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# *Week 01: Introduction*

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## **Depiction of Christianity**

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- How is Christianity being portrayed in the world (especially in America?)
  - The media has depicted Christians to be uneducated, ignorant and foolish
    - Ex: shows like Family Guy
- Many people thought (and still think) that we have no way to respond to such speculation and attack
  - Reason: people generally have **“properly basic beliefs”**.
    - They simply believe in what they believe in
      - parent’s generation VS our generation
        - **ex: woman bleeding for 12 years**
          - If she was our friend what would we say to her before she left her house?
  - The problem is when this mindset prevents us from asking questions!
    - How do we know God exists?
    - How do we know Christianity is true?
    - How do we trust the bible to be credible?
      - Some think these questions are “wrong” by nature.
      - **\*\*\*Note: this is a generational issue, not just a cultural issue\*\*\***
- But the bible encourages us to provide reasons for our faith:

- *“But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have” 1 Peter 3:15*
  - 1 Peter’s main audience is for non-Jewish, exiled Christians (new converts)
    - They are being severely persecuted by their neighbors
    - Paul reminds them that now they are family of Christians.
      - This is a re-occurring theme of the bible
      - Ex: Warning label on Football helmets
        - WARNING .... NO HELMET SYSTEM CAN PREVENT CONCUSSIONS OR ELIMINATE THE RISK OF SERIOUS HEAD OR NECK INJURIES WHILE PLAYING FOOTBALL.
  - In other words, if you are not at risk of getting hurt, you are probably hitting too soft!
  - If you are not being persecuted, you are not a fully dedicated Christian.
    - But being persecuted does not mean simply being threatened by the enemy.
      - In the case of the gentiles, Peter was encouraging them to be prepared to give an answer to the non-believers who would give them a hard time.
        - How many of us are ready to give an answer to those around us who ask us questions!
          - Note: if you find yourself getting upset in religious debates with friends, that probably means you do not know your faith comfortably.

- “Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled[a] among us, 2 just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. 3 **With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, 4 so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.**” Luke 1:1-4
- Luke was told by **Theophilus to investigate the events related with Christ Jesus; the Gospel was his report on his research.**

## What do we believe in?

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- Our Christian Creed Recites:
  - “We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and all things visible and invisible. And we believe in one **Lord Jesus Christ** the only begotten son of the Father who was with him before the creation of the World”.
- **Who is Jesus?**
  - Christians = followers of Christ
    - Without knowing Christ **I cannot follow Him.**
- **This question was also important to Christ:**

“When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” They replied, **“Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”** “But what about you?” he asked. **“Who do you say I am?”** Simon Peter answered, **“You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”** Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. **Matthew 16:13-20**

- He is our savior; the messiah (the savior of the world).
- The purpose of this course will be two folds: to properly identify Christ Jesus for who He truly is and to enable students to confidently provide reasons for their faith in Christianity.