

BIG QUESTIONS OF FAITH

3 APOLOGETICS FOR KIDS



ST STEPHENS BIBLE CHURCH KIDS DEPT

WHY APOLOGETICS?



This is a 3-part apologetics series for kids.

Apologetics will help children

- KNOW what they believe
- BE CONFIDENT about what they believe
- BE ABLE TO DEFEND what they believe.

This series will cover 3 topics:

- How do we know God is real?
The universe is here
- How do we know God is real?
The universe is designed on purpose
- How do we know Christianity is true?
The historical evidence for the resurrection

Each lesson plan has different introduction ideas to choose from so that you can capture their imagination right at the start

The last question we will tackle in 6 parts

LESSON PLAN

Introduce the idea...

Idea 1 Who put that there?

Have a hidden cupcake/ ball/ wooden spoon etc somewhere and "discover" its existence with the kids, asking them "who put it there?". Use the following phrases as you express your curiosity - "It couldn't have just appeared - could it?" "How could that just be here?" "I just don't understand - its not like it could have just got here on itself"

Idea 2 Have you ever heard?

Say, "One reason people often give for not believing in Christianity is because Science has shown that Christianity is wrong."

Ask the kids - "Have you ever heard anyone say this? What have they said?"

Discuss what they think about this, link it into the teaching by saying " Today we are going to see that Science actually proves God is real."

Idea 3 Playdough

Give children playdough and ask them to create something (can also be played as a playdough Pictionary game) Spend some time talking to the kids about what they have made with the following leading questions:

Could the playdough have made itself into that on it's own?

Why are they able to make something out of the playdough?

How are they different to the playdough?

"I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else."

CS Lewis



BIBLE DISCOVERY

Open Bibles or have large format passage print outs

Read Genesis 1:1-2 and answer these questions

Who made the heavens and the earth?

God

What was there BEFORE the heavens and the earth were made?

Nothing but God

So what?

Science agrees with Genesis 1:1-2 that God created the universe BECAUSE

- Nothing comes from Nothing
- Everything that begins to exist(or be) has a cause
- The universe began to exist (or be)
- Therefore, the universe must have a cause
- This cause must be timeless and powerful and not material (made of stuff)

Which sounds a lot like God. Let's see how this argument works.

Hold up pictures of things that were made (A painting, a building, a sandcastle, a cake etc
And ask the kids " Who made these?" Everything that is, was made. (If the kids ask about God being made - remind them about vs 2, He is both timeless AND powerful AND Spirit which makes Him able to make

So when people talk about the world exploding into being - that actually proves God exists, because something (or someone) had to CAUSE that explosion. Remember it had to be DIFFERENT to what was made - so outside of time, more powerful and not made of matter

Applying the Apologetic

How does this change the way you feel about God?

What can we pray for from the lesson? (Sorry, Thank you, Help me, Help others, You are amazing because...)

LESSON PLAN

Introduce the idea...

Idea 1 Balancing act

Play Jenga (or an alternative balancing game) to introduce the idea of the preciseness of the universe

Alternative balancing games:

Weigh on a scale - set a weight and get the kids to load the scale to try get it just right

Try get children to balance standing up from a sitting back to back position

Idea 2 Tune it in

Bring a dial tune radio to your class and ask them to take turns trying to tune the radio station in without any static background noise. This introduces the idea or the precision of care needed for the universe to exist and work the way it does

Idea 3 put it back together

Take apart something - a watch, a toaster, a set lego object etc and try get the children to put it back together. Ask which parts need to go in first or how they fit together so the object works. This is to introduce the idea of design.

"What can be more foolish than to think that all this rare fabric of heaven and earth could come by chance, when all the skill of art is not able to make an oyster!"

Jeremy Taylor



BIBLE DISCOVERY

Open Bibles or have large format passage print outs

Read Psalm 8:3-6 and answer these questions

What does this passage tell us about who made the moon and the stars?

God

What does this passage tell us about man's role in God's creation?

Man is made to rule over creation

So what?

Science agrees with Psalm 8:3-6 that God created the universe with a design

- The fine tuning of the universe is due to either be accident or design.
- The fine tuning cannot be by accident - because of the detail needed to work and that people needed to rule
- Therefore, the universe is due to design.

Share these amazing design facts of our world:

Did you know that your eye have 120 million rods in the retina. These rods pick up light and send signals to our brains that process those bits of light into images.

Did you know that leaf cutting ants in the amazon live with a fungus under ground. That fungus sends out signals to the ant to tell it which tree's leaves to cut. When the tree starts to defend itself by turning sour, the fungus then tells the ants which tree to move on to. This way the fungus grows, the ants that eat the fungus are fed AND the tree is not gobbled up completely

Did you know that the moon is in just the right spot for us? It is the pull of the Moon's gravity on the Earth that holds our planet in place. Without the Moon stabilising our tilt, it is possible that the Earth's tilt on a 23.5 degrees axis - it could vary wildly. It would move from no tilt (which means no seasons) to a large tilt (which means extreme weather and even ice ages

Applying the Apologetic

How does this change the way you feel about God?

What can we pray for from the lesson? (Sorry, Thank you, Help me, Help others, You are amazing because...)

3. HOW DO I KNOW CHRISTIANITY IS TRUE?

THE HISTORICAL EVIDENCE FOR THE RESURRECTION















1 Corinthians 15:13-19

Paul is very clear in his letter to the Corinthians that if Jesus didn't rise from the dead, there is no hope and no point to our faith. It is important for our kids to know that the only reason we are Christians and not Muslims, Hindu's Jewish or just nothing is because of the historicity of the resurrection. The argument for this one is bigger - so we won't do an intro idea.

The argument goes like this:

- Jesus life, death and resurrection is one of the most historically supported FACTS of history.
- If his life, death and resurrection are facts - so are his teachings about himself and God.

List your class by name - What growth would you like to see in them after this lesson? Spend some time praying for that growth.

BIBLE DISCOVERY & LESSON PLAN

Open Bibles or have large format passage print outs

Read 1 Corinthians 15:13-19 and answer these questions

What does this passage tell us about what is the most important fact about Jesus?
That he really did rise from the dead?

Why is that fact so important?

If he didn't rise from the dead, then no one will, which means there is no point in being a Christian

How do we know its FACT?

- Weight of Evidence!

Have 2 bags (or pillow cases) and explain that the one pillow case is the evidence for Jesus' life, death and resurrection, and the other is for the Roman Emperor Caesar. Fill the Jesus bag with very heavy items and the Caesar one with lighter and less stuff. The ratio should be 240 (Jesus) to 1 (Caesar) Get the kids to try to move the bags. The idea is for them to feel the weight of historical documents.

- Time of records!

Ask them to play the 1 min game. Get them to stand up and ask them to not look at their watches BUT guess when 1 mins has passed. They can shout out their name and sit down when they think the minute has passed. Afterwards ask them how do they think time affects our memories. Let them know that the EARLIEST written record we have for Caesar is 1200 years AFTER he lived. BUT for Jesus is only 40 years. (Some of those who had seen and known Jesus were still alive and said what is being written down is true!)

- A matter of life or death - eyewitnesses. Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-8

Ask the children to help you list ALL the disciples who Jesus called (Minus Judas Iscariot) Peter, James, John, Andrew, Philip, Matthew, Thomas, James - the son of Alphaeus, Bartholomew, Judas Thaddeus, and Simon the Zealot, Mathias

Add Paul's name to the list.

Then one by one, explain how they all died - Using this repeated phrase.

"Because they told people Jesus really did rise from the death, and when threatened with death they refused to lie... " (ie ...Peter was also killed on a cross)

James - beheaded, John - forced to live on a stranded prison island, Andrew - died on a cross, Philip - hanged, Matthew - Not known Thomas - killed in India, James - the son of Alphaeus - had stones thrown at him, Bartholomew - killed in India, Judas Thaddeus - killed in Persian, and Simon the Zealot - died on a cross, Mathias - had stones thrown at him
Paul - killed by the Romans

continued...

BIBLE DISCOVERY

How do we know its FACT continued?

- A matter of life or death - eyewitnesses. Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-8

Explain that apart from the disciples and Paul, 500 OTHER eyewitnesses saw Jesus after he had risen from the dead. They were mostly around when the Bible was being written, so could have been called in to testify at court.

- People who didn't chose to follow Jesus wrote about him!

Easy to imagine someone who loved Jesus to write about him BUT actually there are lots of people who decided NOT to love Jesus who wrote about His life, death and resurrection. They have weird names: Tacitus, Josephus, Pliny the younger, Suetonius.

- No other way!

The other options to Jesus coming back from the dead are:

- He didn't die to start off with - Some people think that Jesus just fainted, and people thought he died, buried him BUT then he got up, moved the stone and came out of the tomb by himself. The problem with this idea is that he was very badly hurt, bleeding and tired before the cross even, so how could he do that heavy lifting AND the soldier at the cross only had 1 job - to make sure the prisoner was dead. His life depended on that AND he tested Jesus by checking he was really dead. Some other people think that someone swopped places with Jesus and they died instead. But Jesus was guarded the whole time and everyone of his friends ran away from him when the Romans arrested him.
- His disciples stole his body and lied - we are told about this lie that was started by the Jewish council after Jesus rose from the dead. The problem is it doesn't explain him being seen by so many people, alive and eating. It also doesn't make sense because of how many of the disciples died promising they saw him alive.

Applying the Apologetic

So, given ALL the evidence - Do you think Jesus really rose from the dead?

He also said the ONLY way to have our sin forgiven and go to heaven is to trust in Him

How does this change the way you feel about Jesus and your relationship with Him?

What can we pray for from the lesson? (Sorry, Thank you, Help me, Help others, You are amazing because...)