

IX. THE PATH TO HUMANISM

2.33.18

*"If you reject the doctrine of penal substitution can you still be a Christian? To say that Christ did not die in your place for your sins **is to flatly deny the atonement itself.** And **it is to deny the validation of the Father who raised Him from the dead.** You can't deny Christ and his work and be saved."* John MacArthur

*"The **resurrection** was **the affirmation** that Jesus was who He said He was, and that what He did worked."* Mike Winger

*"Then in the end, **I stopped believing that Jesus physically rose from the dead.**"* Bart Campolo

1. What did Bart Campolo say he thought of the resurrection after he ceased to believe it was physical? What does Alisa Childers say about the idea that the resurrection is not physically true and what was the verse she used to prove her point? As a Christian, you should commit this verse to memory.

*"There came a point five or six years ago where I had a bike crash. **I almost died...** I remember saying to my wife, **'I think this life is all we get.'** She said, 'Yeah, I think so too.' She said, **'I think you better stop being a professional Christian because you don't believe any of it anymore. I'm a secular humanist.'**"* Bart Campolo

"There's a myth in our culture that Christianity in the west is dying. But if you look closely... it's all the same denominations... they have been emptied of the power that is the gospel." Russell Berger

2. What does Russell Burger say is the problem as opposed to the idea that Christianity in our culture is dying? What does this imply for the doctrines that have been covered in this film?

*"I kept bending things around **so that I could end up with a god who I could truly love.** The problem is that once you're done making all those adjustments, **I realized that the god I believed in was a god of my own invention.**"* Bart Campolo

*"So, what we're seeing is not the failing of Christianity in the west. **What we're seeing is nominal Christians who were never Christian to begin with... being honest about who they really are.**"* Russell Berger

*"The only difference between me and the atheist **is the grace of God.**"* Russell Berger

3. What worldview does Russell Burger say Liberal Christianity (Progressive Christianity) shares a foundation with? When Rob Bell and Richard Dawkins are compared, what is their response to Christian doctrines like penal substitution?

*"**Faith** clearly means, the very word means, **walking in darkness, not certitude.**"* Richard Rohr

*"He's actually saying **that faith is blind**, which of course, **Christians don't understand faith to be a blind leap in the dark.**" Alisa Childers*

4. Alisa Childers says there are two extremes in faith, what are they? What does Alisa say faith is, as opposed to those two extremes? What is the verse displayed?

5. What does Russell Berger say he would rather progressive Christians do? How does he describe such an exodus? Do you agree? Consider Matthew 13:24-30 and 1 John 2:19.

*"And so, on some level Jesus was saying, 'Look, **do you want to know the ultimate expression of Christianity? Love people.**' And I go, like, **I don't think he was far off.**" Bart Campolo*

*"Essentially what your saying is our goal is to actually **keep the law** and that's something that **the gospel is here to remind us that we cannot do.**" Voddie Baucham*

6. What do Alisa Childers and Voddie Baucham say is the problem with someone simply telling you to love and be a better person?

7. What does Dr. Michael Horton say is the message of prosperity preachers and of progressive Christians and how does He say that contrasts the biblical message?

*"In your **humanist worldview**, how do all the sins of the world **get reconciled and fixed? They don't!** They don't! That's why you have to try to stop people from hurting people. **That's why you have to work to make a better world.** Because there's some brokenness you can't fix. There's some wounds you can't heal. **There's some losses you can't make right, you can't make whole.**"* Bart Campolo

8. Fill in the blanks: Dr. Horton says Christ saves us from the guilt and bondage of world that is full of _____ and _____. What does he also say Christians do in response to the gospel?



WHY CHRISTIANITY STANDS APART

This chapter was very revealing concerning the convictions and beliefs of Bart Campolo. The contrast of his humanist worldview with historic Christianity became very stark. Considering this contrast, we want to clarify certain founda-

tional truths from God's revelation that will hopefully be beneficial to you.

Because Christians believe *ultimate justice* is for God to administer in the end, it follows that such justice is out of reach for any earthly authority or government (Revelation 20; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14). What follows from this is that, within the context of earthly judicial systems, the Christian must always seek to protect the innocent—even at the cost of the guilty person going free (Numbers 35:6). The Christian lives this life knowing that the God of *perfect justice* and *perfect love* will bring all things into the open on the last day, will right all wrongs, and wipe away every tear (Revelation 21:4). By contrast, the humanist has *no hope* beyond this life, and the tattered miniscule expectations that a humanist may call 'hope' do not even begin to compare to the certain hope found only in Christ. Due to this fact, *humanists will do whatever is necessary to achieve some sort of utopian vision in this sin-cursed world*. A utopian vision, in large part, is a humanist attempt to usher in a society of perfect justice for all. Sadly, this has led to the bloodiest century in history. The 20th century's world wars were brought about by fascist regimes and communist leaders attempting to implement godless utopian ideologies dreamed up by humanist philosophers like Karl Marx, unleashing historically *unparalleled* oppression and horror.¹ Such realities simply lend to the proof of Christianity, confirming that men are *desperately sinful* and *in need of a Savior!* Only when Christ returns will a perfect utopian world be possible because He, as the King of Kings, will conquer all the evil which is ultimately rooted in the hearts of men (1 Corinthians 5:25).

CERTAINTY AND FAITH

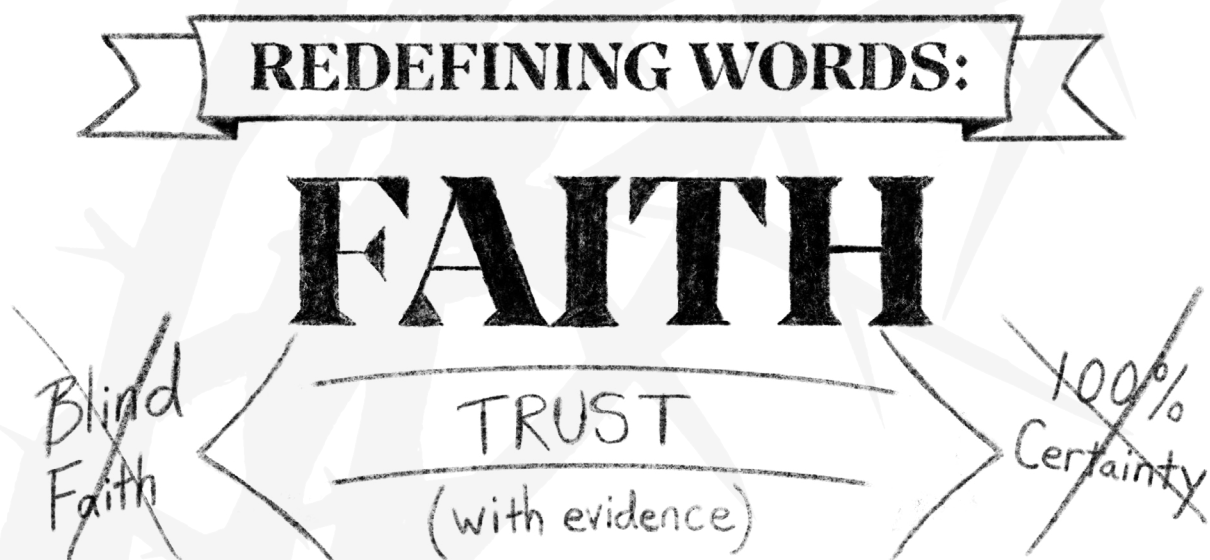
This chapter briefly covered the topic of certainty regarding faith. Just as there are degrees of doubt, there are degrees of certainty. The bible teaches that Christians can know specific truths with a large degree of certainty. For instance, the bible says we should *know* God and the truths of revelation, and this knowledge should be held with certainty—John 17:3 says, “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent” (see also Matthew 9:6, 11:27, 13:11; John 7:17, 8:32, 10:4-5, 14:17).² This is because the objects of our faith, God and His revelation to us, are certain whether we are certain about them or not. There is a difference between the certainty

1. The world wars resulted in around 52 million dead and Stalin in Russia alone was responsible for 15 million deaths, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mass_killings_under_communist_regimes; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II_casualties. In addition, apart from the wars that began in-part due to communism, there were over 100 million deaths in communist countries where the state killed their own people, see *The Black Book of Communism: Crimes, Terror, Repression* by Nicolas Werth, Jean-Louis Panné, Andrzej Paczkowski, Karel Bartošek, Jean-Louis Margolin, Ehrhart Neubert, and Joachim Gauck.

2. John M. Frame, “Certainty,” in *The New Dictionary of Christian Apologetics*, ed. W. C. Campbell-Jack, Gavin McGrath, and C. Stephen Evans (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 143.

of the source and one's individual expression of belief. Our faith, which is the expression of individual certainty or doubt, may waver, but the object of truth rooted in God Himself does not. Religious *doubt* is in opposition to certainty, and the Bible often describes doubt concerning the truths revealed in scripture as sin (Matthew 14:31; Romans 14:23). While doubt is not always sin, it certainly is not a virtue for the Christian.³ The Christian should always seek to strengthen their faith by reading and studying God's word, which will build their conviction, providing greater levels of certainty.⁴ In addition, James 2:19 reveals to us that doubt and unbelief are not exclusively intellectual, they also have to do with the will and the heart. Satan and the demons believe that Christianity is true, but since their hearts and wills are opposed to God, they have no saving faith.⁵ You could say that Satan is *certain* Christianity is true, *even more than you or me!* But that certainty will not save him. Therefore, while you should understand that the expression of certainty in your faith is important, saving trust in the One who provides salvation *is far more important*. "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" (Matthew 6:33). No matter how much your subjective expression of faith may waver, be sure to always cry out to your Savior as the father who had a demon-possessed son did, "I do believe; help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24).

CHALKBOARD ILLUSTRATIONS



3. Frame, "Certainty," 143.

4. Ibid, 144.

5. John S. Feinberg, "Doubt, Religious," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 2nd ed., ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), 356.



LAW

(CREATING A BETTER YOU)

(CREATING A BETTER WORLD)