

23T01b Doubting Christian
(written by Dr. Kip Wehrman 01/16/2023)

Hello my friends. Thanks for joining me today for an @ the PUNLA coffee table.

Can I ask you a question? What makes God real to you? Many of us have had moments in our lives when we doubted. We wondered if God was real.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father thank you. Thank you for coming to make a way for us to be near you. Thank you for being you. You are wonderful, you are counselor, you are almighty, you are God. Bless our time together and I pray all these things in your name Lord Jesus. Amen.

So, what makes God real to you? I know this is not a subject most want to talk about but why? I could share my life stories with my doubts and questions, failure and triumphs but that would probably not help you. So, what would help? If you have never thought about it, I challenge you to do so. What would it take for you to be absolutely sure God is real?

I am a believer that nearly every question about God can be answered by the Bible, but I bet for many of you that is no comfort. The Bible can be intimidating and even scary. You think it is impossible to understand or read. Or you might just think the Bible is not relevant to your life. But what about God? Is God relevant to your life?

I want to challenge you to determine what it would take to be absolutely completely 100 percent convinced God is not only real, but Jesus is the king over everything including you. Okay for many of us that is hard to completely absolutely 100 percent accept anything. I was like you once. I doubted. I was a doubting Christian?? I used a question mark after Christian because can I really be a Christian and doubt.

Have I given you enough questions yet. See another question. The word doubt means to have a feeling of uncertainty or lack of conviction. I was in this place for much of my life.

I had an advantage though. I thought there had to be a God. I am an engineer and a scientist. I love to observe and speculate about my surroundings. I truly love the natural world. I should just say I love the world. The complexity and diversity are beyond anyone's ability to comprehend. The more we learn as scientists, the more we know we don't know. More knowledge always leads to more questions. Perceived answers only peak curiosity to look longer and deeper. More Questions. More, more, more. Why do you think that is? No matter how hard we look or how hard we study. No matter how smart we think we are, we never run out of questions.

Think about it. Many people today believe in naturalism or evolution, but these theories just give rise to more questions than answers. There are always exceptions which don't

fit the model. There are always unanswered questions. I believe the natural world around us screams God. But I'm sure many of you don't see it that way. My children and I learned about paper making recently. The modern marvel of paper. Did you ever consider the many marvels like paper we take for granted? You crush, mush, and scrabble wood pieces to make pulp or you can start at this point with some old paper to recycle. You Mix the mush in water to make a slurry, then strain the water away to make a mat of paper. You dry and blot and dry and blot until you have paper. We can make paper. Do you understand how or why the cellulose in the paper sticks together to give us paper. It's a little complicated, in fact the more we know the more questions we have. But let me ask you another question. Is it easier to make the paper or the tree?

All of our modern marvels require simple components, knitted together in specific detailed designed ways. We know and understand how difficult a smartphone is to make but what about the minerals and molecules which are used to make that phone. What's more difficult to make a smartphone or the gold that is used to make the electrical components. Have you ever made gold? It is not easy. The simplest things are actually the most difficult to make, why is that? I believe only God can make something from nothing.

Okay, you don't like chemistry or physics or electronics. Okay. I get it. I could talk to you about other sciences like biology, botany, geology, medicine, astronomy. But enough science. If you can look into the night sky and see the magnitude of the universe and still believe in chance and randomness, Then science is never going to convince you.

If science cannot convince you, if science cannot give you absolute confidence God is real then what? I know it's another question.

Let's look inward for a moment. I have a mind, now I'm not talking about a brain. I have one of those too, but I have a mind. A mind is an awareness of my world and an awareness of things I cannot perceive with my 5 senses. Our Sight, sounds, touch, smell and taste can only explain some things. Emotions, feelings, instincts are beyond just our five senses. Many say these are learned behaviors, but children show them before they can truly learn anything from us. You might say it's in our genetics. but, how or why would it be if you don't believe in god. Evolution cannot explain these things. Awareness cannot be explained by any science or pseudoscience I know of.

Okay, you say I need to hear from God to believe in God. Then read the bible, talk to people that study the bible. The Bible is God's word. Okay You want to hear an audible voice from God to believe. Then read the bible out loud. It's not just a joke. The word of God can speak to us like no other book ever written.

So, if nature, your mind and the bible are not enough to believe God is real, then what?

Why do people curse using the name of God? Even mentally ill people who are completely out of their minds, curse using the name of God. Why?. If God is not real, then why do we so primordially reflexively curse by His name. That's across cultures and languages.

When tragedy strikes what do people do? They pray. I was watching a professional football game the other day, when a player suddenly dropped to the ground in cardiac arrest. What did the players instantly do? They dropped to a knee and prayed. The TV announcers prayed. What would have been prohibited just minutes before was suddenly needed. Prayer would had been considered inappropriate. But now in a crisis, they all called on God. Did they think God was real. Real enough that they felt God could affect that situation. Why, if there is no God, would peoples reflex be to call on God to help or intervene in times of need.

Why do people get angry at God. People who profess to not believe in God, when tragedy comes like natural disasters or death or illness. People say things like how could a loving God let this happen. God is not fair. Why would God do this. We are very quick to blame God, even when we spend all of our time denying God even exists

Let me quote Blaise Pascal, "In faith there is enough light for those who want to believe and enough shadows to blind those who don't." God is not going to overwhelm your will. The question is really, do you want to believe God is real.? If you do then, ask God to reveal himself to you. Just say, "God, I want to know you, please help me to believe and know you". Don't expect it to be a blazing light from heaven, although God can do that. It will more likely take time, keep praying that prayer, reading, studying, looking, observing. Over time God will reveal himself to you in a way you can understand and confidently believe. It's really up to you, to want to know God is real.

Let's Pray. Father God, thank you for being patient with us Lord. Many doubt, help them to search for you. I know Lord you are there with them. May you give them what they need to see you, feel you. I pray this in your name, Lord Jesus Amen

Let me leave you with this. If we are honest, most of us have doubted. Doubt is not a sin. But don't stop there, search for an answer. And if you are short on faith, then ask God for what you need. Mark 9:26, Lord "I do believe, help my unbelief". This is from a story in the Bible in Mark 9, I urge you to read it if you are a doubter.

When I sat down to write today, I had another topic in mind. But God just seemed to be steering me to this topic. So, I hope this is helpful to someone out there.

Thank you for joining me today @ the PUNLA CoffeeTable. If you liked the message, please share a link with a friend. You can contact me at kip@punla.org if you have comments or questions. So, until next time @ the PUNLA CoffeeTable. God bless.