

# Questions – Role Play

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## Episode 2: Who do you trust?

### Leader's Questions

**1. Why does Chris say that he trusts the Bible?**

Because it is the Word of God; it is God revealing himself to humanity.

**2. Why does Chris believe the Bible to be the Word of God?**

Because the Bible says it is. Chris points to 2 Timothy 3:16, but there are other texts you could go to including: 2 Peter 3:14-16 (Peter saying that Paul's letters are scripture, from God). This does begin to move towards questions about the canon of scripture and how we know that we have the 'right' books in the New Testament, but that will have to wait until episode 5.

**3. What do you think about Chris' reasons for believing the Bible is worth putting his trust in?**

This aims to bring out both their understanding of what Chris has said but also their own personal viewpoint.

**4. What does Damien mean by a circular argument?**

A circular argument is when you try to prove something by itself. In most situations circular arguments are not good or helpful (e.g. I should be able to stay out later because I have the right to do that). But at root all knowledge has a foundation. Three popular possible foundations for knowledge are reason, experience and revelation. If I say I know things because I reason about them, then I can't escape the point that my reason has told me this. Or if I say I use my reason because in my experience my reason is the best gauge of truth, then in actual fact I am using my experience to validate my reason, so my experience is my ultimate authority. Basically, we simply all must choose which circle we want to spin round!

**5. What reason does Damien give for not believing the Bible?**

He says because what is described within it doesn't appear to be reasonable.

**6. How does Damien define 'reasonable'? and how does he come up with that definition?**

Damien's definition of 'reasonable' is: 'If you can prove something to be true,' but he comes up with this definition using his reason. In some ways there is nothing wrong with that but Damien doesn't accept or seem to recognise that his reliance on reason is, at foundation, circular. Damien's definition also raises the question of what proof is appropriate for religious belief. Truth claims in different areas (e.g. science or a court of law) are 'proven' in different ways. We will revisit this question in series 2 when discussing science and faith.

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## Leader's Questions

7. Holly is quite rude to Damien saying: “So either you take the reliable historical scripture as your starting point, or you have to make stuff up yourself using your own puny sofa-football-pundit brain.” Overlooking her rudeness for now, what is she trying to get at do you think?

In truth, our own understanding of the world (and even ourselves) is extremely limited and often wrong, so the atheist assertion that human reason provides a better foundation for knowledge begins to look fragile.

8. Holly acknowledges that reason and experience have a role in belief but how do they fit with reading the Bible as the Word of God, God's revelation of himself?

- There is good evidence to support the historical accuracy of the New testament (reason);
- And the Bible makes sense as a coherent whole (reason);
- It helps people to experience truly meaningful life. The fact that a relationship with God satisfies our longings suggests, perhaps, this is what we were made for (experience).

But these things support God revealing himself through his word. They have a supporting but not ultimately foundational role.

9. Why might evidence be a better word to use than proof?

Proof carries too many connotations with mathematics and science (which we'll come back to in series 2); by talking about evidence we can shift the discussion to what might be reasonable evidence to conclude something in different circumstances. In deciding if Jesus existed and said he was the son of God, historical record is vital evidence (and we have lots of it). Even witness statements that he rose from the dead are important evidence (even if people struggle with the idea of miracles. We'll revisit these issues in subsequent episodes of this series.

10. What is good about the way in which Holly and Chris end the discussion with Damien before the final car chase?

They offer to read the Bible with Damien – reading the Bible with Christians brings together reason experience and revelation, but provides the place for the spirit to use the Bible to convince the non-Christian.

# Questions - Role Play

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## Role Play for

In turns have a conversation, with one person playing the role of a Christian and the other a non-Christian. Start with one of the following statements that could come from a non-Christian friend:

- 'Why do you think the Bible is from God?'
- 'You talk about the Bible, but it's really your own reason which you're relying on!'
- 'Surely there are some things I can know without trusting things, say for example, I know that water boils at 100C.'

Remind them that they are focussing on responding with a question back to the other person.

If these conversations don't go well, don't worry and tell the people in your group not to worry, it is likely that it's the first time most of them have tried any of this and like anything else it takes time to get used to.

You could finish your time together by thinking through one of the role plays as a group, pooling ideas of questions that could be asked.

# Questions - Role Play

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## Group Member Questions

1. Why does Chris say that he trusts the Bible?
2. Why does Chris believe the Bible to be the Word of God?
3. What do you think about Chris' reasons for believing the Bible is worth putting his trust in?
4. What does Damien mean by a circular argument?
5. What reason does Damien give for not believing the Bible?
6. How does Damien define 'reasonable'? and how does he come up with that definition?
7. Holly is quite rude to Damien saying: "So either you take the reliable historical scripture as your starting point, or you have to make stuff up yourself using your own puny sofa-football-pundit brain." Overlooking her rudeness for now, what is she trying to get at do you think?
8. Holly acknowledges that reason and experience have a role in belief but how do they fit with reading the Bible as the Word of God, God's revelation of himself?
9. Why might evidence be a better word to use than proof?
10. What is good about the way in which Holly and Chris end the discussion with Damien before the final car chase?

## Role Plays

In turns have a conversation, with one person playing the role of a Christian and the other a non-Christian. Start with one of the following statements that could come from a non-Christian friend:

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- 'You talk about the Bible, but it's really your own reason which you're relying on!'
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