

# A Biblical View of Christianity

By Harvey Solganick

## Pre-Session Assignments

One week before the session, students will take the following assignments.

### Assignment One

Read the comments related to John 1:1–14 in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to write and share definitions of *exclusivity* and *inclusivity*, *inerrancy* and *inspiration of the Word*, *logos* and *theos*, *theism* and *deism*, *children of God* and *family of God*, *fellowship*, *faith* and *grace*, and *being born again*. Use an online Bible dictionary (such as [www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/](http://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/)) or ask a church leader for a printed one).

### Assignment Two

Read the comments related to Isaiah 1:18–20 in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to write and share definitions of *sin*, the *fall*, the *gospel*, the *Trinity*, the *resurrection*, *Christian reasoning*, and the *law of noncontradiction*. Use an online Bible dictionary (such as [www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/](http://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/)) or ask a church leader for a printed one).

### Assignment Three

Read the comments related to 1 John 1:3–7 in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to write and share definitions of *faith and work*, the *fruit of the Spirit*, *happiness and joy*, the nature of fellowship and discipleship, the *light of Christ*, the *blood of Christ*, and the *church* body. Use an online Bible dictionary (such as [www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/](http://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/)) or ask a church leader for a printed one).

## Scripture to Memorize

*"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself."* Luke 10:27

## Session Goal

Consistent with God's Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit—by the end of this session, disciples will trust and obey the Word of God, the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and apply their personal relationships as Christians in fellowship with Christ, the Father, the Holy Spirit, and with other believers, taking the good news to unbelievers locally and globally.

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Administratively, Harvey was a former division chair of the Communications Department within the Dallas County Community College District and was the founding headmaster for Prestonwood Academy of Dallas. He serves as coordinator of Discipleship University as a member of First Baptist Church of Dallas. Born in Brooklyn, New York, he is the son of Russian and Romanian Jews who immigrated to America in 1914.

His PhD is from the University of Texas at Arlington. He has traveled, lectured, and served on missions throughout Germany, Sweden, Russia, the Ukraine, Israel, Thailand, and China. His publications include *Our Holy God and Sinful Man: Truths of the Tanakh and Torah*; "Worldview Apologetics," *The Encyclopedia of Christian Civilization*; and *Critical Thinking for the Constructive Christian*.

## It's in the Book

30 minutes

### Real-Life Scenario

You are excited about the first day of college. You are attending your first class, the philosophy of religion, after years of schooling guided by your parents and your church. The professor invites the students to have open discussion about religion. The one faith that is off limits is Christianity, since the professor considers it based on exclusive, one-way thinking. You are not allowed to claim the Bible as the inerrant, inspired Word of God, claim a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, or refer to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. How can you approach your classmates and professor in the course?

### A Biblical View of Christianity: The Word of God

Read John 1:1–14 out loud.

#### Studying the Passage, vv. 1–14

**Verses 1–3. In the beginning was the Word . . . Word was God . . . came into being.** The Word (Greek, *logos*) was God (Greek, *theos*) existing before creation and before your creation. God spoke the world and the universe into creation. From *logos* we derive the words *logic* or *order*. From the root of the word *theos*, we get *theism*, a belief in a supernatural being. Thus, even natural revelation recognizes the design or order of the universe having been created by some supernatural act, by a sovereign Creator. However, this creative act alone does not verify a special revelation, a personal God who interacts with you in a relationship.

**Verses 4–5. In Him was life . . . the Light of men . . . darkness did not comprehend it.** Just as God breathed life into the universe, He breathed life into Adam, the first man, and breathed life into you. However, the natural man does not have this special relationship until he or she accepts God's Son, Jesus Christ, the light of the world, in the spirit of being born again.

**Verses 6–9. There came a man sent from God . . . John . . . a witness . . . about the Light, so that all might believe through him . . . the true Light . . . enlightens every man.** John the Baptist announced the coming of the Messiah, who brings hope of salvation and eternal life for all who will accept Jesus. Although some will reject Christ, those who accept Him will have true fellowship with Him as well as with the Father and other fellow believers.

**Verses 10–13. He was in the world . . . the world did not know Him. . . . those who were His own did not receive Him. . . . as many as received Him . . . He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name . . . born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.** Acceptance of Jesus Christ means you are born again spiritually by accepting the Son of God, the Son of Man, since Christ is fully human and fully divine. We are adopted into His family as children of God with a special relationship to Jesus Christ.

**Verse 14. And the Word became flesh . . . dwelt among us . . . we saw His glory . . . the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.** We are saved by grace, accepting the truth of Jesus Christ as truly God in all His glory. Christ came to show us how to be human, sending the Holy Spirit to guide us in becoming more like Jesus. We become "little Christs," made in the image of God, and conforming to His image until we reach our glorified state.

#### Assignment One Feedback

The student who completed **Assignment One** during the week can now share a report.

## Discussion Questions

How can you convince someone that the Word of God is more powerful than any other book or source; that Jesus Christ is the only way for truth, life, and eternal destiny; and that the Holy Spirit offers a personal relationship?

### A Biblical View of Christianity: The Truth of the Gospel

Read Isaiah 1:18–20 out loud.

#### Studying the Passage, vv. 18–20

**Verse 18.** “‘Come now, and let us reason together,’ says the LORD, ‘Though your sins are as scarlet, they will be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they will be like wool.’” God offers an invitation, desiring all to accept Him. He wants a relationship with those who will love Him with all their heart, mind, soul, and the power of their will. The result will be the forgiveness of sins, a purifying of the spirit like snow from the stains of the blood of Christ, who died on the cross to bring salvation and eternal life as a loving gift. This is the good news, the gospel truth of Christianity. We invite mankind to trust in Jesus and obey His Word, believing He has laid down His life for them.

**Verse 19.** “‘If you consent and obey, you will eat the best of the land.’” If believers trust and obey God’s Word and allow Him into their hearts and minds, then they will live a good life for eternity. They will not live in bondage to a fallen world filled with sin and evil. They will be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit into a new creature in Christ.

**Verse 20.** “‘But if you refuse and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword.’ Truly, the mouth of the LORD has spoken. Judgment will come in the Day of the Lord. When Christ returns, He will come with a sword. Those not in Christ will perish forever while those saved by the Word of God will have eternal life. Disobedience to God’s Word as divine authority and rebellion against His invitation for salvation will lead to eternal condemnation.

#### Assignment Two Feedback

The student who completed **Assignment Two** during the week can now share a report.

## Discussion Questions

What makes God’s love different from worldly love? Give some examples where worldly love fails us.

### A Biblical View of Christianity: Doing God’s Business

Read 1 John 1:3–7 out loud.

#### Studying the Passage, vv. 3–7

**Verse 3.** what we have seen and heard . . . to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; . . . our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. Just as Christ came into the world as fully human and fully divine, the fellowship of the Trinity is expressed in God’s creation, the world through the fellowship of believers, in their compassion for others’ needs. Faith and works accompany each other like the fruit of the Spirit.

**Verse 4.** These things we write . . . our joy may be made complete. The inspired writings of the disciples, with the inerrant Word of God revealed now, can make the believer’s joy

complete. The disciple is now filled with the Holy Spirit and can count it a blessing no matter what circumstances prevail.

**Verses 5–6. the message we have heard from Him . . . God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.** If the good news of the gospel is received, we are children of God in the family of believers. We practice Christianity by obeying His Word and by demonstrating our faith by works toward others. Our witness becomes a light to others in the darkness in the world.

**Verse 7. if we walk in the Light as He . . . in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.** We experience the pure light of Jesus Christ and share it with others. We are covered by the blood of Christ, the redemption of sinners by Christ's crucifixion. This is true fellowship, living with Christ in us. The body is the temple of the Lord, and we are in the body of His church.

### **Assignment Three Feedback**

The student who completed **Assignment Three** during the week can now share a report.

### **Discussion Question**

How can we disciple one another through fellowship and extend that fellowship to the greater community?

### **Heart and Hands**

8 minutes

Read again the **Real-Life Scenario** near the beginning of the lesson. Consider whether your answers have changed during the session.

Be silent for two or three minutes. Thank Jesus for His sacrifice and for the gospel. Adore Him for His glorious reign on the throne of heaven.

Then ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you:

1. A way the Scriptures you studied today will change your heart (the real you) for the glory of Christ.
2. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to stop doing something in your life for the glory of Christ.
3. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to do something for the glory of Christ.

Write what the Spirit says to you below and then be ready to share what you have written with the group.

### **Since Last Week**

5 minutes

### **Grace-Filled Accountability**

5 minutes

### **Planning for Evangelism, Missions, and Service**

5 minutes

### **Prayer**

7 minutes

## At Home: Nail It Down

A true Christian has a biblical worldview based on the inerrant, inspired Word of God, the Holy Scripture (John 1:1; 1 John 1:1).

- A theist intellectually believes in a supernatural being, without a personal relationship with Christ.
- A deist believes in a Christ who does not consistently intervene in life on earth but watches and waits for us to work out our salvation with works.
- A true Christian is Christ centered, having a personal, vertical relationship with Christ and having a horizontal relationship with other believers in fellowship. This is the sign of the cross, believing in Christ who was crucified (1 Corinthians 1:23).

A true Christian lives a holy, ethical, Spirit-filled life with practical application of God's Word, guided by the Holy Spirit. Christians love the Lord with all of their heart, body, mind, and the strength of their souls (Luke). Their reasoning is guided by this dedication and conviction (Isaiah 1:18). Christianity is a blend of doctrine, experience, and practice.

- Christianity is an intellectually reasonable faith, consistent with God's revealed Word.
- Christianity provides a comprehensive worldview for life now and for eternity.
- Christianity is relevant to the daily lives and spiritual journeys of believers.
- Christianity doesn't contradict itself.
- Christianity is based on exclusive truth while all other religions are based on falsehood.
  
- Christians accept the truth of Christ and His divine authority as revealed in Holy Scripture.
- Christians have faith in the Trinity to guide them as people of the "Way."
- Christians share the good news of the gospel with others evangelically (Hebrews 5:12).
- Christians trust and obey God's Word and teach others to follow Him.
- Christians grow more like Him, offering discipleship and fellowship to one another in their homes, personal relationships, and community (1 John 1:3, 6-7; 1 John 4:7-8; 2 Timothy 2:2).

The core of Christianity is in the incarnation of Jesus, His virgin birth, His death on the cross, His burial, and His resurrection—demonstrating His conquering of death and sin and our bondage to the world (1 John 3:16; John 13:34-35).

### Parent Question

*Are you prepared to boldly declare and demonstrate that you trust and obey the Word of God, the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and live in fellowship with Christ, the Father, the Holy Spirit, and with other believers, taking the good news to unbelievers locally and globally?*

The Making Disciples curriculum is a gift from Southwestern Seminary to teenagers who, for the glory of the Father and in the power of the Spirit, will spend a lifetime embracing the full supremacy of the Son, responding to His kingly reign in all of life, inviting Christ to live His life through them, and joining Him in making disciples among all peoples.

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