal reading of the Koran followed by some groups such as the Taliban and modern promoters of Islam.

5. What is foreknowledge, and where is it seen in the Bible?

ANSWER: It is knowing something that will happen in the future. Read the prophecies of Daniel concerning kingdoms that would be established in the distant future. Each of those has come to pass. Writings in Isaiah and Psalms about Jesus are another example.

6. What do we mean by scientific insights?

ANSWER: The Bible makes scientific statements that have only been confirmed in modern times. The medical knowledge of Leviticus 13 is an example. Isaiah 40:22 is another — stating that the earth is round and that the cosmos is accelerating outward is another.

7. What is the “vacuum cleaner” analogy?

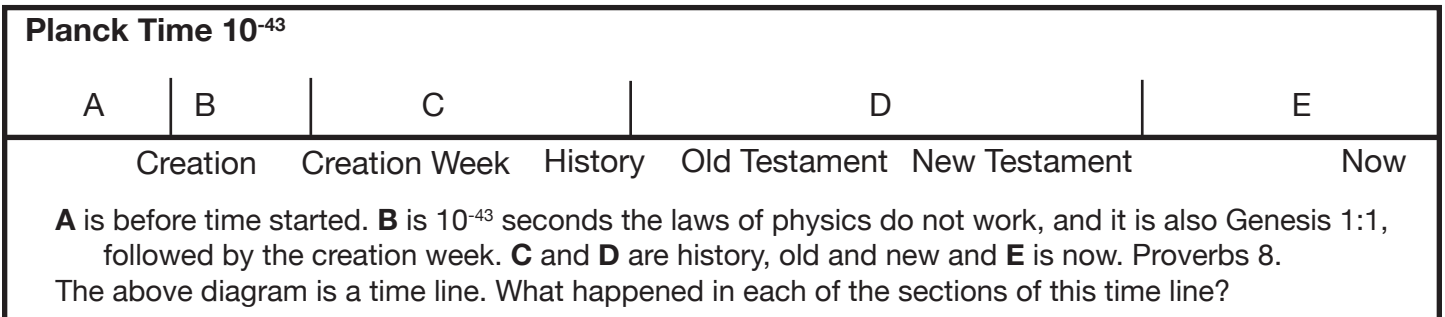
ANSWER: You have to be plugged in to whatever you believe for it to work.

8. Why does the existence of evil not denigrate the existence of God?

ANSWER: You cannot know real evil unless you know real good. Real good can only exist, if you believe in God. Atheists try to deny evil exists as a way around this.

9. What is “Planck Time” and why is it important?

ANSWER: It is the time after the beginning where the laws of physics begin to work. Before 10^{-43} seconds the laws do not work. Genesis 1:1 states this concept.



10. What was the Steady State theory and why was it promoted by atheists for many years?

ANSWER: It was the statement that the universe has always existed and that Genesis 1:1 is incorrect in stating that there was a beginning. It was embraced by atheists because it avoids the belief that there was a creation as stated in Genesis 1:1. The Big Bang evidence and the expansion of the cosmos made the atheist belief impossible to accept. There was a beginning and it was caused. The complexity of things like DNA eliminate chance as a viable explanation for the cause being chance.

PROGRAM 8
Evidence for the Historical Reality of Jesus

1. Why can an atheist not believe good and evil exists?

ANSWER: They have no standard of good or evil. Every evil dictator had a distorted view – Hitler, Stalin, etc.

2. Why is the atheist claim that evil is a proof there is no God not valid?

ANSWER: They do not understand that there is a purpose in our existence. Atheists have no purpose, but believers do.

3. Why is it essential that humans be free moral agents?

ANSWER: Love cannot exist unless there is choice; sexual love without choice is rape, and it is not love. This is true of every form of love.

4. There are five evidences of biblical inspiration. Explain what they are.

ANSWER:

- a) Unity: Forty men wrote over a period of 1500 years with no disunity in their message at all.
- b) Historical accuracy: the first three programs showed that there is archaeological verification of a large percentage of what the Bible says.
- c) Influence: the results of following atheism has been war, anarchy, and mass killing. Christianity has furthered education, given women status, provided hospitals, and cared for the less fortunate. When someone has done something bad in the name of Christianity (like the Crusades) it has been at odds with the teachings of Jesus.
- d) Foreknowledge: the book of Daniel is the classic illustration of prediction centuries before the event took place. Isaiah's picture of Christ is another great example of this.
- e) Scientific foreknowledge: The medical knowledge of the Bible such as Leviticus 13, and Job 26:7, 38 reveals scientific understanding not understood for thousands of years.

5. Read Isaiah 40:22. There are two modern facts of science that are stated in this verse. What are they and when was this written?

ANSWER:

- a) That the earth is round (a circle) at least 760 years before the birth of Christ.
- b) Space is stretched out like pulling a cord on a lawnmower.

6. What did each of the following contribute to knowing Jesus actually lived?

ANSWER:

- a) Pontius Pilate inscription proves that Jesus was a real person. Matthew 27:22 is right.
- b) Herod the Great validates Mark 12:13–17 and Acts 12:21–23.
- c) Josephus records Herod Agrippa II verifying Acts 26:23–26. Also his quote about Jesus.
- d) Coins give the dates of biblical characters and events.

7. What are five reasons why it is impossible for the story of Jesus to be fabricated?

ANSWER:

- a) No one produced a body to refute the resurrection, and no one risks persecution for a fabrication.
- b) Thousands saw the miracle of the feeding – no one refuted it.
- c) Only Jesus fulfills Daniel's prophecies and messianic expectations.
- d) Grave robbing was a crime, so claiming the body of Jesus was stolen defies common sense.
- e) Fabrication would be immoral, and Christianity was and is about morals.

8. What did each of these non-Christian sources contribute to verification:

ANSWER:

- a) Tacitus tells of Nero building a palace, burning Rome, blaming Christians.
- b) Suetonius backs this up and Matthew 28.
- c) Pliny letter to emperor about executing Christians.
- d) Josephus — references to Christ in “Arch of Titus”
- e) Lucian Peregrinus — repeated reference to Christ.

All of these show that Christianity was widespread and world wide.

PROGRAM 9
Considering the Claims for the Divinity of Jesus

1. What are five claims Jesus made about himself?

ANSWER:

- a) John 3:16 — That he was the Son of God.
- b) John 8:58 — That he was the “I AM.”
- c) John 4:26 — That he was the Messiah (Christ).
- d) John 5:22 — That he was the judge.
- e) John 14:6 — That no one comes to the Father except through him.

2. What are five ways that Jesus proved his claims?

ANSWER:

- a) By fulfilling all prophecies
- b) By the miracles he did
- c) By the resurrection
- d) By his teaching
- e) By the impact of his teachings

3. There are two responses people can make to all these claims. What are they?

ANSWER:

- a) They are true — love and obey him to be saved.
- b) He was a liar, a lunatic, and a very bad person.

4. Below are passages that contain specific teachings of Jesus Christ. Identify what those teachings are:

ANSWER:

- a) Matthew 23:4 — He was against abusive religious leaders.
- b) Matthew 23:3, 23 — He was against abusive religious rules.
- c) John 18:36 — He was against violent rebellion.
- d) Matthew 6:19 — He was against materialism and greed.
- e) Matthew 7:2 — He was against judgmentalism.
- f) John 4:9 — He was against racism and did not allow it.
- g) John 8:7 — He was against male chauvinism and included women in all he did.
- h) Matthew 5:44 — He was for the love of all mankind and practiced it.
- i) Matthew 5:22 — He advocated the value of every human.
- j) Matthew 6:14 — He emphasized forgiveness and reconciliation.
- k) Matthew 7:12 — He taught fairness and good relationships.
- l) Matthew 6:34 — He emphasized peace and well being for all.
- m) Matthew 5:4 — He preached and practiced healing and happiness.
- n) John 14:2–3 — He gave hope for the future for all who follow him.

5. Who would have been drawn to Jesus by these statements, and who would have been repulsed?

ANSWER: The common people would have been attracted and the corrupt religious and political leaders would have been repulsed.

6. Why should each of us seriously consider the claims of Jesus?

ANSWER: They are the only way to a positive experience in life upon this earth, and the only way to be sure of a blessed existence in our future after death.