***Why I Believe***

***Preface***

Dear Bible Student,

We wrote this booklet to assist your personal study of your own beliefs. In doing so, we wanted to give you a foundation upon which to begin your studies and to encourage you to think about God, your relationship with Him, and the solid truth of the Bible.

This workbook is not meant to be a study in itself––and that is important. Again, it is meant to be a supplement to your own study. Therefore, the questions that are asked are not ones that have a simple answer––instead, many of the questions could become studies in themselves. And, if you want to pursue some of those studies further, we encourage you to do so.

We hope that, in the course of going through this booklet, you will be inspired to take some of the topics even further and that you will spend time pursuing answers to other questions you may develop throughout this study.

The benefit you draw from the pages that follow depend upon you. You have a choice when working through each section: will you rush through it simply to get through the book? Or, will you see this as a foundation for your own personal study?––and therefore, merely an introduction to something much greater. Additionally, this workbook is based upon the class and workshop sessions at YCC, so whatever you put into this study will also impact your experience at camp each day.

This study is made up of four sections and a short introduction about setting goals. Each section builds on the next. **The four parts of the workbook must be completed by June 22nd in order for you to attend YCC (if they are not submitted by June 22nd, your registration will be canceled).**

Part 1 - Creating a Foundation

Part 2 - Gathering Information

Part 3 - Asking Questions

Part 4 - Answering Questions

These four techniques can create a powerful backbone in your study of your beliefs––and really, in your study of any biblical topic.

All in all, this foundational workbook should take you approximately 20-30 hours if you do it thoroughly. From there, may you continue to use its techniques to further your own study, so that you may grow in the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord––a privilege that brings great grace and peace (2 Peter 1:2).

Completed workbooks can be emailed to registration@youthconferencecalifornia.com.

Jason Hensley, Caleb Osborn, & Justin Reich

Simi Hills and Thousand Oaks, 2025

***Introduction - Beginning a Study***

**Setting Goals**

When you begin a study, you should develop a goal––both for the study and for how you are going to complete it.

So, take a minute to develop an intention for this study. After working through this booklet and thinking about the why of your beliefs, what do you hope to have achieved?

Ex. - I want to feel persuaded that my beliefs are founded in fact.

Ex. - I want to be able to explain the why of my belief to others.

Ex. - I want to be inspired to have a deeper relationship with God.

Ex. - I want to have a better idea of how science and archaeology support the Bible.

Just a quick note: Simply finishing the workbook isn’t really the kind of goal that you want to make. If you rush through the workbook just for the purpose of getting it done, you will have learned very little. And isn’t the purpose of the book to bolster your own study habits and biblical understanding?

My intention for this study:

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Now, create a precise goal for how you are going to complete this booklet. A good goal will be specific, measurable, attainable, repeatable, and time-bound (SMART).

For example:

Every weekday from now until June 22nd, I will work through the YCC workbook for 20 minutes.

Specific - Working through the YCC workbook

Measurable - 20 minutes every weekday

Attainable - It’s just 20 minutes a day

Repeatable - Every day

Time-bound - from now until June 22nd

Here is another example:

Every Friday from now until June 22nd, I will work through the YCC workbook for 2 hours.

Try to develop your own goal here:

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Perhaps once you finish this workbook, this specific time that you have consistently allotted to Bible study each week will become something that you can continue. You can use the foundation provided in this booklet to do your own Bible study in the future.

***Part 1 - Creating a Foundation***

***Estimated Completion Time: 3 hours***

We’ll begin this study by considering your own beliefs. You’re going to put together your personal statement of faith. This isn’t intended to be a treatise of what doctrines you believe, but rather an explanation of *why* you believe. Here’s what your statement of faith will answer:

1. Why do you believe in the God of the Bible?
2. What challenges have you faced in your faith? Intellectual? Experiential?
3. How have you overcome these challenges?

**What to Submit**

You have a few options for creating this statement of faith:

* 1. You could write it out like an essay, writing around 500 words.
  2. You could create a video, recording between 4-5 minutes.
  3. You could create some kind of work of art that reflects your reason(s) for belief, take a photo, and then explain it in 4-5 paragraphs.
  4. You could create some kind of work of art that reflects your reason(s) for belief, and then take a 4-5 minute video of you describing the art and explaining how it reflects your belief.
  5. You could write and record a song, playing it for 3-4 minutes, along with a 2-3 paragraph written explanation of the lyrics.

**Conclusion**

For Part 1, please turn in your statement of faith to registration@youthconferencecalifornia.com.

***Part 2 - Gathering Information***

***Estimated Completion Time: 8-12 hours***

A helpful practice in Bible study is gathering information, or learning what others think about the subject. Two useful ways of gathering information can be found below––choose one way and work through that in order to finish Part 2 of this booklet.

Ultimately, both of the ways below can be utilized for a thorough study––and so in your continuing studies of this epistle, you are encouraged to come back and try both of these techniques once you have finished this workbook.

**Technique #1 - Christadelphian Books**

Our community has a number of extremely helpful resources on belief. Going through the studies of other brothers and sisters who have considered the topic is an exceptionally helpful way of getting insight into a biblical subject. As you go through these books, take notes (or mark in your Bible).

Some helpful books are listed below.\* Read through one of the books and take notes (and if you want to study the topic even more thoroughly later, you can come back and read through all of these books):

* “Apologetics: The Hard Questions” by David Levin, written for *The Tidings* from 2004–2006. Starting with [the sixth article in the series](https://tidings.org/articles/apologetics-6-the-hard-questions-the-theodicy-enigma-e/), they are available online (the online archive doesn’t go back to 2004). You can choose 10 of the articles to read.
* *Reasons: Evidence for God, Jesus, and the Bible* (Willow Publications, 2011).
* *Thy Word is True from the Beginning, The Testimony Special Issue,* Volume 80, Number 150, June/July 2010
* [*God Has Spoken, The Tidings Special Issue,* Volume 78, Number 7, August 2015](https://tidings.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2015_08_Aug_Special.pdf)
* *The Bible and Science* (Tidings, 2005).
* *The Deception of Theistic Evolution* (Lulu.com, 2016).
* Genesis 1–2: A Harmonized and Historical Reading (Ascent, 2018).
* *Creation versus Evolution* (The Testimony, 1983). <https://drive.google.com/file/d/16S_lC1Y4-WaubsupX7XuELndb2xacOwc/view?usp=sharing>

**What to Submit**

The end result of this would be a set of notes, or Bible marking, based on the book that was read. If you choose Technique #1, you will turn in your notes or a photo of your Bible marking as your submission for Part 2.

**Technique #2 - Christadelphian Classes**

Just like reading Christadelphian books, listening to classes can help give quite a bit of insight on a topic. As you listen to the class (or afterward, if you want to listen to the classes while you exercise or while you drive), take notes on (or mark in your Bible) the points that you want to remember––again, how many you take is up to you, but the more notes you take, the more information you will have for your own study.

If you like to listen to classes, consider listening to one of the following choices.\* All are available at christadelphianbibletalks.com, Christadelphian Bible Video Channel on Youtube, Glenlock Bible Camp, and Christadelphianvideo.org:

* “The Word of Truth,” a series by Stephen Palmer
* “Bible Prophecy and Archaeology,” a series by Jonathan Bowen
* “The Power of Bible Places and Their Lessons for Us,” a series by Leen Ritmeyer
* “Now is Christ Risen From the Dead,” a series by Frank Abel
* “Faith,” a series by David Fraser
* “The Pursuit of Biblical Faith,” a series by Jason Bobis
* “Why I Believe” by Gospel Online. <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLXqPLxQMlGOediL0w2qgQ4i2wKECyfSVt>. Choose 10 or more of the videos to watch.

**What to Submit**

The end result of this would be a set of notes, or Bible marking, based on the series of classes that was heard. If you choose Technique #2, you will turn in your notes or a photo of your Bible marking as your submission for Part 2.

**Conclusion**

Send a copy of your notes (or pictures of your Bible marking) to registration@youthconferencecalifornia.com.

\*If you would like to read a different book or listen to a different series of classes, please email registration@youthconferencecalifornia.com beforehand in order to have that book or that series approved for the workbook.

***Part 3 - Answering Questions***

***Estimated Completion Time: 15+ hours***

Once you have gathered some information about a topic, you are in a position to start asking (and answering) some in-depth questions about it. Questions power Bible study; they are what cause you to look deeper and to see some of the powerful meanings that Scripture holds beneath its surface.

This section will present some questions related to belief. We have broken it down into “Days,” which match up with the topics that we will consider on the days of YCC. Each day has six questions. Again, questions power Bible study, so as you continue your study after this booklet, we encourage you to pursue some of these questions further.

These questions are purposefully not exhaustive––much is left for you to discover on your own. These are simply to stimulate your thinking.

**What to Submit**

Do not feel as though you must answer *every* question. Some questions might not seem entirely relevant to you––and that is okay. So, in order to complete this section, you must answer at least **25** of the questions.

***Each of your 25 answers should be at least a paragraph long to properly address each question.***

Make sure that you use scriptural reasoning based on supporting biblical passages.

Day 1

1. What is faith? Why does it matter? Where does it come from and how does it grow?
2. What is truth? Why does it matter? Where does it come from?
3. What reasons and/or evidence does the Bible give for us to believe in God & His word?
4. What does the Bible claim about itself? What kind of moral proofs does the Bible give to support these claims, in other words, how does biblical morality support the Bible’s claims?
5. How can prophecy be used to prove the Bible true? Give an example that you would use to convince someone, and walk through this example in detail.

Day 2

1. How does the rest of the Bible corroborate/build upon the Genesis account of Creation?
   * Law
   * Psalms
   * Prophets
   * Christ
   * Apostles
2. Why does it matter whether or not God created the world?
3. God claims to be the creator and sustainer/life force of the world. If that is true, what is the moral corollary for us––in other words, what does God deserve and require from us?
4. What did Jesus and the apostles believe about the creation of the world and God’s role in it?
5. Skeptics often point to Genesis 1 and 2 as two different accounts of creation. How would you harmonize these two accounts?

Day 3

1. Many critics of the Bible point out that miracles defy the laws of nature, and therefore prove the Bible is false (this view is often described as naturalism). How would you disprove naturalism? What is the purpose of biblical miracles?
2. What importance does the Bible place upon Jesus' resurrection? Why does it matter whether we believe in it?
3. How would you explain to someone your belief that Jesus rose from the dead?
4. Many skeptics argue that the gospels contradict one another. They say that the different resurrection accounts stand against the Bible’s inspiration. What are the main differences? Why are they there?
5. Some people today still claim to possess the Holy Spirit gifts and claim to have witnessed miracles. How would you explain this?

Day 4

1. Many in today's world find the Bible to be out of step with modern sensibilities. Is this different than during Bible times? How can one approach discussing topics that are out of sync with current culture?
2. How can we convince ourselves & our peers that the Bible is still relevant?
3. What benefits does a biblical faith provide today?
4. Some feel that one’s spiritual life is solely about their relationship with God and that community is somewhat irrelevant. How would you counter that argument? Why does community matter?
5. The idea of one truth as opposed to many truths is losing popularity. What does the Bible say about the importance of truth? How can God be a kind and loving God without accepting multiple truths?

Day 5

1. What is hope? Why does it matter? Where does it come from?
2. How did the hope of the kingdom provide motivation for different characters in Scripture? See if you can find three characters who were inspired by the kingdom, and describe how it inspired them.
3. What do you do to keep the kingdom real in your mind? How can you (or how do you) use the kingdom to motivate yourself?
4. What are some sacrifices you have had to make for the sake of the kingdom? How did you know that it would be worth it?
5. Having your own motivation is one thing, but inspiring others is another. How did characters in the bible use the kingdom to inspire others? How can you use the kingdom to inspire others?

**Conclusion**

Send a copy of your answers to [registration@youthconferencecalifornia.com](mailto:registration@youthconferencecalifornia.com). Once you have submitted your work for parts 1, 2, and 3, you will be given access to the YCC Google Group, and you will use this access for part 4.

***Part 4 - Interactive Questions***

***Estimated Completion Time: 2 hours***

Now that you’ve answered some of our questions, it’s time to start thinking about some of your own questions.

The most effective kinds of questions are generally “Why?” questions because they help you to look below the surface level. But, other kinds of questions (who, what, how?) can also be useful in the study process. While you study, you can look for answers to these questions.

Ex. - Why doesn’t God speak to us directly in this age?

Ex. - Why are there so many sincere Christians with different interpretations of the Bible?

Write down two questions you developed during your study of belief so far:

Question 1:

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Question 2:

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And now, log in to the YCC Google Group and share your questions. Post one forum post per question. The goal of the Google Group is for you to start sharing your study process with other YCC attendees. You will be required to post your best answer to at least two of your peers’ questions after completing part 4.

**Google Group**

You’re almost done! Now that you’ve answered our questions and primed your mind for seeking answers, log back into the Google Group and answer two or more of your peers’ questions––give each question a solid answer of at least a paragraph using scriptural reasoning (and supporting passages).

Also, check out what your peers have said about your own questions. This is a good time to get to know each other and an opportunity to open up some spiritual discussions before camp.

**Conclusion**

To submit part 4, email your answers to registration@youthconferencecalifornia.com.

Remember that you must have parts 1, 2, 3, and 4 completed and submitted by June 22nd in order to attend YCC. **If you have not submitted these portions by June 22nd, you will be notified that your registration for camp has been canceled.**

You’ve made it to the end of this workbook! But your study of belief has just begun––so, with the inspiration that you have found in this introductory study, we hope that you will continue to gather information, ask questions, and discuss Scripture with one another––growing in your knowledge and love for Our Father and for His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.