



OBJECTIONS

ADDRESSING COMMON OBJECTIONS
TO THE CHRISTIAN FAITH



Welcome to our D-Group Curriculum on Objections to Christianity. Our mission statement for Freedom Church Baltimore is to Draw to Christ, Develop in Community, and Deploy to Culture. We hope this curriculum will help you better understand these objections to Christianity and equip you to remove any obstacles for you and those you are trying to serve in and outside the church.

For the next 8 weeks, we will be looking at some of the most common objections to Christianity. In each of the eight weeks, we will follow the same format. First, we will state the objection. Second, we will take a deeper look at the objection so that we understand it. After doing that, we will take some time to analyze the objection along with some of its assumptions. This will then be followed by questions we would ask anyone holding that particular objection. Finally, this curriculum will conclude with Biblical responses to the objection and applications for all of us.

As we begin to address these objections, we recognize that some of them may require more than one D-Group meeting to be understood and answered. So, we would like to encourage you to have conversations with one another and with your pastors outside of D-Group if necessary.

Objection #1

The Bible was written by men

Summary: A major objection to Christianity is that the Bible was written by men and therefore it cannot be the trusted source of truth about God.

Understanding the Objection

- The Bible is not a trusted source of truth because it was written by men.
- The Bible cannot be the inspired, authoritative, sufficient and inerrant word of God because it was written by men (2 Tim 3:16).
- Since the Bible is written by men, it is one of many opinionated books about religion, therefore it is not special.

Examining the Objection and Analyzing the Assumptions

This objection assumes several things about men and God.

1. Men can't be trusted.
2. Men can't write truth (about God).
3. Men are incapable of knowing truth.
4. God can't use men to communicate truth.
5. Men do not have the ability to distribute truth.
6. God can't give truth to men.



Questions for those who hold this objection

1. How do you prove that this objection is valid?
2. Can you tell me something you believe that is true and why you believe it is true?
3. Do you believe that men can discover and know truth?
4. Do you believe in transcendent or absolute truths?

The Bible's Answer to the objection

1. Read 2 Peter 1:16-21.
2. What stands out to you the most about this text?
3. How does 2 Peter 1:16-21 help us answer the objection?
4. How does 2 Peter 1:16-21 help us answer some of the assumptions that this objection is built on?

You and this objection

1. Ultimately, this objection and the Bible's answer to it are both based on the same thing, a person's source of truth.
2. What are you thinking now?
3. What is God saying to you right now?

Objection #2

The Bible is full of contradictions

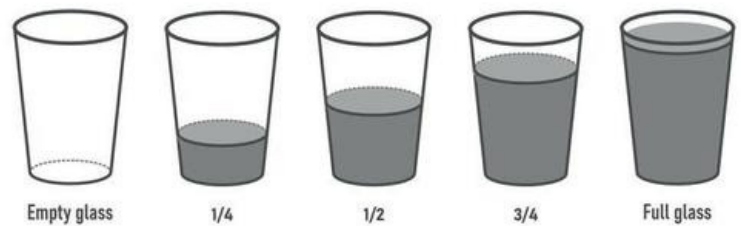
Summary: A major objection to Christianity is that the Bible is full of contradictions and therefore it cannot be trusted.

Understanding the Objection

- Definition of a contradiction: a combination of statements, ideas, or features of a situation that are opposed to one another.
- The Bible is full of contradictions therefore the majority of the Bible contains “a combination of statements, ideas, or features of a situation that are opposed to one another.”
- 2 Contradictory statements cannot be true at the same time.

Examining and Analyzing the Objection

- The following imagery on the right allows you to understand the scope of the objection. In this illustration, the glass is the Bible, and the liquid represents the contradictions. The glass on the far right would most accurately represent the objection we are considering: *The Bible is full of contradictions*. What do you think about this?
- We should make a distinction between a contradiction and an apparent contradiction because it is possible for us to confuse the two.
- Embedded in this objection is the assumption that there are no other legitimate explanations for what appears to be a contradiction.



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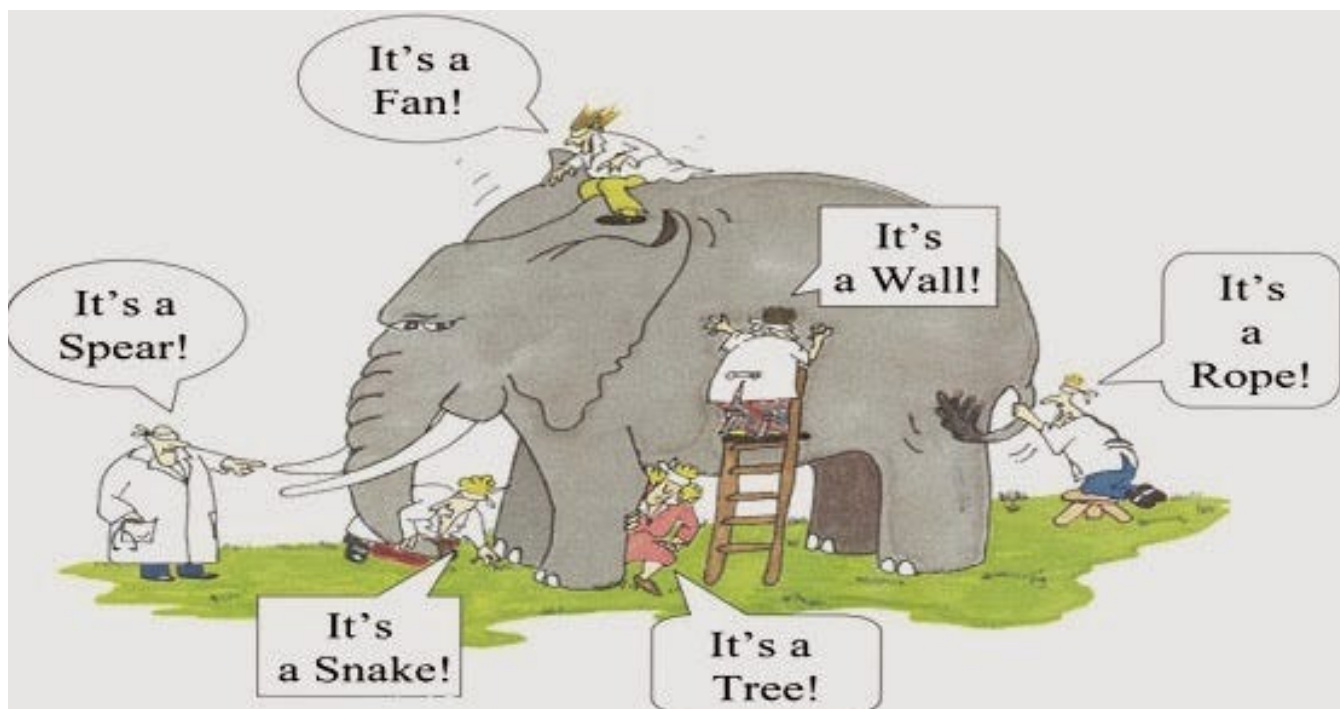
Questions for those who hold this objection

Consider the following example and the questions below: Court reporters capture the words spoken by everyone during a court or deposition proceeding. Court reporters then prepare verbatim transcripts of proceedings.

1. *Would you consider a court reporter's verbatim transcript invalid because it contains contradictions?*
2. *Do you see a difference between a contradiction and an apparent contradiction?*
3. *What role do you think knowledge of a subject plays in whether or not contradictions are found in the subject?*

The Bible's Answer to the objection

It is essential to make a distinction between differences and contradictions in the Bible. Sometimes, the Bible contains different accounts of the same events, but those different accounts do not amount to a contradiction. Consider this illustration below:



Oftentimes, **what appears** to be a contradiction is simply an author(s) writing about an event from a specific perspective or for a specific reason.



Consider these scriptures regarding the different accounts of women approaching the tomb of Jesus:

John 20:1

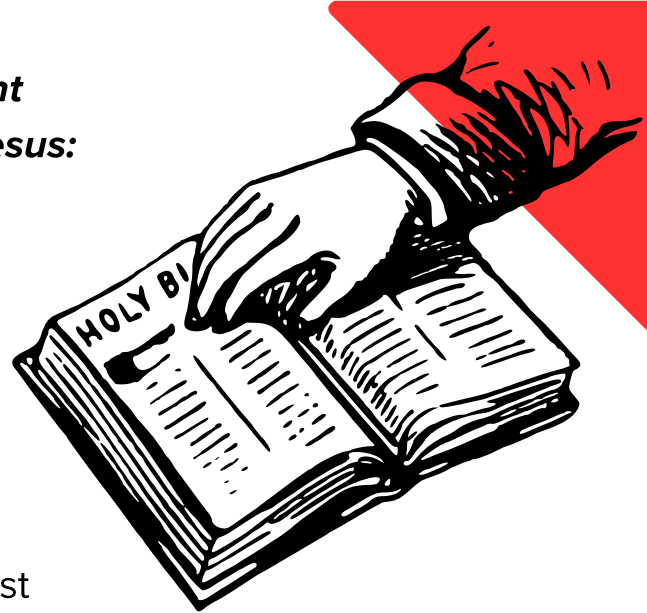
Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

Matthew 28:1

Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.

Mark 16:1

When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him.



*Notice how John records **1 woman** approaching the tomb, Matthew records **2 women** approaching the tomb, and Mark records **3 women** approaching the tomb. These recordings are not contradictions. They are different accounts of the same event. This does not change the historical accuracy of the texts.*



Some people see contradictions in the Bible because they are Biblically ignorant and/or not spiritually alive. 1 Corinthians 2:14 says, “*The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.*”

Take a look at John 8:39-59. It is a great example of Jesus being faced with people who felt like what He was saying was contradictory.

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You and this objection

- The Bible is an incredibly simple and yet profoundly deep book. It is at times very easy to understand but at times it can be confusing and seemingly contradictory. A lot of how we experience the bible is based on how informed we are about it. The less we know about it the more challenging it is to understand.
- Think about the implications of 2 Peter 3:16 as we discuss this objection: *"And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him," "as he [Paul] does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures."* Some alleged contradictions are created by those who are ignorant and biased.
- Looking at and discussing this objection should move all of us to embody and practice what we see in Acts 17:11, "Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true" and 2 Timothy 2:15, "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth."
- What are you feeling or thinking about this objection right now?

REMEMBER!

If you have specific questions about certain objections, you should ask people in your D-group and also remember that your pastors are available to help you.



Objection #3

The Bible supports slavery

Summary: A major objection to Christianity is that the Bible supports slavery and therefore it cannot be trusted.

Understanding the Objection

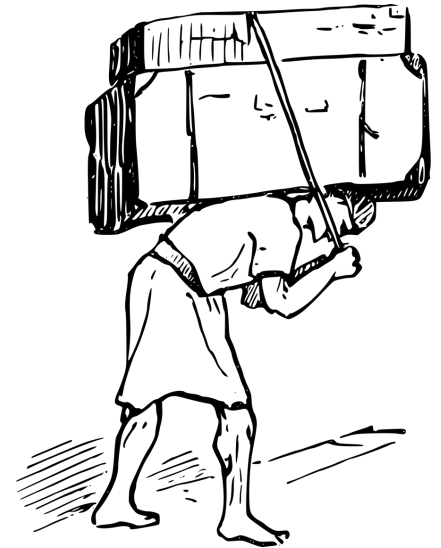
- The Bible's support of slavery is morally incongruent with the nature of a loving and saving God.
- The Bible's support of slavery is inconsistent with redemptive history.
- The Bible's support of slavery is inconsistent with God's law: "Love your neighbor as yourself."
- Most people do not support slavery and think that is evil and should never be allowed. There are places in the Bible that are in complete disagreement with this.
- The Bible supports slavery because it gives instructions on acquiring and how to treat slaves.

Examining the Objection and Analyzing its assumptions

Take a moment to try to come up with a working definition of slavery.

Consider the following assumptions:

1. Slavery should not be supported under any circumstances.
2. All forms of slavery are the same.
3. There is nothing good about slavery.
4. Nothing good comes out of slavery.
5. Slavery is ultimately evil no matter how or where it is practiced.



Questions for those who hold this objection

1. Are all forms slavery equally evil?
2. Are all forms of slavery the same?
3. Can people prosper when slavery is practiced?

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The Bible's answer to the objection

Read each of the following texts and discuss what they teach about slavery AND how they support the assertions below.

Exodus 21:1-16, Exodus 22:1-3, Gal 3:28, 1 Tim 1:8-11, Philemon 1:15-17

- God's original intent for man was to be free, which is why you do not see any concept of slavery at creation.
- Slavery is in the Bible because slavery is a part of our fallen history.
- The presence of slavery in the Bible does not mean it supports slavery as it is popularly understood.
- Not every slave is owned, but every person is a slave (Rom 6:16-23).
- The redemption we experience through the gospel works subversively in us to deliver us from our fallen nature which practiced slavery to our renewed nature in Christ.
- There are different types of slavery according to the Bible. Some forms of slavery were acceptable and other forms were not.
- The slavery that was a part of American history is condemned by The Bible.
- In the age to come, slavery will not exist (Rev 21:5).

You and this objection

1. What is standing out to you the most right now?
2. What are you feeling or thinking right now?
3. What is God inviting you to do?



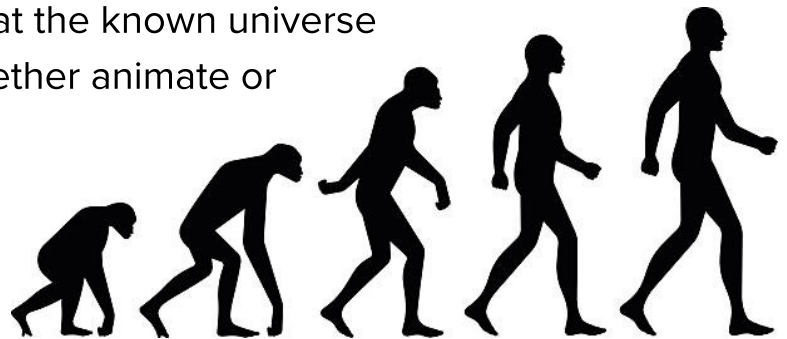
Objection #4

The Evolution Theory disproves Christianity

Summary: A major objection to Christianity is that science proves the Evolutionary Theory which disproves Christianity's assertion of creation.

Understanding the objection

- The Big Bang Theory - the universe as we know it started with an infinitely hot and dense single point that inflated and stretched — first at unimaginable speeds, and then at a more measurable rate — over the next 13.7 billion years to the still-expanding cosmos that we know today.
- The Evolution Theory - Humans are the result of a long evolution process that began with inert material.
- Life began as matter, life will end with matter (it will still be material).
- No immaterial God was or is present.
- Science proves evolution and therefore disproves creationism.
- The Evolutionary Theory asserts that the known universe along with everything on Earth, whether animate or inanimate, is a result of evolution.



Examining the Objection and Analyzing its Assumptions

The Evolutionary Theory assumes several things:

1. Matter is eternal: “infinitely hot and dense single point.”
2. Assumes a measureless heat is responsible for everything in the universe.
3. A dense single point expanded and is responsible for everything we see and know about the universe.
4. Matter can evolve into different types of matter: Emergent property theory – as levels of complexity increase, sometimes new properties emerge.
5. Simplicity of matter “a infinitely hot dense single point” can produce inexplicable complexity like an eyeball.

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Analyzing the Evolutionary Theory:

1. The Evolutionary Theory **cannot be proved** using the scientific method because we are not able to complete all of the steps
 - Observation/Question
 - Research topic area
 - Hypothesis
 - Test with experiment
 - Analyze the data
 - Report conclusions
2. Science is the pursuit and application of knowledge and understanding of the natural and social world following a systematic methodology **based on evidence**. Based on this, is the evolutionary theory really rooted in science?
3. There are gaps in the Evolutionary Theory's explanation such as:
 - Exactly how does a “infinitely hot and dense single point” inflate or expand into the universe as we know it?
 - We know how human beings are formed and developed since science proves this.
4. Without information to fill in the gaps that the evolutionary theory has, one is required to utilize belief in order to make the theory coherent.
5. Infinitely hot matter is generally deconstructive and **not constructive**.
 - If something is infinitely hot, it would be considered to be at an infinite temperature. At this temperature, all matter would be ionized and all chemical bonds would be broken. It would be an extremely energetic state and would likely not be able to exist for very long. Additionally, the laws of thermodynamics would break down at this point, so it is not a state that is considered to be possible in the real world.
6. **What caused** “an infinitely hot and dense single point” to inflate, stretch, move at unimaginable speeds to create the universe and life as we know today.
7. Is the Evolutionary Theory responsible for the laws in the universe and consciousness?



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Questions for those who hold this objection

1. What is the origin of the “infinitely hot and dense single point?”
2. Why is there no substantial record of intermediate species fossils? (Apes turning into Humans)
3. How does evolution explain genetic and chemical complexities (DNA)



The Bible’s Answer to this Objection

Read the following texts and discuss how they answer this objection: *Genesis 1:1, Psalm 14:1, Psalm 139:13-14, Isaiah 45:12, John 1:1-3, Romans 1:18-22, Hebrews 11:1-3.*

You and this objection

1. What is the primary emotion you experience when you encounter this objection?
2. In your opinion what is the single greatest factor in determining whether a person believes in evolutionary theory or creation?
3. What do you think of the quotes below?

“A worldview is a set of beliefs on the fundamental nature of reality that determine how one interprets his or her experiences, influences thoughts, beliefs and behaviors and ultimately serves as a personal compass for life.”

“In the Evolutionary Theory, matter is God, science is the Bible, evolution is religion.”

Isaac Newton (1643–1727), founder of classical theoretical physics: "What we know is a drop, what we do not know is a vast ocean. The admirable arrangement and harmony of the universe could only have come from the plan of an omniscient and omnipotent Being."



Johannes Kepler (1571-1630), founder of the laws of planetary motion: "The wisdom of the Lord is infinite as are also His glory and His power. Ye heavens, sing His praises; sun, moon, and planets, glorify Him in your ineffable language! Praise Him, celestial harmonies, and all ye who can comprehend them! And thou, my soul, praise thy Creator! It is by Him and in Him that all exist."

Objection #5

Christianity is the White Man's religion

Summary: A major objection to Christianity is that Christianity was created by and for white men and therefore it should not be followed.

Understanding the objection

- Christianity originated from white men.
- There are aspects of Christianity that come directly from white men.
- White men hijacked the Jewish and Christian writings and distorted them for their own purposes.
- The Christianity that is practiced today is neither Christian nor divine in essence.

Examining the Objection and Analyzing its assumptions

Assumptions:

1. If an ethnicity practices a religion - it is therefore their religion.
2. If ethnicity puts a spin on a religion- it is therefore their religion and no longer what it was.
3. The architects and contributors of Christianity were all European-Anglo Saxon White.
4. There is no such thing as an inspired, authoritative, inerrant, sufficient canon of scripture (The Bible).
5. Anyone who asserts that there is another type of Christianity unrelated to white men is wrong.



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Questions for those who hold this objection

1. On what basis are you determining Christianity is the White man's religion?
2. What do you do with the claim that the Bible is divinely inspired (2 Tim 3:16) and is not the White man's religion?
3. Do you believe that an ethnic group of people can take a religion, change it, and in doing so obliterate the religion?
4. Do you think it is possible for God to use white people for His purposes?

The Bible's Answer to this Objection

Read the following texts: *Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 11:26, Acts 26:28, 1 Peter 4:16, Revelation 7:9*. Afterwards, discuss how these texts can help us answer this objection.

Consider the following information regarding some of the origins of Christianity: Beginning with the Bible, Africa played a huge part in the early church. Some of the most influential church Father's were African. Long before Europe ever heard of Jesus, Africans were getting baptized and preaching the gospel. A few things to take note of:

- Luke 23:26 Simon of Cyrene (North Africa/Lybia)
- Africans from Egypt and Libya were there at Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came.
- Acts 8:26-36 An Ethiopian Eunuch believes and is baptized. Ethiopia is Central Eastern Africa
- Acts 11:19-24 Men from North Africa (Cyrene) were pushing the gospel of Jesus Christ

Now, consider and discuss the following questions:

1. How would you define what Christianity is?
2. How would you define what a Christian is?
3. How would you answer this objection?

You and this objection

1. Christianity is divinely originated by God alone.
2. Christianity is not the white man's religion.
3. Christianity is ethnically monolithic.
4. Christianity is radically, ethnically inclusive.
5. Christianity in its essence is immutable and impervious to the distortions of any ethnic group.

Objection #6

A "loving God" would not send people to hell and allow suffering

Summary: A major objection to Christianity is that a "loving God" would not send people to hell and allow suffering and therefore it should not be followed.

Understanding the objection

- A loving God only does loving things and sending people to hell and allowing suffering are not loving things.
- A loving God would not create a place of eternal torment for suffering.
- A loving God would not sit by and watch people suffer.

Examining the Objection and Analyzing its assumptions

Assumptions:

1. Love and suffering are incompatible.
2. Love and justice are incompatible.
3. Love would never do anything that would hurt anyone.
4. Love is omnipotent and cannot be hindered.
5. Love is not patient and acts immediately.
6. God can be held accountable for refusing to act lovingly.
7. God is ultimately at fault for all of the wrong doing in human history.



Questions for those who hold this objection

1. Can love and justice exist at the same time?
2. What part do humans play in their own suffering?
3. Can you tell me what you are doing to limit human suffering?
4. How do you reconcile this objection with John 3:16?

The Bible's Answer to this Objection

Read the following texts: *John 3:16-21, John 11:1-25, 2 Tim 3:1-6, Revelation 20:11-15* and discuss how they answer the objection.

You and this objection

1. God is love (1 John 4:8)
2. God is just (Job 34:12, 37:23, Psalm 89:14, Isaiah 5:16)
3. We have to take responsibility for our actions because they contribute to our suffering and eternal destiny.
4. We will never completely understand human suffering, God's justice and His love. It will always be a beautiful mystery.

Objection #7

Why does God forgive sinners? (rapist, murderers, pedophiles, etc)

Summary: Who would want to follow and believe in a God who forgives rapist, murderers and pedophiles?

Understanding the objection

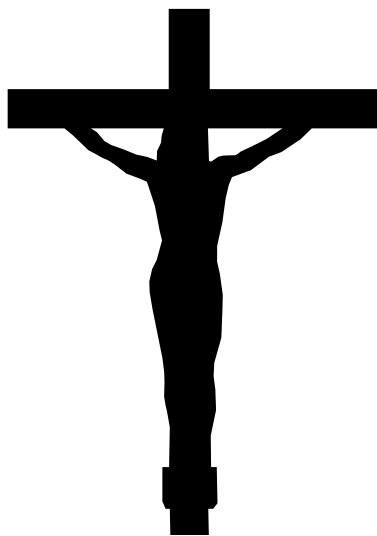
- A God who pardons rapist, murderers and pedophiles is not God.
- It is immoral for God to forgive certain types of sins/evil.
- It is inconsistent with the concept of justice for God to forgive certain types of sins/evil.
- It says something about God if He forgives certain types of sins/evil.
- Some behaviors are beyond the scope of forgiveness.
- Some behaviors are criminal and should face the divine justice system instead of forgiveness.

Examining the Objection and Analyzing its assumptions

1. God cannot be just if He forgives certain sins.
2. God is condoning evil/sins if He forgives certain sins.
3. There is a difference between sins, some are very bad and some aren't so bad.
4. Forgiveness and justice are tied together as concepts and cannot be separated.
5. God is judged based on who He forgives and who He doesn't.

Questions for those who hold this objection

1. What is your standard for righteousness?
2. What do you use to determine God's essence and His character?
3. Do you see a difference between forgiveness and justice? If so, could you please explain it?
4. What is your understanding of the gospel?



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The Bible's Answer to this Objection

Read the following texts and discuss how they can help us understand and answer this objection.

Job 34:10-12, Luke 23:39-43, Romans 3:21-26, 6:23, 2 Corinthians 5:10

You and this objection

1. How does the gospel illustrate forgiveness and justice?
2. What do you think is really going in the minds and hearts of the people who hold this objection?
3. Why do you think it is so hard for us to except the fact that God forgives us when we do certain things?
4. Who is responsible to administer justice for crimes, the church or the government?
(hint: Romans 13:1-5)



Objection #8

Christianity is just one way to God, but it is not the only way

Summary: Christianity is one of many religions on Earth, it is not the only way therefore it should not be taken as the only way to practice religion.

Understanding the objection

- There are many religions and each one claims exclusivity, they can't all be right.
- The presence of many religions proves that we can't know which one is the right one.
- Who are we to say who is right and who is wrong when it comes to religions?
- Since Christianity is not the only way to God it can be disregarded.

Examining the Objection and Analyzing its assumptions

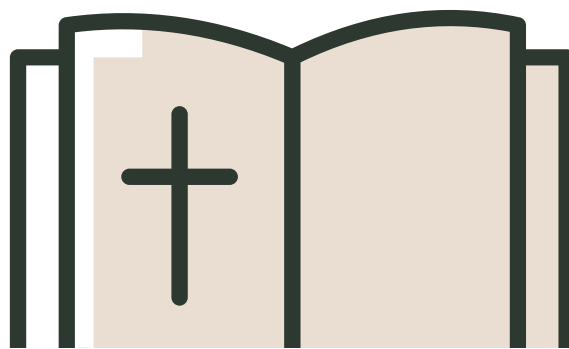
1. We can't know the truth.
2. Religious options means we can't know the truth.
3. Since all the religions are claiming to be right they must all have some truth which eliminates one of them from claiming that it has the only truth.
4. If we believe that one religion is right and the others are wrong it seems arrogant and has so many implications.

Questions for those who hold this objection

1. Do you believe that the existence of differing opinions on an issue/religion essentially prohibits us from knowing the truth?
2. Do you believe in absolute truth?
3. Is it possible that one religion could be right and the others wrong?
4. What would it take for you to believe that one of the religions are right and the others are wrong?
5. What bothers you the most about one religion being the only way?

The Bible's Answer to this Objection

Read the following texts and discuss how they help us understand and answer the objection: *1 Chronicles 17:20, Isaiah 45:22, John 14:6, John 17:3, Acts 4:12.*



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You and this objection

1. Ultimately, this objection is answered by a call to faith in the certainty of the assertions found in the bible that it is the only word of God proclaiming the exclusive truths about God and religion.
2. Where do we see the concept of absolute truth and transcendent morality in the world today?
3. What do you think bothers people the most about the idea that Christianity is the only way?
4. How do you feel about Christianity being the only way?
5. How should you relate to people who hold this position?

