



10 Reasons To Believe IN THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

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1 THE CREDIBILITY OF ITS FOUNDER. Christ said He came from heaven to fulfill prophecy, to die for our sins, and to bring to His Father all who believe in Him. Logic says that He was either a liar, a lunatic, a legend, or the Lord of heaven. His first-century followers drew their own conclusions. They said they saw Him walk on water, still a storm, heal crippled limbs, feed 5,000 with a few pieces of bread and fish, live a blameless life, die a terrible death, and alive again. During His ministry, when some of Jesus' followers took issue with His teachings and left, He asked those closest to Him if they too wanted to leave. Peter spoke for the others when he said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (John 6:68-69).

2 THE RELIABILITY OF ITS BOOK. Written over a period of about 1,600 years by 40 different authors, the book on which the Christian faith rests tells one story that begins with creation and concludes on the threshold of eternity. The integrity of its historical and geographical record is supported by archaeology. The accuracy with which it has been copied and handed down to us has been confirmed by the Dead Sea Scrolls of Qumran. Originating neither in the East nor the West, but in the Middle East—the cradle of civilization—the Bible continues to speak not only with spiritual power but with convincing prophetic accuracy.

3 ITS EXPLANATIONS FOR LIFE. All religious systems attempt to give meaning to our existence. All attempt to explain our thirst for significance, the problem of pain, and the inevitability of death. All religions attempt to apply the design of the cosmos to our individual lives. It is the Christian faith, however, that reflects the caring attention to detail so evident in the species and ecosystems of the natural world. It is Christ who speaks of a Father who takes note of every sparrow that falls, a Father who numbers even the hairs of our head (Matthew 10:29-31). It is Christ who reveals a God who shows how much He cares for all that He has created. It is Christ who clothed Himself in our humanity to feel what we feel, and then to suffer and die in our place. It is Christ who reveals a God who cares as much about His creation as the design and detail of the natural world indicates (Psalm 19:1-6; Romans 1:16-25).

4 ITS CONTINUITY WITH THE PAST. The Christian faith offers continuity with our deepest ancestral roots. Those who trust Christ are accepting the same Creator and Lord worshiped by Adam, Abraham, Sarah, and Solomon. Jesus didn't reject the past. He was the God of the past (John 1:1-14). When He lived among us, He showed us how to live according to the original plan. When He died, He fulfilled the whole Old Testament sacrificial system. And when He rose from the dead, the salvation He offered fulfilled God's promise to Abraham that through his descendant He would bring blessing to the whole world. The Christian faith is not new with Christ. From Genesis to Revelation it is one story. It is His story—and ours (Acts 2:22-39; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8).

5 ITS FOUNDATIONAL CLAIM. The first Christians were not driven by political or religious dissent. Their primary issues were not moral or social. They were not well-credentialed theologians or social philosophers. They were witnesses. They risked their lives to tell the world that with their own eyes they had seen an innocent man die and then miraculously walk among them 3 days later (Acts 5:17-42). Their argument was very concrete. Jesus was crucified under the Roman governor Pontius Pilate. His body was buried and sealed in a borrowed tomb. Guards were posted to prevent grave tampering. Yet after 3 days the tomb was empty and witnesses were risking their lives to declare that He was alive.

6 ITS POWER TO CHANGE LIVES. Not only were the first disciples dramatically changed, but so was one of their worst enemies. Paul was transformed from a Christian killer into one of their chief advocates (Galatians 1:11-24). Later he reflected the changes that had occurred in others as well when he wrote to the church in Corinth, "Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 6:9-11 NIV).

7 **ITS ANALYSIS OF HUMAN NATURE.** The Bible says that society's real problems are problems of the heart. In an age of information and technology, failures of character have scandalized institutions of family, government, science, industry, religion, education, and the arts. In the most sophisticated society the world has ever known, our national reputation is marred by problems of racial prejudice, addiction, abuse, divorce, and sexually transmitted disease. Many want to believe that our problems are rooted in ignorance, diet, and government. But to our generation and all others, Jesus said, "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man" (Matthew 15:19-20).

8 **ITS VIEW OF HUMAN ACHIEVEMENT.** Generation after generation has hoped for the best. We fought wars that would end all wars. We developed educational theories that would produce enlightened, nonviolent children. We conceived technologies that would deliver us from the oppressive slavery of work. Yet we are as close as ever to what the New Testament describes as an endtime marked by wars and rumors of war, earthquakes, disease, loss of affection, and spiritual deception (Matthew 24:5-31; 2 Timothy 3:1-5).

9 **ITS IMPACT ON SOCIETY.** A carpenter rabbi from Nazareth changed the world. Calendars and dated documents bear silent witness to His birth. From rooftops, necklaces, and earrings, the sign of the cross bears visual witness to His death. The Western world-view, which provided a basis for social morality, scientific methodology, and a work ethic that fueled industry, had roots in basic Christian values. Social relief agencies, whether in the West or East, are not fueled by the values of Hinduism, Buddhism, atheism, or secular agnosticism, but by the direct or residual values of the Bible.

10 **ITS OFFER OF SALVATION.** Alternative religious views have saviors who remain in the grave. No other system offers everlasting life as a gift to those who trust One who has overcome death for them. No other system offers assurance of forgiveness, eternal life, and adoption into the family of God by calling on and trusting Someone in the same way a drowning person calls for and relies on the rescue of a lifeguard (Romans 10:9-13). The salvation Christ offers does not depend on what we have done for Him, but on our acceptance of what He has done for us. Instead of moral and religious effort, this salvation requires a helpless admission of our sins. Instead of personal accomplishments of faith, it requires confession of failure. Unlike all other options of faith, Christ asks us to follow Him—not to merit salvation but as an expression of gratitude, love, and confidence in the One who has saved us (Ephesians 2:8-10).

YOU'RE NOT ALONE if you are still unconvinced about the reasonableness of faith in Christ. But keep in mind Jesus' claim that we don't have to resolve our doubts on our own. He said, "If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether My teaching comes from God or whether I speak on My own" (John 7:17 NIV).

If you do see the reasonableness of faith in Christ, keep in mind that the Bible says to the family of God, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9). The salvation Christ offers is not a reward for effort, but a gift to all who put their trust in Him.

To accept God's gift of forgiveness and everlasting life, you can pray something like this: "God, I know I'm a sinner. I know I can't save myself. I believe Jesus died on the cross for my sins. I believe He rose from the dead to live His life through all who believe in Him. I now receive Him as my Savior. I accept Your offer of forgiveness and everlasting life. Thank You, Father. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."

If you made a decision to put your trust in Christ, let us know by letter or e-mail (rbc@rbc.org) and you will receive, without cost or obligation, devotional and Bible-study materials designed to help you grow in your new life as a child of God. Also, pray for God to lead you to a church that faithfully teaches the Bible in a spirit of love and Christlikeness.

For more information, or for a catalog of our resources (which includes other 10 Reasons To Believe brochures), write to RBC Ministries at:

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