

B Q&A

A Bible Question you may be afraid to ask:

If you've never heard or seen Him—

How Can You

Be Sure ?

God Exists?

Biblical Quotations

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How can you be sure God exists?

Do you find the question in the title of this article a little scary? Many people do—they are afraid to ask it because, if there really **is** a powerful God, they think He may be angry that they doubt His existence!

How about you? Are you worried God may ZAP you with a bolt of lightning for being unsure about Him?

If so, you need to find out what the Bible says about God. For it is not the God of the Bible who takes glee in “frying” people. It is the “god” of this world—the Devil--and the false gods he has deceived Mankind into inventing.

If you have studied the cultures and religions of this world, present and past, you may find that your study has affected what you expect to find about the God of the Bible. The stories told of the gods of ancient Greece, Rome, and Northern Europe gave them personalities like fickle men—unpredictable, quickly angered by the slightest mistake, vengeful, egotistical, quarrelsome. They fought among themselves and often tormented men. The relationship men had with their gods was one of trying to stay on their good side, primarily by “bribing” them.

This was equally true of the gods of such other cultures as ancient Mexico or the Pacific islands. You have probably heard of such customs as sacrificing young virgins to stop the wrath of volcano gods by throwing the young women alive into the molten lava.

If you have only heard isolated stories from the Bible, perhaps you have wondered if the God of the Bible is that kind of god.

Or you may wonder why you should have any more confidence in what the Bible says than in the myths of ancient Roman gods, or in the *Koran* of the Moslems, or the *Book of Mormon*.

Do you have questions like these?

- Can you **prove** the Bible is true?
- Can you **prove** God exists?
- Why should I believe in a God who hasn't answered my prayers?
- I try to be good, so even if I don't believe in God, won't I go to heaven if He really exists?

It's not wrong, or evil, or weak to have such questions. And there **are** answers to these questions! They aren't quick answers, and they aren't short answers. But if you will accept the challenge to learn more about the Bible and the God of the Bible, the answers can change your life. In the rest of this booklet, we will begin to explore the answer to the question:

How can I *know* God exists and that the Bible is His Word?

A few years ago, two young Mormon women came to my door and asked to be allowed to teach me about their beliefs. I agreed to listen to their testimonies. They shared a little of the history of their religion, which is primarily based on the acceptance of Joseph Smith as a true prophet. Smith lived in the early 1800's, and claimed to be given the Mormon religion directly by God through special revelations. In their first visit, the young women never did tell me anything about the specific beliefs of their religion. They were only trying to convince me that Joseph Smith's claims were true. And what proof did they offer? They explained that anyone who wanted to be absolutely sure that Smith was a true prophet of God should pray and ask God for proof. And that proof was specifically to be a "burning in the bosom [chest]." Each young woman then testified to me that she was absolutely sure of her religion's truth because she had personally felt that "burning."

Did I pray that prayer? No—because I was already convinced that Joseph Smith was a false prophet. I had not been convinced by emotional or physical "feelings," but by a study of the history of the Mormon church and its writings. That history was riddled with lies, forgeries, confusion, and evil results in the lives of those who had followed Smith. I had seen carefully documented proof of the deception of Joseph Smith, including gross contradictions within his own writings over a period of just a few years. I shared some of my concerns with the young women. They were puzzled, but promised to get answers for my questions about the church and its founder from their spiritual "elders."

When they later returned, they had no answers, but were interested to hear more questions. After one more visit, they never returned. I found out later that they had been mysteriously transferred out of my "territory." I have no doubt that this was because the leadership of their church didn't want them to hear such confusing questions. It was much simpler to rely on a "burning bosom" than on using the mind to understand truth.

How can you **know** God exists? The first key is to:

Use your *mind*!

The Bible nowhere indicates that you should just rely on "feelings" to know God. In fact, the Bible warns that just relying on feelings can get you in trouble. The Bible declares that there is an enemy of God, called Satan the Devil, who can

masquerade as God and deceive men and women. This Devil, and his helpers who are called demons, are capable of giving you “feelings” and appealing to your emotions. Once they have gotten your attention this way, they can get you believing lies about God.

So will you **prove** to yourself God exists just by using your mind to read the Bible? No—for many people have read the Bible from cover to cover and consider it just another collection of myths.

If just reading isn’t enough, what more is needed?

I once had a friend who asked me intently one day, “How can I prove to an atheist co-worker at my job that the Bible is true?” This friend had been a professing Christian for probably ten years or more. In fact, he had been to a religious college and received training to become a minister. There was only one problem ... he was not living the life of a true disciple of Christ, the changed life revealed in the very Bible he wanted to prove to his co-worker. He had severe problems with alcoholism, sexual deviancy, violent temper. As we talked, I realized what he was groping for was a set of *intellectual arguments* to use to prove his “belief system” to someone who disagreed with him.

Is that how you prove God exists, by carefully setting up arguments for yourself? No—for many of those who try to argue for God and the Bible actually deny what they are claiming by the lives they live.

There is only one way to prove God. It involves your mind. But it doesn’t start with **you**—it starts with God! The Bible declares that God loves you so much that He will reach out to you to reveal Himself to you. The way He does that is to give a small amount of faith ... sort of a “down payment” of belief. You must then choose to **act** on that faith, to take a small step toward God by desiring to know more about Him, and to be willing to put forth the effort to learn more about Him through His Word, the Bible. Each time you act on the faith He gives you, He will show you more about Himself, and you will find you have **more** faith.

The things He will show you in His word can be understood by your mind. But the way you prove them is not by intellectual arguments.

If someone declared to you that water will freeze at 32 degrees Fahrenheit and below, how would you go about proving what they say? Would you present intellectual arguments—or would you put some water in a freezer and see what happens?!

If someone declared to you that one route to the next town was shorter than another, how would you go about proving what they say? You might look at a map, but an even more effective proof would be to travel both routes in your own car and check the mileage on your odometer.

In the real world, you prove things by “putting them to the test”!

It is the same with God and the Bible. The Bible is full of declarations from God about how He intended for Mankind to live. The Bible includes examples of people who followed God’s plans for life, and people who rebelled against those plans. It describes the blessings promised for obedience, and the curses promised for disobedience. As you learn about these choices from the Bible, you can “put them to the test.” And as you do, your faith will continue to grow.

No one can prove to you the Bible is true. You cannot prove to someone else that the Bible is true. For **each person** must prove the Bible for himself by putting it to the test in his own life.

Likewise, no other human being can make your faith grow. And you cannot make someone else’s faith grow. Each person must act on the faith God gives him. If he does, his faith and his knowledge of God **will** grow.

If you have come this far in this booklet, and are still interested in learning more, then it is possible that God has reached out to you with that beginning faith.

It’s up to you to take the next step, and begin reading the Bible and putting what you read there to the test in your own life.