

# Does Truth Exist?

## The Road Runner Tactic

*Anyone who denies the law of non-contradiction should be beaten and burned until he admits that being beaten is NOT the same as NOT being beaten, and being burned is NOT the same as NOT being burned!*

— AVICENNA (Note: We like Avicenna's point but not his method!)

### MEMORY VERSE

*We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.*  
(2 Corinthians 10:5)

### WHAT IS APOLOGETICS?

Apologetics comes from the Greek word "apologia", a legal term meaning "defense." Apologists do not apologize for their faith. They defend the historic Christian faith by providing evidence for the truth of the Bible and the Christian worldview. Apologists also answer questions and objections to Christianity.

### WHY ARE WE DOING APOLOGETICS?

#### **Because reason demands it and the Bible commands it!**

For practical and biblical reasons, we think you should only believe what is true. Wrong beliefs can hurt you and others. Moreover, the Bible actually commands that we love God with our minds and have reasons for our beliefs (see I Peter: 3:15; Matthew 22:37; II Corinthians 10:5).

We hope this study of the evidence for the truth of Christianity will give you an even greater desire to trust Christ while it equips you to better represent Him to a lost and dying world.

In order to show that the bible is true beyond any reasonable doubt, we must answer "yes" to the following four questions:

1. Does Truth Exist?
2. Does God Exist?
3. Are Miracles Possible?
4. Is the New Testament True?

Knowing the answers to these consequential questions sets a foundation for your entire life—how you will think, act, and make choices. However, many people don't search out the truth to answer these questions; they just piece together cultural slogans or tidbits they have seen or heard from other people. Their "personal" view of life is actually very "impersonal"—merely a collection of opinions from others. Too often, there is no basis of truth for their view, just whatever they choose from the "spiritual buffet" of religious beliefs — some of this and some of that, whatever they like or makes them feel good. Since the answers to these questions have temporal and eternal consequences, we ought to take the time to discover their real answers. We ought not bet eternity on unexamined slogans.

### **1. Read Romans 1:18-23. According to Paul, why do some people reject truth and Christianity?**

*They give in to the sinful desires of their hearts  
They suppress the truth by their wickedness  
They exchanged the truth about God for a lie  
They worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator  
They did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God*

## **THE LAW OF NON-CONTRADICTION**

The Road Runner Tactic utilizes the law of non-contradiction, which says that opposite ideas cannot both be true at the same time and in the same sense. For example, the earth can't be both round and not round at the same time and in the same sense.

We all know this intuitively because the law of non-contradiction is one of the most fundamental laws of all thought. As with the other laws of logic, the law of non-contradiction is self-evident—You can't prove it; you just know it. It can't be discovered by reasoning from other principles. It is one of the principles you start with to discover everything else!

We will use this law repeatedly in our study to help us identify what is false, As we'll see, many anti-Christian beliefs and philosophies are false because they violate the law of non-contradiction. In other words, they are self-defeating. They don't meet their own standard.

Once you learn how to use this law, you will be well on your way toward becoming a very effective apologist for Christ. In fact, there are few things more important than learning how to identify and expose self-defeating statements. These statements are everywhere and they underlie many of the anti-Christian philosophies prevalent in our society and even in the church. After several years of seminary, I (Frank) can say that the ability to identify and refute self-defeating statements is among the most useful things I have ever learned.

**2. What would you say to someone who says they don't believe in the law of non-contradiction?**

*You do believe in it—you're using it right now by saying you do not believe in it!*

**3. What did the Muslim Philosopher Avicenna say should be done to someone who denies the law of non-contradiction? What's the moral of his quote?**

*"He should be beaten and burned until he admits that to be beaten is not the same as not to be beaten, and to be burned is not the same as not to be burned."*

*The Moral of the quote is that it is self-defeating to deny the law of non-contradiction: to deny it is to use it!*

## THE "ROADRUNNER" TACTIC

**4. Describe the Roadrunner tactic.**

*The Road Runner tactic uses the undeniable laws of logic to expose that much of what our common culture believes about truth, religion, and morality is undeniably false. That which is self-defeating cannot be true, but many Americans believe it anyway.*

Once you know the Roadrunner tactic, you will be able to easily expose many self-defeating claims as false. "I can't speak a word in English" is obviously self-defeating, but there are many others that are a bit more subtle and challenge the truth of Christianity. Review the following examples using the Roadrunner tactic:

**"You can't know truth!"**

*Answer: Then how do you know that?*

**"It's true for you but not for me!"**

*Answer: Is that statement true just for you, or is it true for everyone? ("True for you but not for me" may be the mantra of our day, but it's not how the world really works. If a policeman pulls you over and says you were speeding, do you think you'll get out of a ticket if you say, "that's true for you but not for me"?)*

**"No one has the truth."**

*Answer: Is that true?*

**"There are no absolutes"**

*Answer: Is that an absolute truth? Are you absolutely sure?*

**"You can't know anything about God!"**

*Answer: Then how do you know that about God? Why can't you know anything about God? What do you mean by that? How did you come to that conclusion?*

# The Law of Non-Contradiction Helps Us Discover What is False

Opposite ideas cannot both be true at the same time and in the same sense.



**The Earth is Round**



**The Earth is NOT Round**

**5. Now try these on your own:  
"All truth comes from science."**

*Is that a scientific truth? Can you prove that in a laboratory?*

**"You should be open-minded."**

*Should I be open-minded about being open-minded?*

**"You should doubt everything."**

*Should I doubt that?*

**"You're just playing word games with me."**

*Is that a word game? I am not engaging in word games, but using good reason to point out that some of your statements violate the law of non-contradiction and thus can't be true.*

**6. Why is it not a good argument to say you believe the Bible because of “faith”?**

*Because simply believing doesn't make it true. If you believe the earth is flat, does it make it that way? Truth is truth whether you believe it or not.*

**7. How would you answer someone who challenges you by saying, “You Christians think you know it all. You can't go around telling people what to believe. It's wrong to force your beliefs on other people!”**

*Then why are you telling me what to believe and do?*

**8. In recent years, Matthew 7:1, “Thou shalt not judge” (KJV) has replaced John 3:16, “For God so loved the world” as the most quoted Bible verse. Even non-believers know it and they use it to try and silence Christians. What would you say to someone who claimed: “You ought not judge?” What does Matthew 7:1-5 say? Is Jesus telling us not to judge? (Compare to John 7:24).**

*He's not telling us not to judge—He's telling us how to judge. We can't avoid making judgments. Jesus is simply telling us not to judge hypocritically. We should correct our own behavior before we go help correct our brother's.*

**9. The traditional use of tolerance when it comes to other views in society is to “put up with” or “endure.” But increasingly in our society, Christians are told we must go beyond the traditional meaning of tolerance and actually celebrate what other people do. Can you think of any time when you or someone you know were told you must deny your beliefs so that others aren't offended? Can you think of any time where others are told they must deny their beliefs so that Christians are not offended? Why is the “tolerance” only one way? (Many people who claim they are fighting for “tolerance” are often the most intolerant.)**

*Answers will vary from person to person*

## 10. Are Christians commanded to tolerate or love? When is it loving to be intolerant?

*Love. Christians are commanded to love which goes beyond tolerance. Tolerance is too weak. Tolerance says "hold your nose and put up with them." Love says "reach out and help them."*

*Tolerance is a virtue if you're talking about listening to other points of view, but it's a vice if you're talking about letting destructive or sinful behavior go unopposed. All civilized societies are intolerant of harmful behaviors. You are not loving if you tolerate or endorse sinful behavior. Love does not allow us to be indifferent to acts that destroy other people, and it certainly doesn't allow us to endorse such acts. In fact, Jesus told the woman caught in adultery, to go and sin no more.*

## SHOULD WE BE AGNOSTIC ABOUT AGNOSTICISM?

### 11. Immanuel Kant claimed that we are locked in agnosticism because we "kant" know the real world. Using the law of non-contradiction, how could you easily refute this false claim?

*Immanuel Kant violates the Law of Non-contradiction. Kant contradicts his own premise by saying that "no one can know the real world" but then claims to know something about it: that the real world is unknowable.*



*Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) was a philosopher who had a significant impact on today's modern thinking.*

## HOW IS TRUTH KNOWN?

Truth can be discovered using the self-evident laws of logic, which are also known as first principles. The first principles are called "first" because they are not proven by other principles—they are simply inherent in the nature of reality and thus self-evident. First principles are the tools we use to help us discover truth. Everyone knows these principles, even if they haven't been taught them.

Two of the principles are: The Law of Non-Contradiction and The Law of the Excluded Middle. The Law of the Excluded Middle tells us that something either is or it is not. For example, God either exists or He does not—there is no "middle" alternative.

**12. Next to each question below, write down each possible answer that is allowed by the Law of the Excluded Middle:**

- **Does God exist?**

Yes or no

- **Did Jesus rise from the dead?**

Yes or no

- **Was the Apostle Paul executed in Rome?**

Yes or no

**13. If a conclusion is practically but not absolutely certain, we say that we are:**

Certain beyond a reasonable doubt – as is the requirement in a court case.

**14. Answer the following:**

- **What if the Bible is true? How should this impact a person's life?**

If the Bible is true then it provides both meaning and purpose for life here and in eternity. It should impact my life by causing me to change my thinking, actions, and ultimately my destiny in this life and eternity.

- **What if the Bible is not true? How would this impact a person's life?**

If the Bible is not true, then it is irrelevant. If no other God exists, then life is meaningless as there is no design or purpose for us. The impact on my life would be that I am free to do whatever I want. Morality doesn't matter and neither does life. If another God exists, then I would be subject to his teachings.

- **We can't see gravity and we can't see God. So how do we know either exists?**

We can inductively determine if either exists. For example, we can see that objects fall to the ground. Through observation we can know that there must be some force causing that even though we don't "see" the force directly. Likewise, though we can't see God directly (He is an immaterial being), we can detect Him by his effects (such as creation and morality). Through observation (induction) of what is around us we can draw reasonable conclusions (deductions) about the existence and nature of God.

## **WE ARE TRUTH SEEKERS BUT ALSO TRUTH SUPPRESSORS**

There were those who saw with their own eyes the truth of Christ's miracles and heard with their own ears the truths of His teachings yet still refused to believe. In fact, suppressing the truth is common among humans. So we must be patient with unbelievers as we try to bring them to a saving knowledge of Christ.

### **15. When have you hated and suppressed the truth in order to do or get what you wanted?**

Answers will vary from person to person

## **SO WHAT? WHO CARES ABOUT TRUTH?**

### **16. Why does truth about religion and morality matter?**

They have temporal and maybe even eternal consequences. Apathy and ignorance can be fatal.

*We love the truth when it enlightens us, but we hate it when it convicts us.*

— ST. AUGUSTINE



## THE TRUTH ABOUT TRUTH

1. Contrary beliefs are possible, but contrary truths are not possible.
2. You can believe everything is true, but everything can't be true.

You can believe anything you want. You can believe the earth is flat if you want, but that doesn't make it flat. You can sincerely believe there is no God, but if God actually exists then He really does. Sincerity is not a test for truth.

If anyone ever tells you that there are no objective truths, ask them, "Is that an objective truth? If it is then it defeats itself. If it is not, then why should I believe it?"

## TWO QUESTIONS TO ASK PEOPLE WHO LOVE TO ARGUE AGAINST CHRISTIANITY

As you share the information in this study with others, you may want to ask them these two questions:

1. If I ask you a serious question, will you give me a brutally honest answer?
2. If Christianity were true, would you become a Christian?

If they hesitate at all on question number two, their resistance to Christianity is not just intellectual. They may not want Christianity to be true. They may not want to change the way they are living. Pray for and love them, but you might want to spend your discussion time with people who are more receptive to the evidence.

## TOOLBOX

- Have you ever heard an objection to Christianity and were not sure what to say? Do you want to have questions and answers at your fingertips? Then download the CrossExamined App for free! Go to: [www.CrossExamined.org](http://www.CrossExamined.org) and click on "media".
- For more on how to use questions effectively, get the book, *Tactics: A Game Plan for Discussing Your Christian Convictions*, by Gregory Koukl.
- For a listing of several excellent apologetics websites, visit: [www.CrossExamined.org](http://www.CrossExamined.org) and click on "Resources" and "Links."