

Kids Apologetics Series

For Upper Primary Kids (ages 8-11)

Why Apologetics?

Kids Apologetics Series – For Upper Primary Kids (ages 8-11)

Teaching Plan – Why apologetics? 1 Peter 3:15, Acts 17:16-34 and Colossians 2:8

Hi Everyone,

This is the first in a 5-part apologetics series for kids. Apologetics means to defend the faith. The aim of this series is to equip kids so that they are always prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks them for the hope that they have (1 Peter 3:15). This series can be taught in kids church over 5 weeks or can be used at home by parents to equip their kids. Note if this is being used at home you may decide to skip or change the game. The arguments in this series are based on the work of Dr William Lane Craig in his book *Reasonable Faith*¹.

The first lesson focuses on why apologetics is important. The big idea is apologetics is commanded by God (1 Peter 3:15). There are several reasons why teaching apologetics to kids in particular is important.

- Apologetics encourages kids by strengthening their faith. It equips them with arguments to counter rival worldviews. In a 2018 Pew Research Centre Report in the USA, the biggest reason why people under the age of 35 had left the church was “they question a lot of the church’s teaching². In Colossians 2:8, Paul says “*See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.*” Apologetics equips kids not to be deceived by these hollow and deceptive philosophies.
- Apologetics opens up opportunities for kids to talk about the Gospel. Often people will refuse to engage with Christianity as they believe it is not a reasonable position to hold. Apologetics builds credibility for the

¹ Craig, William. L. *Reasonable Faith*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books. 2008

² <https://www.foxnews.com/opinion/young-christians-are-leaving-the-church-heres-why>

Christian worldview by creating space for the Gospel to be proclaimed in a conversation. A Biblical example of this is Acts 17:16-34 where Paul engages with Athenian philosophy before proclaiming the Gospel.

Our main scriptural passages to see these points will be 1 Peter 3:15, Acts 17:16-34 and Colossians 2:8.

The teaching plan asks the teacher to retell the story of Acts 17:16-34 from the point of view of Paul. That is imagine you are Paul telling the story. If you are not comfortable doing this you could read the story or watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cU-LwyAL6yl> with the kids

How we want kids to be changed at the end of this lesson?

We want kids to be able to define and know the importance of apologetics.

Singing

1 Peter 3:15 memory verse

– https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XX8z9f_H5GU

- This song will help us learn this key Bible verse for our series.
- This verse shows us that God commands us to use apologetics.

Introduce

We have just listened to a song on the Bible verse 1 Peter 3:15. This verse includes a command “always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks to give the reason for the hope that you have.”

Today we are starting a series on apologetics. Christian apologetics means to defend Christianity against critical arguments. Or as we have just sung “it is giving an answer to everyone who asks to give the reason for the hope that you have.”

Today we are going to see why we should do apologetics. We will see the reason we should do apologetics is because of the verse we have just sung. God commands us to do apologetics.

Teach

We have seen God commands us to “always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks to give the reason for the hope that you have.” We should do apologetics because God commands us to. We are going to look at a Biblical example of someone using apologetics in practice.

Act out Acts 17:16-34 from the point of view of Paul.

In this passage Paul is talking to some people from Athens. They are philosophers (v18). Paul wants the Athenians to become Christians. Let's do a flow diagram on the white board, to see how Paul uses apologetics while talking to them.

Apologetics opens opportunities to talk about the Gospel:

- As a people, the Greeks tried to worship every man-made god (v23).
- They even had an altar to an unknown god in case they'd missed one (v23).
- Paul starts trying to convince the Athenians it is worth investigating Christianity by using their philosophy. This is a form of apologetics.
- Paul shows that even the Greeks recognize that God created everything including people (v28). This is an example of the argument from Creation which we will look at next time.
- Having shown the Athenians that it is worth exploring Christianity through apologetics, Paul then shares the Gospel.
- Jesus was raised from the dead (v30).
- That the people need to repent (v30).
- We can see that the Athenians were ready to listen to the Gospel because of Paul's apologetics.
- We see that the apologetics worked because Paul was able to share the Gospel and some of the people believed the Gospel (v34).

Apologetics encourages us by strengthening our faith. It equips us with answers when other people question our faith. It means we are less likely to lose our faith:

- There is another reason to do apologetics although we get it from a different part of the Bible.
- Colossians 2:8: *“See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.”*
- Apologetics helps the church not to be fooled by arguments from non-Christians.
- In a 2018 study in the US, the biggest reason young people give for leaving the church is because “they question a lot of the church’s teaching.”
- That is to say, they don’t believe it.
- Now it’s fine to have doubt and seek answers.
- However, these people hadn’t been given any good answers to their questions.
- Apologetics provides good answers to those questions.

Apply

Give the children 2 minutes to write down reasons their non-Christian friends have given as to why Christianity is not true

- Have the children share some of those reasons.
- What have the children said in response?
- Explain when the children have given their responses, they have been doing apologetics.
- Recap why we do apologetics. “Because God commands us to” and the reasons why he commands us to.
- Have the kids repeat the reasons back to you.

Game

Play a game of in the tomb out the tomb

Need

- A mat or rug which will represent the tomb.

Instructions

- Nominate a leader.
- The leader can say:
 - In the tomb (kids jump in the tomb)
 - Out the tomb (kids jump out the tomb)
 - Witnesses (kids place their hands above their eyes)
 - Stole the body (Kids must get in pairs and pretend they are stealing the body)
 - Show the marks on your hands (Kids must hold open their palms)
- Any child who gets the instruction wrong is eliminated.
- If the game goes for a while then the last child to do the instruction is out.

Explain

In that game, we had to do what the leader said. We had to obey the leader's command. The commands focused on Jesus' resurrection which is one of the defenses of Christianity.

Just like we had to obey the leader's commands, we have to obey God's commands. God has commanded us to use apologetics so we should obey.

God created the universe

Kids Apologetics Series – For Upper Primary Kids (ages 8-11)

Teaching Plan – God Created the Universe Genesis 1:1

Hi Everyone,

This is the second in a 5-part apologetics series for kids. Apologetics means to defend the faith. The aim of this series is to equip kids so that they are always prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks them for the hope that they have (1 Peter 3:15). This series can be taught in kids church over 5 weeks or can be used at home by parents to equip their kids. Note if this is being used at home you may decide to skip or change the game.

The first lesson looked at the question of why should we do apologetics.

The second lesson focuses on the argument from creation. The big idea is the existence of God can be shown from the creation of the universe. The argument goes like this:

- Everything that begins to exist has a cause
- The universe began to exist
- Therefore, the universe must have a cause

We will see this cause must be timeless, immaterial, powerful and an agent.

We will look at Genesis 1:1 to show that God created the universe from Scripture.

How we want kids to be changed at the end of this lesson?

We want kids to be able to use the argument from creation to defend the faith.

Singing

1 Peter 3:15 memory verse

– https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XX8z9f_H5GU

- This song will help us learn this key Bible verse for our series.
- This verse shows us that God commands us to use apologetics.

Recap and Introduce

We have just listened to a song on the Bible verse 1 Peter 3:15. This verse includes a command “always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks to give the reason for the hope that you have.”

One reason people often give for not believing in Christianity is because Science has shown that Christianity is wrong.

Ask the kids – “Have you ever heard anyone say this? What have they said?”

Some people say God doesn’t exist because the Bible claims God created the universe but Science has now shown that the universe was created by the Big Bang. Today we are going to look at how we can use Science as evidence to support the Bible’s claim that God does exist and created the world.

Teach

Distribute Bibles to the children and have them turn to Genesis 1:1

In Genesis 1:1 we read “In the Beginning God created the heavens and the Earth.”

This verse tells us that God created the universe.

There is an argument we can use to show Science agrees with Genesis 1 that God created the universe.

The argument goes like this:

- Everything that begins to exist has a cause
- The universe began to exist
- Therefore, the universe must have a cause

This cause must be timeless, immaterial, powerful and personal which sounds a lot like God. Let's see how this argument works.

Everything that begins to exist has a cause

Use the pictures supplied in the [PowerPoint](#).

Have the kids discuss who made each thing shown in the picture (use generic terms such as artist rather than Monet).

Answers

- Water lilies – artist
- Burj Khalifa – architect/builder
- Cruise Ship – Engineer
- Sheet music – Composer
- Food – Chef

These examples show us everything that has come into existence has a creator. We are not aware of any occurrences where this is not true. (NB/ if any kids ask what about God then point out that God didn't come into existence).

The universe began to exist

- We have good evidence that the universe began to exist
- Watch https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xtrYF_hxxUM
- In that video we have seen that there is good evidence to suggest the Big Bang Theory is true and that the universe had a beginning
- That is, it began to exist

Therefore, the universe must have a cause.

- This conclusion logically follows from the first two points we have looked at. If everything that begins to exist has a cause and the universe began to exist then it must have a cause.
- But what can we know about this cause?
- The cause must be timeless (exists forever) because time came into existence during the Big Bang.
- The cause must be immaterial (not made out of material things) because matter came into existence at the Big Bang.
- The cause must be powerful because the universe came into being from nothing. Only something powerful could do this.
- The cause must be an agent that is someone with free will. Why? Well the cause chose to create the Big Bang. Only someone with free will can make a choice. This means that the cause of the Big Bang is an agent.
- The cause must be timeless, immaterial, powerful and an agent. These are all qualities of God. God is timeless, immaterial, powerful and an agent.
- This argument uses Science to show that God exists.

Apply

- We can use this argument when people say that Science shows God doesn't exist.
- We can also use it to help other Christians to grow in their faith as additional evidence of God's existence.

Game

Have a race

Need

A referee and competitors

Instructions

- Have races between kids
- Show them the route for the race and how they have to win

- Explain to the kids they can only start when the referee says go

Explain

That race had a beginning. It started when the referee said go.

Since everything that begins to exist has a cause, this race must have a cause. The referee caused it to happen. The referee created the race.

The universe also has a beginning. Therefore, it must have a cause. That cause is God.

Alternative game option:

Need

Playdough or duplo.

Instructions

Have the children make something out of playdough or duplo.

Explain

Show that this playdough sculpture came into existence and has a cause – the child. Likewise, the universe came into existence and has a cause. That cause is God.

Pray

Thank God that he created the universe.

Argument from design

Kids Apologetics Series – For Upper Primary Kids (ages 8-11)

Teaching Plan – Argument from Design Psalm 8:3-6

Hi Everyone,

This is the third in a 5-part apologetics series for kids. Apologetics means to defend the faith. The aim of this series is to equip kids so that they are always prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks them for the hope that they have (1 Peter 3:15). This series can be taught in kids church over 5 weeks or can be used at home by parents to equip their kids. Note if this is being used at home you may decide to skip or change the game.

Lesson 1: looked at the question of why should we do apologetics.

Lesson 2: looked at the argument from creation.

The third lesson focuses on the argument from design. The big idea is to show God's existence from the apparent design of the universe.

Scientists have observed that the universe is fine tuned for life. That is if small changes were made to the way the universe functions, life wouldn't exist at all. An example of this is if the gravitational constant was to change by even a fraction, matter would either be flung so far apart that stars and planets would not form or matter would have been crushed together at the beginning of the universe and there would have been no expansion of the universe. Please watch this video to get an idea of what we mean by fine tuning – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BjlrAME1LLw>.

The argument from design is as follows:

1. The fine tuning of the universe is due to either necessity, chance or design.
2. The fine tuning is not due to necessity.

3. The fine tuning is not due to chance.
4. Therefore, the universe is due to design.

If the universe is designed, there must be a designer so we have an argument for the existence of God.

We will look at Psalm 8:3-6 as our Scripture showing God is the designer of the universe.

How we want kids to be changed at the end of this lesson?

We want kids to be able to use the argument from design to defend the faith.

Singing

1 Peter 3:15 memory verse

– https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XX8z9f_H5GU

- This song will help us learn this key Bible verse for our series.
- This verse shows us that God commands us to use apologetics.

Recap and introduce

We have just listened to a song on the Bible verse 1 Peter 3:15. This verse includes a command “always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks to give the reason for the hope that you have.” This was our point from week 1. We do apologetics because God commands us too.

Last lesson we saw one reason people often give for not believing in Christianity is they think Science has shown that Christianity is wrong. We saw the argument from creation uses Science to show God exists rather than showing Christianity is wrong.

Today we are going to see another argument that uses Science to show God exists. This argument looks at the way our universe is so fine-tuned or calibrated for life to exist. This fine-tuning points to a designer of the universe who we would describe as God.

Teach

Read Psalm 8:3-6

- What does this passage tell us about who made the moon and the stars?
 - God made them
- What does this passage tell us about man's role in God's creation?
 - Man is to rule over God's creation
- This means that the universe has been designed by God and God has designed man to rule over it.

The fine tuning of the universe

Science shows us that the universe is amazingly precise. If major forces in the universe changed by the smallest of fractions then life would not exist. We call this precision 'fine tuning'

Activity

Need

Traditional radio.

Instructions

Have a child try to find a certain AM/FM channel. They have to make it sound perfect with no crackles and no other radio stations.

Apply

Show that if the frequency is just a little bit off then the radio doesn't work. It needs to be fine-tuned.

Watch this video – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BljrAME1LLw>

- Ask the children if they can summarise the video?
- Essentially the universe has a number of forces that cause it to work the way it does. If any of those forces were to change by even the tiniest of amounts, it would not be possible for life to exist in the universe.
- One example of this is the gravitational constant. If gravity in the universe was to change by even a tiny amount, the universe would either have flung so far apart that stars wouldn't form or would collapse in on itself and again stars wouldn't form.
- This fine tuning needs to be explained.

Argument from design

- This argument has four steps.
- The fine tuning of the universe is due to either necessity, chance or design.
- The fine tuning is not due to necessity.
- The fine tuning is not due to chance.
- Therefore, the universe is due to design.

Step 1 – The fine tuning of the universe is due to either necessity, chance or design

- This step shows the different options that could explain the fine-tuning of the universe.
 - Necessity – The universe necessarily has to be this way ie/ the universe could not have existed any other way.
 - Chance – It is a statistical fluke that the universe is the way it is.
 - Design – The universe was designed this way.
- There is no other option to explain the fine tuning of the universe.
- Which is the best option?

Necessity

- Did the universe have to be this way?
- Do the laws of nature require the universe to be this way?
- Scientists have calculated that the laws of nature could have led to any number of universes.
- Since it is at least possible for other universes to exist then it cannot be the case that the universe had to be this way.

- We can rule out necessity.

Chance

- This leaves two options chance or design.
- Is it just pure luck that the universe is the way it is?
- The problem is it is so unlikely the universe should be like this.
- The probability of the universe being the way it is would be like having 1 white ball and billions and billions and billions of black balls in a jar and you somehow picking out the white ball. It is so unlikely it requires an explanation.

Design

- By ruling out necessity and chance there is only one option left, design.
- If the universe was designed there must be a designer.
- The Bible shows us that designer is God.

Apply

- We can use this argument when people say that Science shows God doesn't exist.
- We can also use it to help other Christians to grow in their faith as additional evidence of God's existence.

Game

Need

A pack of cards

Instructions

- Select a random card from the pack and have the children try to guess the card.
- Anyone who guesses wrong sits down.
- Anyone who guesses correctly stays in the game.
- See if anyone can guess the right card 10 times in a row.

Explain

In that game no one managed to correctly guess the right card 10 times in a row. If someone had managed to do that, we would have thought they were cheating.

The same is true of our universe. It is fine-tuned for life. The probability of the universe existing as it does is even more unlikely than picking the correct card ten times in a row. The most probable explanation is that the universe was designed. If it was designed it must have a designer which is a description of God as the Bible shows he is the designer.

Pray

Thank God that he designed the universe perfectly for life.

Argument from morality

Kids Apologetics Series – For Upper Primary Kids (ages 8-11)

Teaching Plan – Argument from Morality Psalm 119:137-138

Hi Everyone,

This is the fourth in a 5-part apologetics series for kids. Apologetics means to defend the faith. The aim of this series is to equip kids so that they are always prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks them for the hope that they have (1 Peter 3:15). This series can be taught in kids church over 5 weeks or can be used at home by parents to equip their kids. Note if this is being used at home you may decide to skip or change the game.

Lesson 1 looked at the question of why should we do apologetics.

Lesson 2 looked at the argument from creation.

Lesson 3 looked at the argument from design.

The fourth lesson focuses on the argument from morality. The big idea is to show God's existence from the existence of moral laws.

If we are to draw an accurate map of Scotland, we need to compare our map to the actual Scotland to see if we have got it right. Likewise to see if an action is good there needs to be a standard by which we measure whether an action is good or bad. If there is a standard, we can say an action is objectively good or bad.

In society, we are quite happy to say certain actions like love are objectively good and certain actions like murder are objectively bad. That means there must be a standard in which to measure these against. The standard must be outside of humanity and it must be personal as only a person can give laws. Therefore, the only possible solution is God as he is the only personal agent outside of humanity.

Please watch this video before teaching this lesson <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OxiAikEk2vU>

The argument from morality is as follows:

1. If God does not exist, objective moral values and duties do not exist.
2. Objective moral values and duties do exist.
3. Therefore, God must exist.

We will look at [Psalm 119:137-138](#).

Righteous are You, O LORD, And upright are Your judgments. You have commanded Your testimonies in righteousness And exceeding faithfulness.

This shows that God's character is righteous and that his commands flow out of that righteousness.

How we want kids to be changed at the end of this lesson?

We want kids to be able to use the argument from morality to defend the faith.

Singing

1 Peter 3:15 memory verse

– https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XX8z9f_H5GU

- This song will help us learn this key Bible verse for our series.
- This verse shows us that God commands us to use apologetics.

Recap and introduce

We have just listened to a song on the Bible verse 1 Peter 3:15. This verse includes a command “always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks to give the reason for the hope that you have.” This was our point from lesson 1. We do apologetics because God commands us too.

Lesson 2 we saw one reason people often give for not believing in Christianity is because they believe Science has shown that Christianity is wrong. We saw the argument from creation uses Science to show God exists and that Science doesn't show Christianity is wrong.

Lesson 3 we saw another answer to those who say Christianity can't be true because Science has shown that Christianity is wrong. We saw the argument from design uses Science to show God exists.

Today we are going to see another argument for the existence of God. Since moral laws exist, there must be a moral law giver. There must be a standard by which we measure whether an action is good or bad. The only possible standard is God's character. Therefore, we can show God exists from the existence of good and evil.

Teach

Spend 2 minutes having the kids create two lists; one of actions that are good and one of actions that are bad. Have the children feedback some of the actions they have written down.

- Ask the children "How do you know these actions are good?"
- Would these actions still be good or bad if another person thought the opposite? Why?
- For example, Hitler thought it was good to kill people was he right?
- We need a standard of right or wrong to determine what is right or wrong.

Illustration

- Have an item with a long straight edge eg/ a table.
- Have the children guess how long the item is?
- Then measure the item and tell the children the answer.

Explain that when the children guessed the length they were guessing subjectively. The length of the table was what each person doing the guessing thought it was. Is this a good way of measuring the table?

To get the true length of the item we needed to use a standard of length. We used a tape measure which records length in cm's. The standard is cm's.

Explain

What standard can we use to measure morality?

Read Psalm 119:137-138.

What does this passage tell us about God's character?

- God is righteous – that means his character is good.

What does this passage tell us about God's commands?

- They are righteous.
- They are righteous because God is righteous.

The Bible claims that God's character is the standard by which we measure whether something is right or wrong.

Most Atheists (people who don't believe in God) would agree that if God does not exist then there is no standard by which we can measure whether something is right or wrong.

Another way to put it is like this:

- In order for there to be good, there must be a moral law or rule.
- If there is a moral law or rule there must be a moral law or rule giver.
- This moral law giver must be a person (someone with free will) because only a person can give laws.
- The only person we know of outside of humanity is God.

Moral Argument

We can use this argument about a standard for morality to provide evidence that God exists. The argument goes like this:

- Step 1) If God does not exist, objective moral values and duties do not exist.
- Step 2) Objective moral values and duties do exist.
- Step 3) Therefore, God exists.

We have seen both Steps 1 and 2 are true and therefore, God exists.

Apply

We can use this argument in two ways:

1. Firstly, we can use it as evidence for the existence of God when we talk to people who don't believe in God.
2. Secondly, we can use it to encourage other Christians in their faith.

Game

Directions

Assign one person to be the "Captain." The role of the Captain is to call out the actions and dismiss the players who don't do the actions quick enough or who break from character. Once the captain calls an action, each player has to quickly start performing the action (e.g. within 3-4 seconds). If they don't find a group fast enough or perform the right action, they are out of the game. When there is 1 player left, the game is over.

Here is a sample of the actions or commands that the Captain will call out...

- Captain's Coming!: Everyone stands at "attention" (in a salute), and they can't move from this position until the caller says, "At Ease!" If they laugh or break from the attention, they are dismissed.
- To the ship!: Players run to the right.
- To the shore!: Players run to the left.

(For an added bonus be sure to point the right direction the first few times and then begin to point the opposite occasionally. You will be surprised how many go the way you point instead of the right direction)

- Sailor Overboard!: One person drops to one knee the other stands behind them, puts a hand on their shoulder. Both scan the ocean for the sailor overboard.
- Crows Nest!: Three players stand backs to each other and lock arms at the elbows to form the crows nest.
- Mess Table!: Four players (or as many as you have) squat in a circle like sitting at a table and pretend to eat like they haven't eaten in days. Tell them to make really loud eating sounds like "YUM YUM YUM YUM YUM!"
- Walk the Plank!: Five people (or as many as you have) stand in a single file row hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them

Explain

In that game we had to obey commands. The commands were like rules. There was a command or rule giver – the captain.

In life we have moral rules like; love others, do not murder, do not lie. Since there are moral rules there must be a moral law giver. This is an argument we can use to help demonstrate God's existence.

Historicity of the resurrection

Kids Apologetics Series – For Upper Primary Kids (ages 8-11)

Teaching Plan – Historicity of the Resurrection 1 Corinthians 15:3-6 and v17

Hi Everyone,

This is the fifth in a 5-part apologetics series for kids. Apologetics means to defend the faith. The aim of this series is to equip kids so that they are always prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks them for the hope that they have (1 Peter 3:15). This series can be taught in kids church over 5 weeks or can be used at home by parents to equip their kids. Note if this is being used at home you may decide to skip or change the game.

Lesson 1 looked at the question of why should we do apologetics.

Lesson 2 looked at the argument from creation.

Lesson 3 looked at the argument from design.

Lesson 4 looked at the argument from morality.

The fifth lesson focuses on the historicity of the resurrection. The big idea is to show there is good historical evidence that the resurrection of Jesus is true. The importance of the resurrection cannot be overestimated. Paul states in 1 Corinthians 15 that if the resurrection didn't happen then our faith is futile. We are still in our sins (1 Corinthians 15:17). In other words, if you want to prove Christianity is false, prove the resurrection didn't happen. However, there is very good historical evidence to show the truth of the resurrection.

This evidence seeks to establish the truth of three historical facts

- The tomb was empty.
- Jesus appeared after the resurrection to a number of his followers.

- His followers came to live very different lives after they encountered the risen Jesus.

Once these facts are established then we need to seek the best explanation of these facts. The best explanation continues to be that Jesus really did rise from the dead.

We will use 1 Corinthians 15:3-6,17 as the passages in Scripture to support our apologetics.

How we want kids to be changed at the end of this lesson?

We want kids to be able to recall the historicity of the resurrection to defend the faith.

Singing

1 Peter 3:15 memory verse

– https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XX8z9f_H5GU

- This song will help us learn this key Bible verse for our series.
- This verse shows us that God commands us to use apologetics.

Recap and introduce

We have just listened to a song on the Bible verse 1 Peter 3:15. This verse includes a command “always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks to give the reason for the hope that you have.” This was our point from lesson 1. We do apologetics because God commands us too.

Lesson 2 we saw one reason people often give for not believing in Christianity is because they believe Science has shown that Christianity is wrong. We saw the argument from creation uses Science to show God exists rather than showing it to be wrong.

Lesson 3 we saw another answer to those who say Christianity can't be true because Science has shown that Christianity is wrong. We saw the argument from design uses Science to show God exists.

Lesson 4 we saw another argument for the existence of God. Since moral laws exist, there must be a moral law giver. This moral law giver must be God.

Today we are going to look at the resurrection of Jesus. The Apostle Paul says that if the resurrection didn't happen then our faith is meaningless. We are still in our sins (1 Corinthians 15:17). In other words, if you want to prove Christianity is false, prove the resurrection didn't happen. However, there is very good historical evidence to show the resurrection did happen. We will look at this evidence today.

Teach

Opening Activity

Spend two minutes having the kids write down what they know about the resurrection of Jesus and have them share this with each other.

Teach

There are three historical facts about the resurrection of Jesus that are well established among historians (write these up on the board)

- Jesus' tomb was found empty.
- Jesus appeared before a number of his followers.
- The lives of Jesus' followers were radically changed following their encounters with the risen Jesus.

First, we will look at the evidence for each of these facts and then we will seek to find the best explanation of these facts.

Watch this video – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4qhQRMhUK1o>

Have the children feed back to you what evidence the video presented for each of these facts. Write up the reasons. These can be found below.

Jesus' tomb was found empty:

- Lots of early sources increases our confidence that this event did really happen.
- The tomb was found by a group of Jesus' women followers. At that time, in that culture, a women's testimony was worth less than a man's testimony. If this story was made up a man's testimony would have been used as it would have been more believable at that time, in that culture.
- The Jewish authorities who were Jesus' enemies also came to believe that the tomb was empty. Read Matthew 28:11-13. Explain if the tomb wasn't empty the Jewish leaders could have just pulled out the body. Instead they come up with a lie.

Jesus appeared before a number of his followers:

Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-8

- Ask the children who Jesus appeared to?
- Peter was his best friend. He should recognize him.
- His 12 closest followers. They should recognize him.
- 500 people most of whom were still alive when this was written. It is very difficult for 500 people to consistently tell the same story without it breaking down. If you've ever played telephone (aka Chinese Whispers) you will know this. (see game below)
- Then he appeared to James. James was his half-brother and should recognise him.
- Then to the apostles
- Then to Paul – Paul was Saul who was his enemy and so was not likely to say Jesus rose from the dead unless he actually did.
- These testimonies are covered in a large number of early sources giving us confidence that they did happen.

The lives of Jesus' followers were radically changed following their encounters with the risen Jesus:

- The Disciples were scared for their lives after Jesus' crucifixion.
- The Disciples came to believe Jesus rose from the dead even though they had no previous idea this would happen.
- Paul and James became believers even though they were previously enemies or skeptical.
- The disciples were willing to die for their belief.

Best explanation of these facts

Some people have suggested it was a conspiracy:

- The Disciples stole the body and set up a hoax.
- Yet the Jews were not expecting the Messiah to die and rise again. Why would they make it up?
- Why would the disciples die for something they knew wasn't true?

Some people have suggested that Jesus wasn't really dead and was placed in the tomb alive, then escaped.

- Yet the Romans tested to see if he was dead by stabbing him with a spear.
- The tomb was guarded by Roman Soldiers.

Some people have suggested the disciples imagined Jesus had risen from the dead.

- Yet he appeared to multiple people at different times. How could they all have imagined this?
- Also the Jews would have imagined Jesus had gone to heaven not that he had come back to life.
- It also doesn't explain the empty tomb.

The best explanation is that God raised Jesus from the dead.

Apply

We can use this argument in two ways:

Firstly, we can use it as evidence for the existence of God when we talk to people who don't believe in God.

Secondly, we can use it to encourage other Christians in their faith.

Game

Directions

1. **Getting Started.** Players must sit in a circle or stand in a straight line. They need to be close enough that whispering is possible, but not so close that players can hear each other whisper.
2. **Begin the Game.** The first person in the line or circle whispers a word or phrase into the ear of the person sitting or standing to their right.
3. **The Game Continues.** Players whisper the phrase to their neighbors until it reaches the last player in line.

The Conclusion. The last player says the word or phrase out loud so everyone can hear how much it has changed from the first whisper at the beginning of the circle or line.

Explain

In this game we couldn't keep the same story going throughout the chain.

Yet early Christians witnessed Jesus rising from the dead and told the same story even though this was not what they were expecting. This is one of the three historical facts support the truth of the Resurrection of Jesus.