

WE HAVE SEEN HIS GLORY

The Glory of the Savior's Signs

INTRODUCTION

I recently listened to a debate about faith on the Veritas Forum that included an evolutionary biologist Philosopher Dr. Andy Norman of Carnegie Mellon, arguing for his definition of faith. According to Dr. Norman the Christian faith is just positive thinking. He illustrated his definition by referring to a time when he was in school and was expressing sadness.

A friend asked why he didn't smile. He said that he didn't have a reason to smile. His friend said, "Smile anyway." He said, "Why not." He felt dishonest at first because he was displaying an attitude he didn't feel. He tried it anyway. He says that ironically, he started to smile at people, and they smiled back. Suddenly the world felt like a friendlier place. A lot of his social anxieties started to dissipate, he claimed. He said that it was the best advice he ever got. He said it is functionally like faith. He defended his claim by recounting a debate between Bill Nye and Kenneth Ham.

In that debate these two men were arguing as to the Genesis account of origins. In that Q&A, the moderator asked both men, what would change their mind. Bill Nye (the atheist) said, "Evidence"; and he went on to give concrete examples of what would change his mind as an atheist and evolutionist. Ken Ham said, "I'm a Christian. Nothing is going to persuade me that the Word of God is not true."

Dr. Norman interpreted Bill Nye's as scientific; and Ken Ham's response was the response as religious. Norman believed that Ham's position was a refusal to bend despite evidence. This, the professor saw, was at the heart of religious faith. He goes on to say that it seems as if the role of faith is to provide an exemption for beliefs that you can't defend or never would withstand scrutiny. Faith excuses unaccountable cognition.

Now I didn't listen to the Nye – Ham debate and Dr. Norman may have misunderstood or misquoted Ken Ham. But if he didn't let me say directly that for a Christian to say, "Nothing can persuade me that the Word of God is not true" is an unbiblical and untrue statement. Quite clearly the Apostle Paul believed there was something that would demolish his faith and that was to prove that the resurrection of Christ did not occur. He wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:14 (ESV),

¹⁴ And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.

MAIN POINT

Today's text will refute Ken Ham's statement. Christianity is evidenced based. ". . . believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father."¹

TEXT: John 10:31–42 (ESV)

EXPOSITON

Jesus has just made the stunning claim, "*I and the Father are one.*" (John 10:30, ESV). And then we read: "The Jews picked up stones again to stone him."² Stoning was the prescribed punishment for blasphemy (Leviticus 24:16; cf. Deuteronomy 13:6–11).³

"*Jesus answered them, 'I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?'*" (John 10:32, ESV). Last week I summarized the undeniable, inarguable overview of Christ's two and a half years of ministry that clearly pointed to His divine nature. His work done in the Father's name testified to His Messiahship (see v.25b). Jesus views His works and His words as a singular claim. The Jews fail to see His works as anything and see His words as blasphemy (because you, being a man, make yourself God)."⁴

Jesus walks them through a difficult argument to understand; an argument widely interpreted. "*Jesus answered them, 'Is it not written in your Law, 'I said, you are gods'? If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken— do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?'*" (John 10:34–36, ESV). The point is that Jesus accuses them in turn of blasphemy. By citing Psalm 82:6⁵, which proved that some mere mortals were called "gods" (small 'g') Jesus was saying that if it was OK for the Scriptures to call mere mortals, gods, then how much more legitimate was it to The God to call His Son, God? Here's a summary of Jesus' argument:

"If God sent me [Jesus] into the world to be the Savior and this is attested by my [Jesus] works, it is greater blasphemy to deny this."

Therefore Jesus returns to His main argument: "*but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.*" (John 10:38, ESV). Jesus wants them to know that the conclusion of His claim combined by His works equals that He is God. It should lead them to believe.

It didn't! "*Again they sought to arrest him, but he escaped from their hands.*" (John 10:39, ESV)

¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 10:38). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

² [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 10:31). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

³ Crossway Bibles. (2008). [The ESV Study Bible](#) (p. 2041). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

⁴ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 10:33). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

⁵ "*I said, 'You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you;'*" (Psalm 82:6, ESV)

Jesus removes Himself from the public scene and moves over across Jordan. When Jesus went to that area of Jordan where the now deceased John the Baptist ministered, the people remembered him. “And they said, “John did no sign, but everything that John said about this man was true.”⁶ They remembered John’s words and now they combined that with Jesus’ works (or signs) and we have this delightful conclusion: “*And many believed in him there.*” (John 10:42, ESV)

Remember the main thought: “*If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me; but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.*”” (John 10:37–38, ESV)

The Christian faith is evidence based.

APPLICATION

If your faith is based upon a positive attitude, wishful thinking, a hopeful disposition, devoid of evidence it is not Christian. Some people call the Gospel of John, The Book of Signs. They include the:

- Turning Water into Wine ([John 2:1–11](#))
- Cleansing the Temple ([John 2:12–17](#))
- Healing the Nobleman’s Son ([John 4:46–54](#))
- Healing the Lame Man ([John 5:1–15](#))
- Feeding the Multitude ([John 6:1–15](#))
- Healing the Blind Man ([John 9](#))
- Raising Lazarus ([John 11](#))

These signs collectively authenticate the claims of Christ but many of us would argue that there is an 8th sign, the resurrection of Jesus Christ. When John wrote his Gospel the purpose was stated clearly: “*Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*” (John 20:30–31, ESV)

I want to speak to two groups of people. The first group includes those who do not believe. You have your views of Jesus. But you do not believe He is God and you have not trusted Him as your Savior. You view the world as Bill Nye does. You want evidence. I have good news to you. The evidence is overwhelming. And the main piece of evidence has never been disproven. People have questioned the resurrection of Christ. They have mocked it. They have tried to explain it away. But they have never disproved it. Paul said, “But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead,⁷ therefore the Christian faith is genuine, substantive and undeniably true. I plead with you today, if you do not believe because of the words Jesus says, at least believe because of the uncontested reality of the resurrection of Christ.

⁶ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 10:41). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

⁷ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (1 Co 15:20). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

There's a book entitled, Evidence That Demands A Verdict. The evidence is so conclusive you must decide today.

I also want to encourage Christians, today. Do not buy into the accusation that Christianity is a blind leap into an unknown abyss. Neither is our lives as believers lived on hopeful, wishful thinking. Our faith is based on the evidence of Christ's resurrection supported by the power of His promises. We are called to live by faith, not faith in faith or faith in wishful thinking. We live by faith in the objective promises of God's Word. Listen again to what Jesus said, "Scripture cannot be broken."⁸ Why? Because the One who said it is the One who said He would die and rise again, and He did. He is faithful.

⁸ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 10:35). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.