

# DID IT REALLY HAPPEN?

A CHRISTMAS INVESTIGATION

## Week 4: *The Strongest Evidence (Part 2)*

### APPETIZER: Teaching-Based Apologetics

Through him you believe in God.  
~ The Apostle Peter (1 Peter 1:21)

#### JESUS IS GOD WITH US, COME TO



#### SO WE CAN SHARE IN GOD'S LIFE.

*The teaching of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)*

| <u>HUMAN NEED</u>     | <u>GOSPEL ELEMENT</u>    | <u>JESUS' TEACHING</u>  |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|---|
| 1. Safety / Security  | Jesus is GOD WITH US ... | Beatitudes (5:3-12)<br>Safe house (7:24-27)   |
| 2. Love / Acceptance  | SHOW US God's love ...   | God's enemy love (5:43-48)<br>Our Father (6:9)  |
| 3. Forgiveness        | SAVE US from sin ...     | Let go of anger (5:21-24)<br>Lord's Prayer (6:12, 14-15)<br>Do not judge; do help (7:1-5) |
| 4. Purpose / Peace    | SET UP God's Kingdom ... | Thy kingdom come (6:10)<br>Seek first the kingdom (6:33)                                  |
| 5. Self-Actualization | SHUT DOWN religion ...   | Law fulfilled (5:17-20)<br>Living inside out (5:21-6:18)<br>Golden Rule (7:12)            |
| 6. Self-Transcendence | SHARE IN God's life ...  | Ask, Seek, Knock (7:7-11)<br>Knowing Jesus (7:23)   |

More on God's Kingdom of Peace: **Luke 6:27-28; 17:20-21; John 18:36; 19; Romans 12:14-13:7**

More on Self-Actualization: **Ez 36:26; Matt 11:28-12:14; 22:37-40; Mark 7:1-23; Luke 11:9-13; 22:20; John 2-4; Romans 5:5; 13:10; 2 Cor 5:21**

More on Self-Transcendence: **Matthew 25:12, 40; John 17:3, 20-21; 2 Peter 1:3-4**

### DINE IN: Thy Kingdom Come

Matthew 5-7

John 3:3; 12:45; 17:3, 20-21; Romans 5:5; Hebrews 5:11-6:3

#### LAWRENCE KOHLBERG'S STAGES OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT

- Reward and Punishment** (It's all good, as long as I don't get caught.)
  - Self-interest** (What's in it for me?)
  - Social Conformity** (Social norms; I want to fit in.)
  - Law, Order, & Authority** (Rules are right because of authority)
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- Social Contract** (Love for others; It's because I care) **Luke 10:25-37**
  - Universal Ethical Principles** (Love as guiding value) **Matt 22:37-40**
  - Understanding Friend of God** (Moving beyond love as a principle to love as a Person; Knowing God's heart through God's story and God's Spirit) **John 15:15; Romans 5:5; 13:10; Hebrews 8:7-13**  
(Stage 7 added by Dr. Timothy R. Jennings, Psychiatrist)

NOTE: Stages 1-4 lack self-actualization. Religion often moves people to stage 4 and no further.

### TAKE OUT: Testing The Way of Jesus

**Anyone who chooses to do the will of God will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.**  
~ Jesus (John 7:16-17)

**NEXT WEEK:** Home Brewed with Jon Hand!

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## Home Church Questions

### HANGOUT [Warming Up to the Topic – in one Large Group]

1. Review Sunday's teaching. What stood out to you? What questions remain?

### HEAR [Listening to God through Scripture – in Discussion Groups]

There is lots to cover here. Remember to use these questions as more of a menu than a mandatory sequential list.

2. Read **Matthew 7:7-24**.
  - a. What verse or idea stands out to you? Why?
  - b. Luke's version of the "ask, seek, knock" section explains that Jesus is talking about receiving more of the Holy Spirit (**Luke 11:9-13**). So, what is so radical about Jesus offering God's Spirit to all people?
  - c. Who or what do you think the wide and narrow gates/roads represent?
  - d. If **verses 13-14** are referring to eternal consequences, what view of hell do these verses support? (Think back to our "rock, paper, scissors" discussion from last year's "BAD IDEAS" series.) Some scholars believe the "destruction" and "life" mentioned here refer to the fruitlessness or joy we experience in this life? What do you think?
  - e. What do you think is the "fruit" that we should be looking for to identify true and false teachers?
  - f. What would you say to a skeptical friend who says that the fruit of the Church has been nothing more than colonization, oppression, moral superiority and judgement of others?
  - g. Do you "know" Jesus? Talk about your relationship.

### HUDDLE [Making It Personal and Praying Together – in Huddles]

3. Did you take time this week to read through the Sermon on the Mount? If so, talk about your observations and experience.
4. Choose a question or two from your huddle questions handouts before praying for each other.