

Questions for reflection, application, and discussion

1. In John 5 Jesus teaches that we shouldn't accept any claim on its own, but he appeals to the testimony of other witnesses to validate the veracity of his claim to be God. This is consistent with the teaching throughout the Bible which calls us to root our faith in objective and verifiable truth.
 - a. In his message Pastor Mike said that Christian faith is often presented as a matter of blind faith that is disconnected from, or even opposed to objective truth. In your experience is this true? Expound on your answer.
 - b. If this is true, why do you think that religious faith is so often presented in a way that is so contradictory to what the Bible teaches about the nature of Biblical faith? Where does this view of religious faith come from?
 - c. Why is this an important issue? What are the dangers of believing that faith is disconnected from objective truth, and why must we root our faith and verifiable objective truth?
2. 1st Peter 3:15 calls followers of Christ to *"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have."* If you were challenged about the truthfulness of the Christian faith would you be able to do so? If not, what do you need to do or study to help you become more prepared?
3. Numerous passages throughout the Bible teach that our faith should be rooted in objective and verifiable truth. For example, 1st John 1:1 tells us that our faith is rooted in *"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life."* However, Hebrews 11:1 teaches, *"now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see."*
 - a. Should our faith be rooted in what has been heard, seen, and touched – objective truth that we can test, or in a certainty in what we cannot see? Are these contradictory or complementary ideas about the nature of biblical faith? If complementary, how to these two ideas work together?
 - b. Practically, what does it look like to live out the type of faith type in Hebrews 11:1?
4. As followers of Christ are we called to take a "leap of faith" that causes us step out beyond what we can see and or understand? What is the difference between a leap of faith that is a leap into the dark and a leap of faith that is a step toward the light?
5. In John 5:40 Jesus teaches that the real reason most people don't come to him isn't because of intellectual questions or doubts, but it's because they don't want to.
 - a. Can what we want to be true unconsciously shape what we believe to be true? If so, can you think of examples outside of religion where this happens?
 - b. In his message Pastor Mike argued that many, if not most people who use intellectual arguments to reject Christianity are ultimately hiding behind those arguments to reject God's authority—which they don't want to be true. Do you agree with this? Why or why not?
 - c. If and when this is the case, how should we argue for the truthfulness of the gospel with those for whom their intellectual arguments are likely not the ultimate issue?