

VALID FAITH 1: Must I Turn My Brain Off to Be a Christian?

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September 6, 2026

Key Scriptures: 1 Peter 3:15; Hebrews 11:1, 3, 6; John 20:24–29

BIG IDEA: Valid faith is not afraid of questions.

VALID FAITH BUMPER

Welcome ****handouts****

Valid Faith Series - Week 1

VALID FAITH Title Art

If faith is TRUE... it should survive investigation.

Next few weeks - questions Christians
sometimes get nervous about.

Real. Reasonable. Can stand under pressure.

Series Outline

- September 13: CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?
- September 20: DID JESUS REALLY RISE
FROM THE DEAD?
- September 27: CAN I STILL TRUST JESUS
AFTER CHURCH HURT?

3 asks:

1. COME WITH QUESTIONS.

2. BRING A FRIEND WITH QUESTIONS.

3. GRAB 30 HONEST QUESTIONS.

30 real questions... short/simple answers... God, science, Bible, suffering, doubt, church hurt...

Grab one for yourself. Share one with your friends.

I DO NOT WANT A BORROWED FAITH

Pastor... Bible... church most of my life...
eventually I have to ask:

Do I believe because I was TOLD?

Or because I believe it is TRUE?

Borrowed faith... from parents... pastors...
denomination... culture...

Works UNTIL life hits: death... unanswered
prayer... hard question... church hurt...

NOT WANT A BORROWED FAITH.

I want to discover a Valid Faith.

What about you? Can you relate?

THE QUESTIONS ARE REAL

- 29% of U.S. adults are now religiously unaffiliated — identifying as atheist, agnostic, or “nothing in particular.” (Pew)
- 60% of unaffiliated say questioning religious teachings is an extremely or very important reason they are nonreligious. (PEW)
- 42% of American adults say they have deconstructed the faith of their youth.
- Among Christians, 37% say they have deconstructed the faith they grew up with. (Barna)

DECONSTRUCTION: Taking apart the faith you inherited and reexamining what you believe.

Good and Bad to this...

-sometimes good, true beliefs get discarded along with the things that genuinely needed to

be questioned.

We are dealing with...

ANCIENT FAITH IN A MODERN WORLD.

People wrestle -science/evolution/evidence...

Genesis... miracles... morality... ancient Bible...

That is why I am calling this message:

Valid Faith Week 1: Must I Turn My Brain Off to Be a Christian?

Your questions are real. They deserve DEEPER THOUGHT - not less.

There is a tension between Reason & Faith
Compartmentalize – Brain vs Heart.

Think vs Feel

What if God's Word shows us a better way?

1 Peter 3:15 NIV

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have."

Peter assumes: HOPE... and a REASON for that hope.

Think about your Faith!

REASON IS NOT THE ENEMY OF FAITH.

Connect to the reason you have hope.

Hebrews 11:1 NIV

“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.”

HOPE = WHAT I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO.

FAITH = TRUSTING GOD WITH THAT HOPE.

Faith = TRUST. So...

WHO ARE YOU TRUSTING - AND CAN HE BE TRUSTED?

STRIP IT ALL AWAY

Christianity makes MANY claims. Not all equally central.

Christians disagree:
Genesis/age earth...

baptism...

free will...

spiritual gifts...

end times... SECONDARY ISSUES...

Important? In varying degrees, YES.

The reason for my hope? NO.

STRIP THEM AWAY FOR NOW

Strip away denomination... political tribe...

worship style... theological labels...

WHAT IS LEFT?

Better question... Who is left? JESUS.

Who are you trusting and can He be trusted.

Christian faith = trusting HIM.

IS JESUS TRUSTWORTHY?

This leads us to God's Word..

Then let us reason through God's Word... not
panic at questions.

**REASONING EXERCISE #1 - WHY SOMETHING
RATHER THAN NOTHING?**

Old question. Answer?

God created or Big Bang?

How did the universe come to be?

Hebrews 11:3 NIV

“By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.”

Visible world made from what cannot be seen.

Visible made from invisible.

Faith teaches this... Science teaches this...

Modern science: atoms/subatomic realities...

invisible building blocks under visible matter.

**SCRIPTURE REVEALED A TRUTH SCIENCE LATER
STUMBLED UPON about 1800 years later.**

Faith explains how there is a universe.

Science explains how there is a universe.

But WHY is there a universe?

Why matter? energy? laws? universe?

WHY PEOPLE? HEARTS? SOULS? DREAMS?

Science can describe HOW. (mechanism)

Science can't describe WHY. (purpose)

Faith explains HOW & WHY.

Mechanism & purpose.

REASONING EXERCISE #2 - WHAT MAKES EVIL, EVIL?

Child abuse... trafficking... torture... not just "I dislike it." ACTUALLY WRONG - EVIL.
WHY?

If we are only matter, chemistry, cells, impulses,
and survival instincts... what makes one set of
impulses **good** and another set **evil**?

Science can describe what happens in the brain.
Science can describe behavior.
Science can describe what helps a species
survive.

But science by itself does not tell you: **CHILD
ABUSE IS EVIL. WHY?**

**FAITH SAYS MORAL TRUTH IS REAL BECAUSE IT
IS GROUNDED IN A MORAL GOD.**

More questions like this?

30 HONEST QUESTIONS.

Short. Simple. Start investigating.

I saw this pop up on facebook...

HUGH JACKMAN - DINNER TABLE

Jackman: If you put Buddha, Jesus Christ, Socrates, Shakespeare, Arjuna, Krishna at a dinner table together, I can't see them having an argument.

Nice thought... all welcome... acceptance...
but THINK DEEPER.

JESUS DID NOT COME JUST TO TAKE A SEAT AT THE TABLE.

Everyone at table died. Jesus died too...

JESUS DIED FOR EVERYBODY AT THE TABLE.

And Christianity says HE ROSE. Jesus is different.
NOT JUST A TEACHER.

CAN JESUS BE TRUSTED?

One follower had to decide that for himself...

Thomas Followed Jesus... HOPE.

Jesus dies... DISAPPOINTED / hope crushed.

Friends: "We saw Him."

Trouble TRUSTING them. "Unless I see..."

Thomas investigates. Jesus meets him in it.

Jesus shows up... stretches out hands... invites him to investigate.

John 20:28 NIV

"Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!""

Notice what Jesus does not do...

-no lecture.

-no guilt trip.

-no turning away.

Imagine - Jesus standing there... open arms.

What do you even do with all of this?

PRACTICE 3 STEPS: REASON → TRUST → HOPE

1. COME WITH YOUR QUESTIONS

Do not bury them. NAME them. Ask them.

2. INVESTIGATE - DO NOT ASSUME

Science disproved faith? Bible changed? Genesis impossible? All religions same? → LOOK CLOSER.

3. KEEP COMING BACK TO JESUS

Not every question carries equal weight. Who is Jesus? What did He claim? Is He trustworthy?

We want to help you take these steps.

What if we stripped everything in religion away until we were just left with Jesus?

"IS THAT ALL YOU NEED?" MEME

"Is that all you need?" "YES."

Strip away denomination... politics... labels... possessions... ability to answer everything...

WHAT IS THE REASON FOR THE HOPE YOU HAVE? IS IT JESUS?

Other questions matter. But underneath it all...
JESUS IS THE CENTER.

IF THIS IS TRUE...

Jesus cannot be one more thing in the cart.

**JESUS IS NOT SOMETHING I ADD TO MY LIFE.
HE BECOMES THE CENTER.**

He is the center... I follow.

...shame loses grip.

...I serve others... forgive others.

VALID FAITH SHOULD CHANGE THE WAY I LIVE.

MUSICIANS

IS JESUS WORTH TRUSTING?

1. If so... PRAY

“God, I do not have all the answers, but I believe You are worth the search.”

2. IF so... START A CONVERSATION

Connection Card / text me / 30 Honest Questions. Let us reason together.

3. If so... TAKE ONE STEP TOWARD JESUS

Investigate 30 honest questions.

Come back. Bring a friend. Trust Jesus. Return to Jesus.