

## 45 OBJECTIONS ADDRESSED

Opening Questions: (Variations on the Section Questions)

- Are any books of antiquity accurate or reliable accounts of the past events which they chronicle?
- If metaphysical realities exist, why are miracles impossible?
- Is human suffering caused by God?
- Wasn't Joshua of Nazareth revealing in the clearest way possible that God does exist?
- Does God send people to hell?
- Doesn't history prove that vast majorities of people can and do believe things that are false?
- Can a person prove love exists?

The fundamental question, "Why do you state that it is reasonable to believe that the person of Joshua of Nazareth – his core teachings and major events in his life – were successfully recorded in the four gospel books?", must be addressed since *the person of Joshua of Nazareth is the primary standard which I use to demonstrate that Christianity is a successful failure.*

### The Trustworthiness of the Gospel Books

It is interesting when talking to people who are skeptical about Jesus of Nazareth that they will often provide some specific claim justifying their doubt, and regarding that claim will state, "anything is possible" to justify the claim. For example, the skeptic might say, "oh, the manuscripts that they possess about the four gospels are far from infallible, and there are many possibilities regarding people tampering with them or just plain making stuff up—anything is possible."

In response to their, "anything is possible" statement, I often will respond with something like, "so, if anything is possible, then it is possible that the record of the four gospels is essentially accurate." Their reaction to that is often incredulity or offense, which reveals much.

If they were honest with themselves, their statement would be, "anything is possible except that the life and teachings and deeds of Jesus of Nazareth were accurately captured in those four gospel books." At least then they would be, and their bias would be laid bare. The simple fact is that not only is it possible that eyewitnesses successfully recorded the words and deeds of Jesus of

Nazareth, but probable. There are no ancient texts that have four corroborating accounts by different authors about the same subject to prove their veracity.

This book is not some apologetic for manuscripts or texts. That type of work has been done, and the reader is free to research it. *This author's position is simple—it is possible that the four accounts of the life, teachings, and deeds of Jesus of Nazareth are generally accurate.* Please note I did not say "free from error" or the religious people's term, "inerrant"—I said generally accurate. Stated another way, the main events and fundamental or core teachings of Jesus of Nazareth were successfully preserved in the four gospels by the four gospel authors.

This position is no more unreasonable than trusting any other ancient historical texts of that period. And as already noted it is significantly more reasonable given the four accounts of the same subject and historical figure, Jesus or Joshua of Nazareth.

So, when someone makes some form of the statement, "we can't trust that the four gospels are accurate" a reasonable response is, "*Why not? Is it possible they are accurate?*" Again, the answer to that question will be revealing. If the answer is no, then that person has a bias so strong that they are not willing to consider things that might well be true on that topic.

Do people look to other writings and books of antiquity and believe they hold accurate accounts of historical events or people's thoughts? Yes, of course they do, and to some much older and less well attested than the four gospel books written in the first century.

The two most cited non-Christian sources of information that validate the existence of the historical Jesus of Nazareth are the works of ancient historians Josephus and Tacitus. The contemporary scholar Louis Feldman has stated that "few have doubted the genuineness" of Josephus' reference to Jesus of Nazareth in *book 20* of the *Antiquities of the Jews*, and that reference is only disputed by a few scholars.<sup>61</sup>

A primary reason for discounting the authenticity of the four gospel books by non-theists is that they contain Joshua performing miracles. Of course, that demonstrates a bias against both the metaphysical as well as against a metaphysical or spiritual agent acting in this realm of the surface of the earth. Having a bias against spiritual things is not "open-minded" and like all bias, is not reasonable given the evidence that our human experience provides. Is it possible that a Being greater than humans and existing in a dimension beyond our third dimension did intervene through Joshua? Indeed that proposition is not logically impossible.

Given the favorite movies and books about the possibilities of aliens and super humans, their capabilities, and the people believing much of it is possible,

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<sup>61</sup> Van Voorst, Robert E (2000). *Jesus Outside the New Testament: An Introduction to the Ancient Evidence.* p. 83. Eerdmans Publishing. ISBN 978-0-8028-4368-5.

Maier, Paul L. (1995). *Josephus, the essential works: a condensation of Jewish antiquities and The Jewish war.* p. 285. ISBN 978-0-8254-3260-6.

it indeed is unreasonable to exclude the four gospel accounts as "fiction" due to the miracles documented in them. What would account for the acceptance by hundreds of millions of people of many unlikely things while rejecting a well attested historical document and its subject, Joshua of Nazareth? A plausible answer is fear, dislike or hatred of the concept of accountability or the agent of that accountability.

Let us take another look at this from a different view before we continue. I have met many Christians who say out of one side of their mouth, "Oh, I believe in Jesus" or "I believe everything he says." Out of the other side of their mouth, they say, "Oh, we can't be sure Jesus said that" regarding some actual teaching in the four gospel books that they don't like or with which they don't agree. You can't have it both ways and be an honest person operating by integrity. Either *the core, primary or essential events and teachings* of Jesus of Nazareth are successfully recorded in the four gospel books that we possess today, or they are not.

As soon as you start down the road of some form of a denial of that possibility – that the adult and public life of Jesus of Nazareth was successfully captured, recorded and preserved in the four books we possess today – then *you have no reasonable basis to say, "I believe in Jesus."* At least not the historical Joshua of Nazareth described in those four books. Sadly, most people don't care if they have a reasonable basis or not. Their made-up "christ" keeps them comfortable in this world, and in their beliefs, they are heading towards heaven, which is the placebo's (made up christ's) primary purpose.

If you reject the recorded sayings of the historical Jesus of Nazareth in the four gospel books- the historical person whose life was recorded by four separate authors (two of the books authored by eyewitnesses) in the four gospels - then what "jesus" do you believe? What "jesus" if you don't even know his teachings because you never seriously read or studied them? What "jesus" if an actual disciple/follower of Joshua of Nazareth gives you a test containing his teachings and you fail the test? What "jesus" if you live contrary to the teachings of the real, historical person of Joshua of Nazareth?

The answer to "What jesus" is the imaginary "jesus christ" of the Christian religion. The ones people make up to "have their cake and eat it too"—to justify their lives in this world.

Those who seek to keep their life will lose it; while those who seek to lose their life for my sake and the Gospels shall save it. (Mark 8:35)

It is irrational to claim to be a follower of the historical Jesus of Nazareth if you don't even know his teachings. It is doubly absurd to claim to be a follower of Jesus of Nazareth while at the same time stating or defending beliefs or behavior that run contrary to his teachings as contained in the four gospel books. And yet, that, in general, describes many of the people who make up the successful failure that is Christianity.

Of course, many religious people don't care about reason as they think that religious beliefs are somehow exempt from the test of logic. If they knew the One who says, "I am the truth"; and, "All who are of the truth hear my voice"; and "the truth will set you free"; then they would see the great error of their illogical way. Sadly, many religious people/Christians put reason aside when it leads them where they do not want to go. In a real and significant way, they are reason-phobic. Let us clarify some important distinctions in this regard.

We cannot validate metaphysical or spiritual realities with our senses. Stated another way, sensing spiritual things is not in the realm of reason or logic. For example, we cannot see an "angel," nor can we see our soul, nor can we hear an audible voice of God. If a person claims that they did hear an audible voice of God, for example, that cannot be validated using reason or logic unless their testimony about hearing God contained the content of that hearing. So, for example, if the person said, "I heard God, and She said that three equals one," then we can use logic to prove that the content allegedly communicated from God to that person is false. We cannot prove the experience was fake – that the person did not hear God – but we can prove that what was communicated in that alleged experience was false.

Furthermore, can we determine truth or falsehood about spiritual claims if we do not have a standard against which to judge the claim? For example, if someone says, "I believe Jesus visited the earth before he came to the people of Israel 2,000 years ago", that claim cannot be verified as true or false since Joshua does not address that in the four gospels nor do we have any eyewitness testimony writings stating that. Or, if another person says, "I believe God want's people to drink tea," that claim cannot be verified as true or false since Joshua does not address that in the four gospels. Please remember, dear reader, that the standard this author is using – since I am a disciple of Joshua of Nazareth and he is my Master – is Joshua of Nazareth, not "the Bible."

What can we conclude in this area of "can we trust the four gospels and how can we test stated God beliefs"? The answer to the first question is yes, of course, we can trust that the four gospel books contain the *core, primary or essential events and teachings* of the life of Jesus of Nazareth. If we question that four separate accounts of a subject who lived 2,000 years ago cannot be trusted as accurate, then we should say the same thing about all other writings during or before that time period which have the same or less manuscript support, especially if it only has one author/source and not four. Again, if you have a bias against metaphysical events, then you will reject that line of reasoning, but at least acknowledge you have a bias against the metaphysical even while you cannot prove the real and significant physical existence of numbers or forgiveness!

The answer to the second question is yes; we can evaluate God statements or proclamations or claims by using observation, reason, and logic to do so. Logic cannot prove or disprove the existence of the person of Joshua of Nazareth or any other person who lived in the past. Those who claim it can have a metaphysical bias which destroys any claim of objectivity. In fact, all

God-claims ought to be rigorously tested using reason, logic, and observation. If they were – and people would accept the truth that reason and logic reveal regarding God claims - we would have far less religious conflict with which to deal. In fact, only One Man would be left standing at the end!

This chapter will not present a defense of, or the evidence for, the veracity of the gospels capturing and recording the three years of the life, deeds, and words of Joshua of Nazareth. With Google available, it is a simple matter to perform a search like, "manuscript evidence for the new testament," and to research the results yourself.

Bruce M. Metzger is widely considered to be one of the most respected and influential new testament scholars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In his works, *The New Testament: Its Background, Growth, and Content, 3rd ed.*, rev. and enlarged (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003), pgs. 317–8; *The Canon of the New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997), pgs. 251–4 & 287-88; he makes a compelling case that the over 5,000 Greek manuscripts, about 10,000 Latin manuscripts, and over 9,000 manuscripts of the new testament in various languages that we possess leave little doubt that the new testament that we possess is accurate or faithful to the original writer's original manuscripts.

New Testament scholar Kurt Aland wrote a book giving reliable dates for the various new testament manuscripts that exist. The dates of these manuscripts range from c. 125 (the B52 papyrus, oldest copy of John fragments) to the introduction of printing in Germany in the 15th century.<sup>62</sup>

Again, I invite the reader to investigate these facts to verify my claim that it is reasonable and plausible to believe that the life, deeds, and teachings of the first-century figure of Joshua of Nazareth were successfully recorded and preserved in the four gospel books.

I recommend you read these articles on Wikipedia:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Historicity\\_of\\_Jesus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Historicity_of_Jesus)

Those articles contain many references that you can research. In short, the information in those articles/pages makes the case that it is entirely reasonable to believe that the four gospels books contain an accurate account of the public life and works of the first-century person of Jesus of Nazareth.

(For a response to typical objections to listening *only* to Joshua as The Standard for knowing God and how human beings ought to live, please see chapter 24, *Some Questions for Biblicians and Christians*.)

## The Gospels Do Not Contain Truth Since They Contain Accounts of Miracles

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<sup>62</sup> Aland, Kurt; Barbara Aland (1995). *The Text of The New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism*. Translated by Erroll F. Rhodes (2nd ed.). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. pp. 40f, 72f. ISBN 0-8028-4098-1.

This is an objection based on a bias against a metaphysical or spiritual reality. Or, stated another way, it is an objection that comes from a “scientific” (more precisely a physicalist) worldview. I have made a strong case in the book that there is a metaphysical or spiritual dimension to human existence. To deny the existence of spiritual or metaphysical things is irrational as we have seen. If there is a metaphysical realm or dimension that contains entities which do not conform to our physical models, then why is it a stretch to believe that those entities could intervene in our realm given the right conditions?

If we are bound only by the “laws of nature” (meaning the physicalist scientific view that all that exists are atoms and molecules, etc.), then how do you fit, for example, the real concept of forgiveness or reason or mathematics into that worldview?

One cannot prove that there is no metaphysical realm. Furthermore, a spiritual realm is the *best* conclusion given the deductive evidence and our human experience. Consider this argument once again.

Forgiveness is real.

Forgiveness is not physical.

Therefore, non-physical things are real.

If I don't love God, I will go to hell—Shouldn't love be a choice and not forced?

This is another popular false belief that prevents people from considering faith in their Father/Creator. It is often stated as, “So God wants to force me to love him, or else I am threatened with the possibility of going to hell.” The false belief in the prior statement is the belief that God chooses where a person will spend their after physical death existence. It is also inaccurate to imply that God “forces” or uses threats to experience love.

The simple answer to the question is we can choose to love or not love whomever we wish, but if we decide not to place our faith in our Father nor love our Father / Creator and others, we forfeit eternal life. Eternal life is something that is earned. We can choose the sure way to Life by placing our faith in our Father and His Son and thus living for truth, rightness, and love; or we can try and earn it without His help by trying to help other people in this life through truth, rightness, and love. If we choose not to love our Father back and we don't do well with living for truth, rightness and by true love, then we send ourselves to the consequences that are just according to our choices. Hell is not a place of eternal torment, but rather a place of justice and termination.

Other than the plain answer that God doesn't choose your after physical life destiny, it can be revealing to ask these questions to those who offer that objection:

- Are you are required being? In other words, are you a necessary being, meaning some universal law exists that says, ‘You must exist’?
- Did you have to exist or could you not have existed?

- Did you cause yourself to exist or was your existence given to you?
- How exactly are you causing your existence to continue right now?

The reasonable person will admit that their existence was given to them or at least they were not - nor currently are - the cause of their existence. (If they claim they are the cause of their existence, ask them to explain that to you with clarity. If they are a physicalist, they will argue that their existence is merely physical and thus you cannot productively move forward with deluded people who deny realities like the existence of reason and forgiveness). Every person has a cause of their existence, the Designer, and Creator of our souls. Existence is a privilege, not a right or a necessity. (Many newly forming human beings have their earthly existence taken away by having their bodies destroyed while being in their mother's womb.) We human beings are not necessary beings, which is to say we did not have to exist.

So, we should be grateful for our existence. Please consider this saying by Alfred Lord Tennyson - "it is better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all." This statement about love is an important and profound truth which points out this critical fact about our human existence – to experience "love" is such a privilege and so special that it is worth the pain of having that love rejected or not returned then never to have experienced it before. Stated another way, to not "love" is not to experience the best of what human life is. Of course I would qualify Mr. Tennyson's "love" as a lesser love, yet still meaningful.

This same concept can be applied in this domain. It is better to have existed and lost my existence than never to have existed at all – this is particularly true when I get to choose if I want to continue to exist or not! Regarding love, not all of us experience the privilege of being loved back!

The next step in addressing this objection is to answer the question, "Is loving other people ever wrong"? In other words, is it wrong to love other people, or is it good and right to love other people? It is true that love is a choice of our free human will, but that does not eliminate the obligation that comes with this essential choice. (See the proper definition of love earlier in this book – love is to value someone at least as high as myself and to treat them selflessly due to compassion.) If a person loves us, are we not obligated to love them back? Or stated another way, if a person loves us, then should we not love them back? Wouldn't the world and our lives be much better if this happened? How would you describe the decision not to return love to someone?

Finally, if I love someone (an adult) and that person does not want to return my love, and that person chooses a destructive path in life even though I have warned them about that path, have I done anything wrong if I allow them to walk that destructive path? Would forcing them off that path honor their free will? Could I force them not to take that path? If I said to that person, "please just come over here and look and see how this path is better than the

one you are choosing,” but they refused to look, am I accountable for their self-destruction?

A final objection might be, “well, God did not have to set up a system where he allows us to choose our after physical death destiny—where we are held accountable for our actions—He could have just had us all go to heaven.” Would that system be fair and just? In that system, Adolf Hitler would be in heaven with Mother Teresa.

No, the simple truth is that God has set up a perfect system where those who care about what is true and right and who want to love and give to others are rewarded; while those who choose not to love others and to primarily take from others, experience just consequences. Included in that system is the ability to choose to be exceptional; to live an exceptional life; to know and understand more and thus be a greater help to others and thus spread God's love, truth, and peace to others. That occurs – that exceptional life - when a person:

- Is grateful to their Father/Creator for being created and thus having life existence;
- Sees themselves for what they indeed are – a flawed, selfish, prideful and fearful being - and gladly takes the offer of forgiveness and freedom He continually extends to them; and
- Chooses, through faith, to love Him and His Son back and thus enter into Life—the exceptional Life that continues after physical death.

The person who turns their back on the One who loves them and who insists on living a selfish life:

- A life characterized by taking instead of giving;
- A life marked by caring more about one's self than others;
- A life characterized by living for material things and self-pleasures instead of trying to help others.

That person will “enjoy” the life given them by their Father, and when their body dies, they will experience fairness and justice, and by their wrong and willful choices, they forfeit Life everlasting—they turned down the exceptional Life and have no one to blame but themselves. Of course, people need to understand the decision of eternal life or not, and if they never heard of The Light nor understood the choice clearly, then God will sort that out.

## Christian Responses to Disciples

Here are some examples of the Christian or Biblicians response to the disciple of Joshua repeating Joshua's truths that the Christian does not agree with:

Example 1:

“You think you know more than leader /pastor /bishop /scholar /author so-and-so? Who do you think you are?”



This is an example of the logical fallacy of appeal to authority. It is a pride based objection not based on reason. The proper reaction to hearing something different would be, “Oh that is a real and interesting difference— I need to check that out”.

Example 2:

“I’ve read the Bible many times; studied it for many years, and I know what it says, and you are wrong.”

This is an example of the logical fallacy of appeal to expert opinion. It is a pride based objection not based on reason. The proper reaction would be to take one of the truths the disciple is stating, and provide reasons why it is wrong.

Example 3:

“Are you saying that all the leaders of the Christian religion are wrong?”

This is an example of the logical fallacy of argument from incredulity. It is a pride based objection not based on reason. The proper reaction would be to consider what Joshua of Nazareth said, find the quote to validate it is accurate and in context and research the claim to see if it is true.

Self-pride and fear and selfishness frequently work together to keep us blind, in darkness and unable to advance in becoming a better human being. For example, if I am afraid to go on a boat due to my fear of drowning, I might say to the person who is offering to take me on a boat, “well, I don't care for that type of boat.” Self-pride prevents me from admitting my fear and causes me to provide an excuse rather than reveal the simple truth that I am afraid of drowning. The person might have a good reason to take me on the boat – perhaps to transfer me to an island where I could help people – but my fear causes my pride to provide an excuse for my selfishness!

Self-pride and fear and selfishness are “enemies” of two critical capabilities of people – love and reason. All three work against our ability to love other people. And all three work against reason to determine what is true and right. And without practicing love, knowing truth and acting rightly, we are truly falling short of being what we were intended to be as human beings...we are failing at life itself! (Of course, the materialistic lie comes along and whispers, “Oh, I am well of and comfortable, so I am not failing at anything...”)

The simple truth is that people who live according to their natural nature of self-pride or fear or selfishness are the reason and cause for most of the suffering, coldness, injustice, pain, neglect, discord, conflict, abuse, and violence – in short, loveless-ness - that occurs in the world each day. I challenge the reader to think this through and consider the possibility that you are part of the problem rather than part of the solution...and then ask, “how can I overcome and be free of my nature of self-pride and fear and selfishness and the hurt that causes other people?”

Can you experience this world and watch the news and say, "Oh, people are doing well"? Is your standard so low (or in reality, you have no standard to judge such things), or are you in such a self-made bubble of self-pride or fear or selfishness that you refuse to see things how they are? Perhaps your standard

to judge how YOUR life is going is, "If I am comfortable, well fed and entertained, all is well in the world." That kind of thinking is the epitome of a selfish life:

- A life with little or no consideration for others;
- A life lived in the darkness of self-pride and fear and selfishness;
- A life without any or very little true love;
- A "life" that will lead to self-condemnation and destruction;
- A "life" that forfeits Life everlasting.

Is that the kind of life you want to live? Do you want to miss the most beautiful aspect of human life? Are you sure no one will hold us accountable for how we live the life we have been given? Are you confident that by ignoring and denying the Standard given, you are exempt from being accountable? Do you want to reject reason and thus deny the simple truths in this section? I urge you not to do that and instead have a genuinely open mind, meaning you are not afraid to consider new things—meaning that you are not scared to look at the Light.

### Why didn't Jesus stay on the earth?

Some skeptics ask, "how come Jesus of Nazareth did not stay on the earth to fix things?" The answer is simple and is addressed by the following simple question.

Did the people who were leaders or in authority where he came the first time he visited welcome him and listen to him and want him to stay?

If you know his story, he was killed by the people. It is not like he was welcomed and put on a throne then just decided to leave! What good would be done to stick around when people didn't want you around and were always trying to find ways to destroy you? If he stuck around after his resurrection, they would seek to kill him again and again and again...!

If you think Jesus would be welcomed today, then you have created a "jesus" of your own making and are ignoring the facts that the historical Jesus reveals. I can testify that as one of his followers, I am not welcomed by people, and I am only one of his students.

### 'Oh, You Are a Red Letter Christian'

Because many Bible publishers have printed Joshua's words in red ink instead of black ink to rightly set them apart from the other voices in the Bible, many Christians will put disciples in a box they call "red letter Christians." Sadly, these Christians or Biblians cannot distinguish between a Person and an ink color. Stated another way, since the Christians/Biblians have come to believe that a book (and by extension, its pages and letters and ink) represents God (due to listening to Paul more than Jesus), they cannot distinguish between the letters/words on the page and the subject the letters/words address.

Therefore, when they hear a disciple articulate that we listen to and follow Jesus of Nazareth and not the Bible, they say, "oh, you are one of those red letter Christians."

No, we are disciples of the Person described by his own words in the four gospel books, and some Bible publishers have wisely chosen to print The Light's words in red ink to set them apart from the other author's opinions.

### Answers to Section and Chapter Opening Questions:

Let us complete this chapter by directly answering the opening section and chapter questions. Here they are again:

- You cannot prove God exists;

A designer is required to account for the complex physical nature of our human bodies for example. A First Cause is required to account for the metaphysical realities like reason, forgiveness, and love. The evidence points to God existing, and the conclusions of mathematical probability science also support the existence of God. A Man some 2,000 years ago did some pretty amazing things to validate his Message, and part of his Message is that God exists!

- Why doesn't God reveal himself if he/she exists?

He did, and he does. He sent His Messenger some 2,000 years ago. He also reveals himself in a spiritual sense, to those who choose to believe Him and place their faith in him. God is revealed in His Creation, especially human beings. Wasn't Joshua of Nazareth revealing in the clearest way possible that God does exist? Joshua did say, "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father." Joshua's miracles validate that he did represent the Creator/Father and was uniquely connected to the Creator.

- How could the Christian God exist if he is both all-powerful and all-loving? Really, why is there so much suffering in the world?

That false belief has been answered and exposed as false. There is so much suffering in the world mostly because human beings refuse to love one another.

Human suffering is caused first by our perception of our lives. Pain – both physical and spiritual – is caused by people or natural events. There are no "acts of God" which bring destruction or suffering.

- How could a loving God send people to hell?

He could not and He does not. Rather, people send themselves to justice and destruction.

- You cannot prove that the gospels are reliable eyewitness accounts of the person of Joshua of Nazareth;

You cannot prove that any written works in that time frame or earlier are not contrived, so be consistent and throw out all those works as well. For that matter, throw out all the books up until several hundred years ago. Having four written accounts by four separate authors of the same subject – which accounts mostly corroborate each other – is substantial evidence that the four accounts

are authentic, accurate and reliable accounts. Having a bias against a metaphysical or spiritual reality when we have strong evidence that it exists is not a valid reason to dismiss the gospels.

- Version 2: Are any books of antiquity accurate or reliable accounts of events at the time the book was written?

Most reasonable people will answer yes. Therefore, if other books of antiquity are respected as being accurate accounts of events, then should not the four gospel book also be given that benefit of the doubt as well, especially since there are four accounts of the same subject?

- The gospel accounts cannot be accurate accounts or reliable because they contain accounts of miracles;

Having an anti-metaphysical bias is not an argument. Metaphysical things exist – like reason, logic, forgiveness, love, our soul or spirit – therefore it is reasonable to believe that there is more to that metaphysical realm which could include a Creator/Designer being who could act in this realm under certain conditions.

Miracles are not ordinary by definition, but it is unreasonable to discount that they could never have happened. The only people who can reasonably (within their wrong worldview) discount the possibility of miracles are those who are physicalists who also unreasonably deny the non-physical nature of things like reason, the human soul, and forgiveness. In other words, they are those who insist that a computer's hardware can account for its software applications and functions.

- But all those people cannot believe something that is wrong!

Yes, history does prove that vast majorities of people have believed wrong things. The earth being flat is one such example. Other examples include the belief that metaphysical causes caused the black plague. As science has advanced and revealed true causes behind physical events, it could be said that most people who lived in the distant past had wrong beliefs about many or even most physical causes. Thus, just because so many Christians (and people of other religions) have a wrong understanding about God and they misrepresent the living God by the one they claim as their triune god, does not mean God does not exist. Furthermore, just because people of the past had wrong/erroneous beliefs about metaphysical causes does not mean that a spiritual reality does not exist.

- Can a person prove love exists?

Yes, because it does occur on the earth between people *and* it is not physical but rather metaphysical or spiritual. The most important “thing” that exists regarding human beings is love, and it is not physical, and it must have a first cause. Or stated another way, whoever created human beings gave us the capacity to love and thus it must be relevant to that creator. And no irrational physicalists, "love" properly defined is not produced by chemicals or animal instincts! (For that matter, what is the cause of "animal instincts"?)

## What Exactly Is Wrong With Jesus' Teachings?

Many who oppose Joshua of Nazareth do so on false grounds. What I mean by that is they use the logical fallacies of the Straw Man or Hasty Generalization to apply criticism. Stated yet another way, they shoot down the false "christ" of Christianity to make their points, or they rightly reject wrong Christian theology/beliefs thinking those wrong Christian beliefs or practices represent the real, historical Joshua of Nazareth. What they don't typically do is to quote Joshua from the four gospels and criticize HIS teaching. And they indeed do not quote his sayings like, "love one another as I have loved you" or "Treat others the way you want to be treated."

This simple discussion below can get to the bottom of the issue IF the person who is a critic cares about truth and uses reason and logic well to find it.

1. What specific belief or practice of Christians do you think is wrong?
  - o When the person identifies something that has no basis in the real, historical Joshua of Nazareth's teachings, the following must be said.
2. "OK, you are right about that, but Jesus of Nazareth did not teach that nor did he set up nor endorse that practice. In other words, Jesus of Nazareth is not responsible for that silly thing or that wrong."

Once a disciple can work through two or three of these erroneous beliefs - and if the person is going to allow reason to guide them and they genuinely have an open mind - they ought to get to the place of actually listening to the real, historical Joshua of Nazareth.

So, I ask, what exactly is wrong with Joshua's teachings? *He made it clear that truth and rightness and love are the most important things we human beings ought to be concerned with, and so I ask again, what exactly is wrong with that?* A reasonable person with a working conscience will have no reply other than, "nothing."

Please consider that a moment.

If nothing wrong can be found in Jesus' primary teachings in the four gospels, why not listen to him? Or even if you find something you think is wrong, is it reasonable to dismiss all the right and good things he taught and lived out? Why reject him on the basis of all the wrong that people have created using his name/person? He is not to blame for the rubbish created and practiced in his name so why reject him on that basis? Nor is he responsible for his actual follower's failures or weaknesses—our failures and shortcomings do not nullify who he is or the truths that he spoke or the things that he did.

The only reasonable cause for the rejection of the real, historical Jesus of Nazareth would be his claims about who he is and what the One he claimed to represent wants. And, if it is accurate that the essentials that Jesus taught were *that truth and rightness and love are the most important things we human beings ought to be concerned with*, what does that mean for people who reject that?

Furthermore, if ultimately what the One he represents desires is that the highest form of love be lived out among people, what does that say about people who reject that desire? Perhaps the concept of accountability has a lot to do with the rejection of Joshua of Nazareth?