

Notes on the Five Scenarios

Meet Cranius. He is a bit of a brain and knows a lot of stuff from school and uni and from reading things on the web. He is really into facts. He believes in the Bible and has even been baptised, but his problem is with what science says about where we came from. It seems so unscientific (which most people think means stupid) to say that God created the world in six days. How can all those brilliant scientists be wrong? He knows there are some scientists who believe in God, but a lot of them also believe in evolution as well. So his problem is trying to understand both the Bible and the science so that both make sense. Can you help him?

- The difference between operational science and forensic science is the key. The prestige and credibility of operational science is enjoyed by forensic science but forensic science is heavily influenced by worldview whereas operational science is not.
- We do not know scientifically what creation looks like. We are told in the Scripture that God created, but what does the creation of something out of nothing look like and what evidence does it leave to indicate that that is what has happened?
- The question of origins cannot be solved purely scientifically – existing evidence will be interpreted and influenced by a worldview, including a Christian worldview.
- So the issue for us is, “What is a reliable worldview that can assist our interpretation of the data?” Our worldview does not make our interpretation infallible but it will assist in getting the interpretation of the data closer to the truth.
- Is the Scripture a reliable basis for our worldview?
- What did the Lord Jesus believe regarding:
 - a) The truth of the Scripture generally?**
 - i) He quoted Scripture when tempted by Satan. (Matthew 4)
 - ii) He said nothing will pass from the Law until all is fulfilled. (Matthew 5:18)
 - iii) He taught that the Scripture is truth and “cannot be broken”. (John 10:35).
 - iv) He admonished the Pharisees and Sadducees for not knowing the Scripture. (Matthew 22:29, Matthew 22:43, Matthew 21:42)
 - b) The creation account in Genesis and other matters there specifically?**
 - i) He referred to Genesis when speaking of marriage and divorce. (Matthew 19:4-6)
 - ii) He referred to Abel. (Matthew 23:35)
 - iii) He referred to the flood, to Noah and to Lot’s wife. (Matthew 24:37, Luke 17:32)
 - iv) He referred to Abraham as having seen His day and therefore obviously regarded him as a real historical figure. (John 8:56)
- If Jesus believed the creation account, can we say that it is not true? What would that imply about Jesus teaching and Jesus Himself?
- While the creation/evolution debate can be a stumbling block for some people, it is not the gospel. We are to take the gospel to the world, not this debate. If it is a hindrance to a person believing, as opposed to an excuse for their unbelief, it can and should be discussed. It may also be used to awake interest in some cases.
- The issue for Christians, once this issue challenges them, is how they regard the Scripture. Do they hold the same high view of Scripture that the Lord Jesus did? If not, how do they justify that?

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Meet Gluella. She feels like she is stuck. She believes in God and everything, but she really isn't that switched on about the whole salvation thing. She is not about to become an atheist—that makes no sense to her at all—but what should she do? She says that just going to meetings all the time gets a bit boring, and she feels bad when people want her to pray or share her experiences of God. What experiences? Of course, she knows she should pray more and read the Bible every day, but to tell the truth, she really doesn't want to. It just doesn't seem worth it. And anyway, when you hear what trouble people who are "on fire for God" get into, can't you just be somewhere in the middle? She wants to know what she should do to get unstuck? Can you help her?

"You will never know how much you believe something until it is a matter of life and death." – CS Lewis - God in the Dock

- Gluella lacks a sense of the reality of the gospel. For her it is cultural religion and not significant in her life. It is not Truth, merely a truth claim.
- God did not send His Son into the world so that we could go to meetings. We have to understand the gospel if we are to know its reality. Any version of the gospel that is our own making (or the making of our culture) is empty and dead.
- There are 3 questions here:
 - What is the gospel about? (The "salvation thing".)
 - How can a person connect with that truth (i.e. reality)? ("Experience")
 - What sort of life must a Christian live? (Being "on fire for God"?)

What is the gospel about?

- The heart of the gospel is the death on the cross of the Lord Jesus. Understanding why He died, or rather, why He came to die, is essential to understanding the gospel.
- From the second chapter of Genesis, when humanity sinned by wanting to be like God and to live independently the story of mankind has been separation and alienation from the One who created them and gives them life. All that follows is about being rescued from sin and the judgement of sin.
- No one can save himself or herself by good works or good intentions. The problem goes deeper than what we do and concerns what we have become. It is the whole person that is corrupted – we are not like God. (Romans 3:23)
- Gluella needs revelation concerning her sinfulness and should seek God for knowledge of that reality. To think you are OK is to be blind and deceived.
- Once the truth of our sinfulness is known and felt then the message about the Lord Jesus immediately becomes relevant. Yeshua means "salvation".
- The Lord Jesus died in our place. This means that sin could not be "corrected" by good works or religious rituals or practices. The sinner had to die. But He rose again to share with us a life that cannot die and that is totally pleasing to God and accepted by God.

How can a person connect with the truth of the gospel?

- What has been accomplished by the Lord becomes effective and real for us when we put our trust in Him, turning in repentance from that desire to be independent and "like God". This is because His promise to receive all that come to Him is true and all who come are "sealed with the Holy Spirit" (Ephesians 1:13). This is the new birth of which Jesus spoke to Nicodemus (John 3).

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- The new birth is the beginning of a walk with the Lord Jesus as His disciple. When His salvation is real for us, when we see what the state of the world is and the wonderful high calling we have in Him, to follow Him in everything becomes not only a delight but also the only way forward that makes any sense.

What sort of life must a Christian live?

- We must not imagine what the Lord expects of us and then try to be what we are not, but rather we need to learn from Him day by day and allow Him to teach us and prepare us for all that He has for us in this life and for the life to come. We are like little children, learning from our Father, growing in wisdom and understanding.
- We have more to learn and we need to change more than we think. There are many lessons and experiences ahead of us as the Lord works in us to conform us to His image.
- Stories of great saints can encourage us because we see God's ways and faithfulness in their lives. But we must not think that we must copy them or expect to have all the experiences that they had. We are each one individuals in God's family and He has His way for each one of us. To just copy others is to deny this truth and to deny the personal love that God has for each of us. We are encouraged to follow the example of their faith and faithfulness, but in our own life and context.
- The Lord Jesus said we must become like little children – trusting and learning. (Mark 10:13-16)
- If we continue in the Lord's word we shall be His disciples. (John 8:30-32)
- The focus of a believer's life is not the meetings. The meetings are a means but not the end.
- The focus of a believer's life is the Lord Jesus and their faithfulness to him each and every day. They are devoted to Him.
- Paul wrote regarding his own walk:
 - I have hope in God ... that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. This being so, **I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men.** (Acts 24:15-16)
 - Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; **but I press on**, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, **I press toward the goal** for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind. (Philippians 3:12-16)

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Meet Mondo. He says that he believes in the Lord Jesus and wants to grow, but he has a problem. He says that if he doesn't go with his friends and do all the stuff they do he will never see them and then how can he ever win them? But the trouble is the things they do are not really, well, you know, very good—parties, drinking, girls - that sort of thing. So he probably shouldn't go and join in everything, although some of his other Christian friends tell him not to be so legalistic! He says he can't go and just stand there, and he certainly won't tell his friends that he's not allowed to drink! Besides, Christians shouldn't just cut themselves off from everybody or else how can they understand people enough to reach them? He wants to know if all this is just old-fashioned conservative culture or is it really from God? He can't imagine living a boring life where you don't do anything except go to meetings! What should he do? Can you help him?

"If you think of this world as a place intended simply for our happiness, you find it quite intolerable: think of it as a place of training and correction and it's not so bad." – CS Lewis - God in the Dock

- **How precious is the Lord to this man?** What price is he willing to pay to know Him and to walk with Him? This needs to be settled first. If the answer is that he is unwilling to give up anything, then how can the conversation proceed?
 - For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. (1 Peter 4:3-4)
 - Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus **will suffer persecution.** (2 Timothy 3:12)
 - For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also **to suffer for His sake...** (Philippians 1:29)
 - But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed **I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord,** for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, **and the fellowship of His sufferings,** being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. (Philippians 3:7-11)
 - For **what profit is it** to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? (Matthew 16:26)
 - Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot

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be My disciple. ... So likewise, **whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.** (Luke 14:25-33)

- When we think of winning people, what is it that we are winning them to? Do we just want them to join "our church" and become part of an acceptable social circle? Or do we want to see them set free from the bondage of sin by becoming disciples of Christ? If the former, don't bother winning them. If the latter, how can we do that unless we ourselves are walking whole-heartedly with the Lord?
- We need to examine our heart when we try to determine what appropriate behaviour is. It is always a heart issue. The Lord Jesus was accused of keeping company with undesirable people, but of course, His motives and His behaviour were perfect. He never acted inconsistently.
- When asking the Lord if you should do something, be sure that you are willing to obey His answer whatever it is. Never try to twist His arm to agree with what you want to do. Nor should you assume that everything you would like to do is forbidden just because you would like to do it.
- When our heart is for the Lord, many things that we used to enjoy become tedious and boring, or worse, positively defiling. We genuinely do not want to do those things. So the challenge is to find things we can do with friends with whom we want to stay in touch that do not defile.
- If you are compromised by your behaviour or your passive endorsement of what others are doing when you are with people, then you are in no position to witness to Christ.
- We must be real in our faith - words and actions must be consistent - if others are going to see a life that commends itself to them. Hypocrisy will win no one. A false or empty witness is worse than no witness at all.

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Meet Confuso. He is a church goer from way back - as long as he can remember. He was raised in a Christian home and was sent to Sunday School from before he could walk. He knows a lot of the stories in the Bible, but has a bad feeling when he hears people say it's the Word of God. The problem is, he says, that the Old Testament is just that, OLD, written when people knew almost nothing about the world or science or anything. How can you believe all of it? It's embarrassing even to talk about it! And the New Testament is so different—like another world again! But even so people still argue about what it means and which parts we need to follow and which we don't. He wants to know how he can be sure it really is the Word of God and how to understand the things that people laugh at or just ignore. Can you help him?

- We cannot say that if we don't understand something in the Scripture or if we can't explain why somebody did or said something then therefore it must not be true. We need to have appropriate humility with all of the Scripture. Forcing meaning or "understanding" where we are unsure is a sure way to error and to an understanding that is lifeless. We need to be taught by the Spirit as and when He determines to teach us. He is very willing to teach, more willing than we are to learn.
- Begin with the New Testament. Examine the evidence for the reliability of the documents that comprise it. The evidence is very strong indeed, far stronger than any other ancient document. One write called it "an embarrassment of riches". So we are an very sure ground when we say that the New Testament was written in the first century and what we are reading is in every substantial detail just what was written.
- Next look at the internal evidence - that is, he contents of each book or letter. On every page you see evidence of real people writing to other real people, without exaggeration or legend making. In fact, the things that would normally be written to impress a sceptical audience are understated. There are many marks of its genuineness, such as the plain admission of the many failings of the apostles, or the women being the first witnesses of the resurrection.
- But the greatest witness to the truth of the New Testament is the account of the life of the Lord Jesus. **"Only Jesus could have invented Jesus."** His sinless life, His profound and timeless moral teaching, His perfection in word and deed, His miracles, His suffering and death and finally His resurrection all proclaim very loudly that He is truly the Son of God. There is no other possible explanation on the evidence. Hear CS Lewis on this point:

I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: 'I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept His claim to be God.' That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic - on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg - or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.

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- So since the New Testament is true (because it cannot be fiction, exaggeration or legend) then the Lord Jesus is the Son of God and we do well to take heed to Him. What was/is His attitude to the Scripture – and when He speaks of the Scripture He is speaking of what we call the Old Testament? It is perfectly clear that He regarded the Scripture as truth. He quoted from Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus and Deuteronomy – in total from 24 OT books. (The New Testament quotes from or refers to 34 of the 39 books). *“These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”* (Luke 24:44)
- Because He trusted the Scriptures and taught us to do the same, we do well to take heed to what He has said. That does not mean we can answer every question or explain every verse. But it does mean we can be sure that it is truth and reliable when properly understood.
- Many opponents and mockers pull out a bit here and a bit there and make fun of it – something that requires little mental effort but which any thoughtful person knows is without any weight, substance or real value. Such people are rarely interested in an explanation of the things they are mocking so they are better left to the pricking of their own conscience. A believer needs wisdom, humility and to be growing in his or her understanding of the Scripture.
- When there is a difference between two Christians regarding some teaching in the Scripture, the first thing to understand is whether they both have the same view of the importance of Scripture. If one regards it as the Word of God, while the other feels that you can pick and choose what you want to accept then there is no point to their discussing the teaching in question until the correct attitude to the Scripture is agreed between them.
- The next issue is whether or not both parties are willing to learn from the Lord and be corrected if necessary by Him. Our understanding is not the Word of God – it is fallible and we are always learning. If one or both are not of that disposition truly then they will discuss the matter in vain – probably arguing rather than having real conversation.
- If open, humble and obedient hearts still cannot understand something in the same way, then love and patience must prevail. Love to respect and appreciate each other and patience until the Lord makes clear to each what the true understanding is – they both may have much room for learning and correction. We can always go deeper.
- A Christian is always learning and being educated by the Holy Spirit if he or she is a disciple of the Lord Jesus. We have no reason to be lazy in body or in mind. A sanctified (i.e. enlightened, active, humble and correctable) mind is of great value and can be a great blessing to many.
- The New Testament is very different from the Old Testament because it is speaking into a totally different situation.
 - The OT contains law that was to govern a specific nation – Israel – in the same way our parliament makes laws to govern this country. The Jews are indeed God’s people, but they were not indwelt by the Holy Spirit and they lived in the midst of a savage and violent world that was full of demon worship and abhorrent religious rituals. It is difficult for us today to comprehend how people thought and acted then. The Jews were a tiny nation in the world and the influence of their values and ethics was not tiny. The prophets spoke of a future glory for Israel but that day had not yet come. They were hard times.

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- The NT is not law to govern a nation, but truth to reconcile people to God and to teach them how to live a new life in the power of the Spirit of God through faith in the Lord Jesus. It is not meant to govern all whole world's behaviour, only those who have responded from the heart in repentance and surrender to the Lord. Of course the call of the gospel is for everyone, but we cannot teach an unregenerate person to "walk in the newness of life" or to "rejoice in the Lord always". First they must come to the feet of the Lord Jesus to receive from Him the gift of Life. Christians are within every nation, but they should not try to form their own nation or pretend that everyone in a town or city or country is the Lord's. When people have tried to do that it has been a great failure. Individually we might rise to high office, for example in government, but we are to serve the Lord there as any other worker serves the Lord in their occupation, being faithful to Him, a light in the darkness and working to bring the blessing of the gospel to those with whom we have contact or influence.

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Meet Timora. She is scared. All the talk about gays and gender and marriage is freaking her out. Why do Christians have such a different stance to everyone else? If gays want to live that way what's the problem? She knows that the Bible says it's not right, although she's not sure why. But she is scared that someone is going to ask her what she thinks or why she didn't wear purple or something, and then they will call her homophobic and a bigot and everything. What is she going to say to them? Anyone who says it's wrong gets roasted on social media. She wants to know what to think and what to do. Can you help her?

- Timora is being bullied and threatened. This is a result of very effective political activism. But we have to recognise that as a Christian "*...we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*" (Ephesian 6:12). This being so, our response must be spiritual, not carnal. We must not become like those who oppose the Lord, using the same methods, tactics, half-truths and political manoeuvring.
- We are entering a time in the West where Christians are not only a minority but also openly ridiculed and opposed in the media and therefore by those who are influenced by the media. In addition, there is much compromise among various denominations causing conflict and confusion. Western culture, though once built largely on broad Judeo-Christian values, has now moved intentionally to a secular worldview. That is, the fundamental understanding of the world is no longer a shared view that God created it and that His law should be the basis of our law and our values, to a view that says that there is no God or creator and that law should reflect current ethics which are simply a matter of common agreement (statistical ethics). This is humanism in full bloom.
- People who have no strong religious or cultural foundation in their life will eventually derive their values from the law, which can be changed by political activism and will therefore lead to a change in social values, rather than follow the change. There will be little or no stability through this process as we have seen in the last 20 years. The arguments made for homosexual acceptance 10 years ago have now been reversed to accommodate "gender fluidity".
- Christian values have not changed, but the society has changed. Young people do not realise this as much as older people who have witnessed the profound shift in the last 20 years.
- Why should the gospel change just because the surrounding culture has changed?
- In the beginning God made a creature in His own image, male and female. He created them to "be fruitful and multiply" and instituted marriage. "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." (Genesis 2:24) This teaching is perfectly clear in the Scripture.
- God's revealed purpose in the form of His creation and in His instruction regarding it was for numerical increase through the union of a man and a woman and for their children to be nurtured in families. Families have traditionally been made up of the parents and children, but also grandparents and other relatives – what we call extended families. The Lord Jesus refers to this is type of household:
 - *Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to 'set a man against his father, a*

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daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law'; and 'a man's enemies will be those of his own household.'
(Matthew 10:34-36)

- Because a Christian's view of marriage is derived from the Scripture, a discussion with an unbeliever regarding the correct definition of marriage will be difficult because it must come down to the reliability and truth of the Scripture. That is where their difference lies.
- The issue regarding gender is an attempt to put our desires before the will of God. People can be confused about their feelings regarding themselves and others. We are fallen people and there is much that is "broken" in us. But that brokenness does not change God's purpose, nor does it mean that a broken person cannot be redeemed and live a full and blessed life in the Lord. Christ died for sinners.
- Our gender does not define us, nor does our sexuality. Being married or single, having or not having children does not determine the value and fruitfulness of our life. We are all in the first instance, people made in the image of God, and sinners in need of salvation. No degree of brokenness separates us from His love, and no degree of apparent wholeness enables us to share in it. Repentance towards God and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ are the way to a full and fruitful life for us all.
- Gender confusion, physical or psychological, where it occurs, is part of humanity's brokenness, that is, our fallen state. However the idea of "gender fluidity" is a rejection of what God has determined for each of us in creation. *"Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, 'Why have you made me like this?'"* (Romans 9:20)
- Christians do NOT have an anti-homosexual message to take to the world. We have been called by the Lord to, *"...make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you;..."* (Matthew 28:19-20)
- We are called to be lights in the world, not judges. We are lights when our life shines with the love of Christ and the gospel is our message to the world.
- We are not called to hate anyone. The Lord Jesus said:
 - *You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.* (Matthew 5:43-48)
- We are instructed not to argue:
 - But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will. (2 Timothy 2:23-26)
- The whole armour of God:
 - Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God that you may be able to stand against the

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wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armour of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, **and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace**; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. (Ephesian 6:10-20)

- We do need courage to be faithful to the Lord. That does not mean that we do not experience fear. It refers to how we respond when we experience fear. The Lord tells us time and again not to be afraid – that is, not to be governed by fear.
- When asked about our views on homosexual issues, or any other issue for that matter, we need wisdom to answer with the meekness that Peter speaks of below, but also out of a life that is characterised by “good conduct”:
 - And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you are blessed. “And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.” But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defence to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. (1 Peter 3:13-17)
- Paul said:
 - Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:12-17)
- **A conversation:**

How did you vote in the postal survey?

That is such a difficult question to answer, not because the literal answer is difficult, but because of all that some people assume lies behind the answer, much of which may not be true at all. A simple yes or no answer cannot account for or address all those issues. But I can tell you that some years ago I gave my life to Jesus Christ because I came to believe that He is indeed the Son of God. That might seem strange to you, but I

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would love to have the opportunity to try to explain what I mean by that and how I have been changed since then. I certainly don't have all the answers, and I am still learning, but I really want to learn to love like Jesus loved and to bring something of the blessing that He has been to me to others.

I know that a lot of people think that Christians hate gays and are homophobic. I hope you have not seen that sort of thing in me because that is certainly not the way I think or feel. But before talking about what Jesus taught regarding homosexuality, the more important matter to discuss is whether or not He is the Son of God. If He is not, then what He said does not matter. If He is, then it matters enormously that we understand it. Is that a conversation you are willing to have?