

# I Don't Have Enough Faith to be an Atheist

Dr. Harley Ihm

## Lesson 1: "Truth is all that Matters When Your Heart Stops!"

What are some of the ideas people cling to about life and death that cannot be substantiated?

Nothing I was ever taught matters when what is true is ultimately revealed. One truth that science or skeptics can never dispute or change, no matter how hard they try, 100% of all people born will die. Life has a beginning and an end. Something is ultimately true and if we are wise, we will want to know, fight to know what that truth is. Bottom Line: Everyone needs to know if there is such a thing as ultimate truth. If we hold on to nothing more than a wish, information that sounds promising, the latest life after death thought, then we are to be pitied because our life is meaningless, a chasing after the wind as Solomon would say.

### **The need for this study:**

Christians claim that there is one true religion. That causes them to be seen as intolerant of others and disrespectful of their right to believe and worship how they choose. Nothing could be more inaccurate. Actually, most major religions claim they alone have the truth. Some people claim that it's okay because we are actually worshiping the same God just through a different lens better suited to a particular culture. However, that creates a problem. For example, Islam teaches that Christ was a mere prophet, not God. C.S. Lewis observed, if Christ is not God, then He could not have been a great prophet or a great moral teacher, because Jesus claimed to be God. If He was not who He said He was, then He was either a liar or a lunatic, which disqualifies Him as a great moral teacher or a prophet from God.

Jesus was a false prophet if what Islam says is truth. Judaism says Jesus was not the Messiah. They killed Him to stamp out the blasphemy of Jesus. They are still waiting for the anointed one from God to arrive with all His military might to restore Israel to greatness. If what they teach is truth, then all the prophecies from their own prophets are lies.

Many Eastern religions claim God is in everything, wind, water, earth, sky, fire, and there is no distinction between the Creator and the created. That directly makes the book of Genesis a lie. The entire creation account is religious fiction if what they say is truth.

The atheist says truth is what we can discover with the human mind because we are all part of a cosmic accident that temporarily exists in time and space. It will one day end. Truth is facing reality apart from any form of a god. Truth is defined only by what can be reproduced. That is interesting because the beginning of life cannot be duplicated yet we claim that it had a beginning. So that we had a beginning, according to atheistic logic, cannot be true because it cannot be duplicated. Hmm. Now what?

Truth is truth. Something is either true or it is not true. There cannot be multiple truths when it comes to creation and our Creator. There is only one truth and to deny that would be disrespectful and unloving to God's creation. How can I be still? Jesus claimed that if He

silenced everyone, then the rocks would cry out who He truly was. His word is either truth or it is a lie. He is both the Creator and Savior of all life or He is not. He is our hope or our stupidity. That is where we have to begin our search for faith based upon truth. That is what we have to know if are going to help others. Then helping others find truth is not being intolerant, it's practicing loving my neighbor as myself.

### **Read John 1:1-18**

What was in the beginning? The Word. The LOGOS [pronounced lah'-gahs] in Greek. That reality and truth. When there was a beginning point in our history, the thought already existed and always had existed.

What was the Word doing in the beginning?

Who was the Word in the beginning? Question: What is the significance of the Word being called "He"? Does it matter?

Who made all things? If you want to know how your church came into being, do you ask just anyone walking in the hall and expect an accurate answer? How could you find out how this church was created? Obviously, you go to someone who was in the planning stages when it first began, who was there at creation. Then you have to wonder why we accept answers about creation from people who are only guessing. If I want to know the answers to life's important questions, I need to go back to someone who was there.

The Five Most Important Questions in Life are: A. Our Origin: Where did we come from? B. Our Identity: Who are we? C. Our Purpose: Why are we here? D. Our Morality: How should we live? E. Our Destiny: Where are we going?

How is the way we answer these questions critical to the way we live? How is our answer guided by our understanding of truth, by our worldview?

What would come from the Word and who would testify that it was truly the Word that had arrived? How has the Word of God been a light to you personally?

### **Read John 1:10-13**

How do these verses accurately describe Jesus? Hebrews 1:2 tells us that Jesus made the universe and all that is in it. The Creator came into the world but the world did not recognize Him, nor receive Him as Creator. Many of His people, Israel, the Jewish nation also did not recognize Him or receive Him. He offered the right to become children of God to all who believe in Him, who is the Word of God made flesh, the Immanuel, God with Us!

Whose glory was clearly seen? How would you describe the glory of God in Christ that you have seen?

With what was the Son of God Filled?

What blessings did we receive from Jesus?

### **Read John 18:28-38**

Did Pilate believe in truth? Pilate couldn't conceive of absolute truth. Truth was dictated by whoever was in power over the empire. Kings and rulers established their truth regardless of the results of effects on people. That was the world Jesus entered. Absolute truth was nothing more than staying alive in a world of power always held over you and backed up by armies.

Why does Jesus say He came into the world?

Who is firmly established as being on the side of truth? How did Jesus' life prove that God was the source of all truth? Is there any other prophet in any religion that can testify to truth, which has literal prophecies written over hundreds of years that all were fulfilled exactly as they were foretold and recorded?

**Application:** Let's go back to those critical questions. How does recognizing the word of God as absolute truth shape our lives in each of these areas? A. Our Origin: Where did we come from? Our Identity: Who are we? C. Our Purpose: Why are we here? D. Our Morality: How should we live? E. Our Destiny: Where are we going?

**Final Question:** What is the one idea that stands out to you most from this lesson?