

Ten Reasons I'm a Christian

1 Peter 3:15

Dr. Kevin Maurice ---- December 28, 2025

All right, welcome back. Hey, I'm pumped for our teaching time today. And kids, I'm glad you're here. We have these handouts with ten blank spaces for you to fill in with me. I want you to write on each line. And after the service I want you to come find me up here, or one of the other staff members will be lined up inside the worship center on either side. You show us this paper, you keep it—you just show it to us and we're going to have a special treat for you. Okay?

Grown-ups, you're allowed to if supplies last.

Now let's please stand and read our scripture together. We'll put this up on the screens. You can find it in your Bibles. It's 1 Peter 3:15. **"In your hearts, honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect."** It's the Word of God. Please be seated.

I love this passage of Scripture. I love it! The Bible is so clear. It tells us to honor Christ the Lord. And then it tells what we as followers of Jesus are meant to do. It says that we're to always be prepared. Prepared to do what? To give an answer to anyone who asks you for a reason. What's the reason? For the hope that is in you. And we're supposed to do this with gentleness and respect. It's one of my favorite passages in the Bible.

And so, this is actually what I'd like to do today, the final Sunday of the year. I want to talk about reasons for the hope that I have in Jesus. Because Christian faith is not this blind leap into the unknown. Christian faith is hope with reason. And it's anchored in Jesus and it's received by grace.

So, today in our time together, I want to share with you ten reasons that I'm a Christian. These are reasons that I am personally convinced of the Gospel. These are signposts that collectively point me to Christ.

If you know Jesus, if you are a follower of the Lord God, I want you to leave today more confident of the hope that you have in Him. If you're not sure what you believe, I'm really glad you're here. I want you to leave today with one or two reasons to consider who Jesus is.

Reason #10: Longing

Okay? Here we go—ten reasons I believe in Jesus. Survey says, number ten: longing. (Kids, check my spelling today too, please.) Number ten is longing. I believe that every person who has ever lived or will ever live has this feeling deep down that there's something more than this. This sense that there's more to life than what we can just simply see, smell, hear, taste, and touch.

And I believe that even from childhood every human being has this desire to know what that is, to connect with whatever that something more is. Have you ever felt that? Now, don't get me wrong. Longing by itself doesn't prove that God exists. But it raises a question: Why are we human beings haunted by this idea that there's something more, haunted by, I would say, eternity?

The Bible tells us in Ecclesiastes 3:11. It says that God has put that idea into the human heart. God has put eternity into the human heart. I believe we feel this sense of longing because we're created in God's image and we're made to know Him and to be known by Him. That's why we have this desire for transcendence and something more.

Creatures are not born with desires unless satisfaction for those desires exists. A baby feels hunger; there is such a thing as food. A duckling wants to swim; there is such a thing as water ... If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probably explanation is that I was made for another world.

---C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

In his book *Mere Christianity* C. S. Lewis puts it this way: "Creatures are not born with desires unless satisfaction for those desires exists. A baby feels hunger; there is such a thing as food. A duckling wants to swim; there is such a thing as water ... if I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probably explanation is that I was made for another world."

Our deepest longings—the ones that nothing in this world can satisfy—are actually signals that we were made for something else; and I would say, that we are made for someone else. Longing is a clue that we were made for more.

Reason #9: Nature (Creation)

And one of the places where I feel that sense of longing most pronounced is when I'm out in nature. That's number nine. Reason number nine is nature, or you could say "creation." It's when you're outside and the thing that grips you is the sense of how small you are in comparison to everything else.

Have you ever been on a mountain and you're overlooking a grove of aspen trees that are changing color? Or you're at the beach and you're standing in the sand, and the waves are hitting your feet and you're staring out at this expanse of water, and it just seems to go on forever? Or you're sitting around a campfire, there's no moon, and you're looking up at the night sky and it's punctured by these bright stars? There's just something about it.

And science is so incredible at explaining the mechanisms of all of that—why leaves change color and why waves roll in and how gravity holds galaxies together. But science isn't meant to tell us whether the universe has meaning or purpose. That's a different kind of question.

And one of the deeper questions that nature whispers to us is: *Why is there so much order?* Because creation isn't just beautiful; creation is coherent. There are laws and rhythms, there's a pattern and precision, there's a design to all of it. We have a cosmos—it's not chaos.

And the Bible tells us why. This is **Psalm 19: "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge."**

Romans 1:20 says **"God's invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, are clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made."**

Nature is meant to draw our wonder and our worship toward the Creator of all of it. It's a signpost. It's a big one.

Reason number nine is that God speaks to us in the world around us—through creation.

Reason #8: Morality

He also speaks to us in the world that's within us. He speaks to us through our conscience, or you could say our morality. You could write justice—this sense we carry that there is a right and a wrong.

Why can we look at history and look at things like slavery or the Holocaust or any of the wars that have taken place and are taking place in our world today and say, “That is evil”? “That should never happen.” When we feel deeply that there's something wrong, we don't just dislike it. We don't just say, “Oh, well, it's my preference that that doesn't happen.” We say, “No, that should not be.” We're not expressing personal preference. We're appealing to a way that things ought to be.

And that “ought to” points beyond us to something objective, to something outside ourselves. And even as children we instinctively appeal to this standard that we didn't invent when we say, “That's not fair!” We just know that there's a way that things should be.

So, what makes something truly right or wrong, other than preference or culture? Our inner sense of good and evil is evidence that there is in fact real moral truth. There's right and wrong, a way things are supposed to be.

And **Romans 2:15** talks about this. It says, **“The requirements of the law are written on our hearts, our consciences”**—our morality—**“also bear witness ...”**

Our conscience is not just learned social behavior. It's not a little cricket that follows you around. Our conscience is a witness. Our moral awareness is God-given. It means that God cares about what is good and just and right.

And not to jump too far ahead, but that's why the Christian story doesn't end with nothingness. It ends with God judging evil and setting the world right—in a new heaven and a new earth where injustice is no more. Reason number eight is about the world that we should have, the one that we want, the one that's right.

Reason #7: Sin

Reason number seven is about why we don't have that world. Because there's a problem. The Bible identifies that problem and calls it sin. Reason number 7 is sin.

I had a friend in college named Kenny who was a devout atheist. He called himself a militant atheist. And he told me once, “Kevin, I don’t believe in God, I don’t believe in Jesus, I don’t believe in any of that stuff. But I tell you what—I believe in sin.”

I said, “Kenny, I do too.”

If you’re sharing the Gospel with someone, sin is a good place to start. Because all of us can look at the world around us and point to something and say, “That’s not right. That’s not how it should be.”

On your phone every single day you’ll find stories of people hating or hurting each other. War, lies, corruption, families falling apart, people using power to crush instead of to serve—there is sin out there. Read any history book. Just look at the world around us and the way that people treat each other. The Bible tells us that creation itself is groaning because something has gone terribly wrong.

But here’s the thing ... sin isn’t just out there in really bad people. It’s also right in here. It exists in me.

Nobody had to teach me as a four-year-old how to yell, “Hey, that’s mine!” and snatch a toy away from my little brother. (Maybe I’m the only one.) Then there’s the desire to pile on when gossip starts happening about somebody, or to just keep scrolling to places I know I shouldn’t, or to lie or cheat or steal. Nobody taught me that. Sin just comes so naturally to us.

We’ve been studying the Book of Romans this entire semester, and the Book of Romans is so clear—we are not good people who occasionally do bad things. We are people whose hearts are bent away from God.

As Christians, when we think about the question “What’s wrong with the world?” the very simple answer is: I am. What’s wrong with the world? I am. Or as the theologian Taylor Swift put it, “It’s me, hi, I’m the problem, it’s me ...”

There is sin out there...absolutely. It exists. But it also lives very comfortably in here. And the truth is that the Christian faith, more than any other religion or philosophy, takes this sin issue seriously—deadly seriously, in fact.

The Bible doesn’t just say, “Yeah, you’re basically fine, you’re most of the way there. Just try a little harder.” The Bible doesn’t present us with this cosmic scale of balance where you try to tip things in your favor. The Bible says we are spiritually dead and we need someone to rescue us. Sin is a big clue for God, because it’s a clue that we need a Savior.

Reason #6: The Bible

And we can learn about who the Savior is because God has given us His word. Number 6 is the Bible. I believe the Bible is the Word of God. I believe in Jesus because I believe the Scriptures are true and trustworthy. And two of the many reasons that I trust the Bible are that it agrees about who Jesus is and because it's historically reliable. Those are two big reasons. Again, there are many more, but these are two reasons I trust the Bible.

The first is gospel agreement. The second is historical reliability.

We have four gospels, four biographies about Jesus. And in those gospels Jesus speaks and acts and does everything in a consistent way. You see, the Bible is not like a random collection of spiritual sayings. The Bible is a unified story of God pursuing His people and ultimately sending a Savior. There's a consistent storyline running throughout the entire thing, across centuries, across authors. There is a theme of creation and a fall, there are promises of redemption. And all of it converges on the person of Jesus.

And what we read about Him in the gospels—all four are unified in the claim that this man is who He says He is. They're unified in what He taught, they're unified in the fact that He was crucified and that the tomb was empty. There's agreement in the gospels.

The second reason I trust in the Scriptures is historical reliability. Historians judge the trustability of ancient documents by two big questions. First, how many manuscripts, how many copies of that writing that we have. Number two: how close are those copies, manuscripts, and writings from the events that they describe?

So, think of all the famous names from history class: Socrates, Plato, Caesar—all of their writings. We have from a few dozen to, in the very best cases, a few hundred of those ancient manuscripts. Part number two—they were written several hundred to a thousand years after the events that they describe. We trust them as true.

Now when we talk about the New Testament, we're in a whole different ballpark. As of right now (I looked it up online—you can track it) we have over 29,900 copies of manuscripts of the New Testament. And the earliest copies aren't from hundreds of years after the fact. They were written decades after the events that they describe. Nothing else in the ancient world comes close!

So, we're not dealing with "legends that showed up thousands of years later." The Bible is reliable as an early, serious historical document. Gospel agreement, historical reliability—two reasons that I trust that the Bible is true.

Quick review—are you still with me? Number 10: longing—there's something more. Number nine: nature—creation points us to a Creator. Morality: there's a way things ought to be—right and wrong. Sin: there's a problem. Number 6: the Bible tells us who Jesus is.

Reason #5: The Church

Reason number 5 that I'm a Christian. It's actually all of you. Well, not just all of you. Reason number 5 is the Church, big C Church—men and women throughout history, across time and space, the people of God who follow Him. The Church has been deeply, uniquely responsible for much—if I could be so bold, most—of the good in the world.

Now I will not pretend that the Church has a spotless record. Throughout history Christians have sinned grievously. We've done evil, we've covered up evil. We should tell the truth, we should repent, and we should pursue justice. If you've been hurt by the church, I'm not asking you to ignore that. In fact, as a representative of the church, allow me to say: I'm sorry.

But here's the truth: when Christians contradict Jesus that's not proof that He doesn't exist or that we don't need Him. It's actually proof that we do. And we should tell the truth both ways, absolutely: where the Church has failed, and also where Jesus has borne incredible fruit through His people.

Pastor Matt talked about this on Christmas Eve: schools, hospitals, orphanages, charity organizations, the abolition of the slave trade, laws protecting women and children. If you look at what we call "universal human rights" that we take for granted today, they're not universal. They're not inevitable. And they didn't arise out of thin air.

They were grown in Christian soil, and they were watered by the Church. The British historian Tom Holland—not that one—



—this Tom Holland—



wrote a book called *Dominion*. And he traces how Christianity reshapes the world from the very beginning. And Holland calls the emergence of the Christian church “the single most transformative development in Western history.” He’s not a pastor; he’s a historian. And he argues that the ideas that we have in the world to care for the weak, to side with the vulnerable, to empathize with victims ... those and many other good things that exist in our world are only here because of the Christian Church.

A clear example of this so often occurs after natural disasters. After fires or floods or freezes, it’s most often Christians and churches that show up first and then stay the longest. Twenty years ago, Hurricane Katrina devastated the city of New Orleans. Days after that catastrophe an atheist journalist named Roy Hattersley wrote an article noting his surprise that all the trucks and the boats and the supplies and the people coming into New Orleans were from churches. And in his article for the *New York Times*, he wrote that the people most willing to take the risks and make sacrifices to help others are overwhelmingly believers in Jesus.

I’m not saying that only Christians do relief work. But for followers of Jesus, that kind of sacrificial love is not a hobby. It’s not something we do on the side. It’s at the very heart of our faith. We love others because He first loved us.

For all her warts, I believe the Church has left the world in a much better place than she found it. So, that’s another reason that I believe in Jesus—because His people point to Him.

Reason #4: The Resurrection

Reason number four: the Christian faith doesn’t begin with a set of teachings; it begins with an event. It begins with an empty tomb. Jesus was publicly executed by the Roman government in a gruesome, memorable way. A lot of people saw Him die. The Roman historian and senator Tacitus writes and mentions Jesus being executed by Pilate.

Three days later, His followers start claiming that He’s alive. That’s a ridiculous claim—unless it’s true. And a lot of people lose if it’s true. And all anyone would have to do to silence this claim and dispel this myth forever—that Jesus of Nazareth got out of the grave—is bring out the body. Everyone knew where He was buried. They knew what He looked like. If you want to

kill, once and for all, this notion that this guy is alive, show us the corpse. No one ever did. And no one ever claimed to.

And this resurrection—this claim didn't start generations later in some far-off place. It happened right there in the same city where He was murdered. And from there the message spread.

And just think about who spread this message. The first eyewitnesses of the empty tomb are women. In our culture in the twenty-first century that sounds great. But in the first century, if you're making up this hoax, that's not how you would tell it. You'd find a different way. You'd kind of hide that truth. Women in the first century weren't even counted as reliable witnesses in the court of law.

Now let's think about the guys in the story for a second—the men, the disciples—before and after the resurrection. Before the tomb, these guys are cowards. They flee at the first sign of trouble, they deny Jesus, they hide away. Only one of them is actually there when He's crucified. The others are too scared. Three days later, after the resurrection, something changes. Because all of them will go and die a grisly death proclaiming this truth—that He's alive—every single one.

It's not eight of the eleven who go and die for this lie and then the three others think, *Phew, okay, Peter's gone. We made it up. Sorry.* All of them go die in horrific ways, and the last thing on their lips is "Jesus is alive." That's an amazing piece of evidence for the truth of the Gospel. Jesus is alive.

That's the resurrection. The resurrection tells us Jesus is alive.

Reason #3: The Cross

Reason number three tells us why He came. Reason number three is the cross. We've talked about this. There is good and evil. There's right and wrong. The world is broken and I am part of the problem. So, what does a holy and just God do with that?

The Bible tells us that God doesn't just shrug off evil. Sin is serious. Justice matters. And on our own, there's no way for us to fix the problem, to "undo" this damage. Religious rituals and good works don't fix things.

Just think about your own life. Think about forgiveness. If somebody does something wrong to you and you forgive them—you truly forgive them—you don't just pretend like

nothing happened. You take on the cost, the burden. Maybe it's financial. Maybe it's mental or emotional, whatever it might be. When you cancel someone's debt against you, when you forgive them, you're the one actually paying it.

Okay, now scale that up to a holy God. If evil is going to be forgiven, the cost has to be paid. And that cost is astronomical. And since we can't do it, God Himself pays it.

He deals with sin in the most direct way possible. He deals with it on the cross. Because at the cross Jesus takes our sin and our shame and our judgment onto Himself, and He takes what we deserve so we can receive what we don't deserve. That's called grace. And that's how we're forgiven.

God loves us so much that He brings us back to Himself. So, at the cross God is just. Morality still exists. And He's the one who justifies so that we can be made new and adopted as His own.

That's what the cross is. It's God's love and His justice meeting in one place. So, it's not just a symbol of punishment. It's not just something we wear. The cross is the clearest picture of God's love. It's on full display in Jesus.

Reason #2: Jesus

And that's reason number two. And I know what you're thinking. *Whoa, Kevin, we're in church—Jesus is number two?* Bear with me. Hold on. Everybody who filled out their papers early was thinking, *I know it's number one.* Gotcha! Jesus of Nazareth—there is not a serious historian or scholar, Christian or not, who denies that Jesus was a real person, that He had followers, that He was executed by the Roman Empire in the first century.

The question is not “Did Jesus exist?” Everyone agrees, yes, He did. The question is, “Who was He?”

For most of the world the answer is, “Well, I think Jesus was a great moral teacher.” Or “He was a really good philosopher, maybe even a prophet or a holy man.” Right? People like a lot about Jesus.

But Jesus doesn't give us that option. He claimed to be the Son of God. He didn't say, “I'm a prophet.” He said, “I am the Son of God. I created you.” He claims to be Lord and Savior. In **John 14** Jesus says, **“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”**

With Jesus there are only three options. And this reasoning for faith was made famous by C. S. Lewis, and it goes like this. Because of what Jesus said about Himself, only one of these three things can be true.

One is that Jesus is Lord. He was being honest. He was telling the truth. He is who He says He is. He is God Almighty and He came to save us from our sins. That's option number one.

Door number two: He was a liar. He made it all up. He's history greatest charlatan. He's a con artist. He deceived everybody.

Or, option number three: He was out of His mind. He believed what He said about Himself. But if He believed those things and He wasn't, He's crazy. He's a lunatic. He was delusional.

Notice that "good teacher" or "great philosopher" or "important person" doesn't make the list. Jesus claimed far too much about Himself for those things. So, because of what Jesus said about Himself, one of these is true.

And when I look at His teaching, when I study His life, when you look at His character and His compassion and courage, when you look at His death on the cross and the resurrection ... He's the Lord.

Reason #1: Drawing

The final reason, number one. And truthfully, this final reason runs throughout all this, from longing, to nature, to morality and sin, the Bible, the Church, the resurrection, the cross, Jesus. After all this, here's my honest answer to why I'm a Christian. I believe in Jesus because He came after me. The Bible calls this "drawing." You could call it "calling."

All these reasons matter. They clear the fog, they make sense of the world, they show us that faith isn't this leap into the dark. But the Bible is clear: underneath all our thinking and our searching, there is a God who was moving toward us.

Jesus said this in **John 6: "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him."** "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws her." "No one can come to me unless God draws them." Every story of someone coming to faith in Christ is actually a story about God, who is running to you first.

And yes, we have to respond. We repent, we believe, and we step toward Him—but only because He first stepped toward us.

And the way that God draws us to Himself can look so different from person to person. It could be a conversation, or a crisis. It could be a Bible verse that you had in your brain since you were a kid. It could be the sermon that you just can't shake. Or it could be this quiet moment out in nature where all of a sudden you know that this is true.

Every night, with each one of my daughters, I pray with them, I pray over them. And I close the prayer with, "God, Jesus, draw her to Yourself." I'm asking God to do what only He can do in their hearts.

The Christian faith is about the living God who comes into your life—often in unexpected ways, through unexpected circumstances. He works in your mind and works on your heart.

He shows you the wonder of the cross. He shows you the uniqueness of Jesus the Christ. And He draws you to Himself. That's my story. Those are my reasons. I pray this is your story as well.

So, who is Jesus? Who do you say He is? What do you believe about Him? If you're a follower of Jesus, I hope that today has encouraged you, that you're walking out a little more confident in your faith, that you're more prepared to give a reason for the hope that's in you.

In fact, I would ask you to pray. Ask God this week for an opportunity to share your hope with someone who doesn't know the Lord. Say, "God, I ask you to give me that opportunity with a friend or a neighbor or a family member—that they would ask, 'Hey, why do you believe?'" God loves to answer that prayer.

If you're not a Christian yet—maybe you're skeptical or curious, or maybe you're carrying some hurt, or you've just got a lot of questions—I want to say that I'm so glad you're here—truly. We as a church would love to be a place where you explore who Jesus is. And I'd ask you to consider before you leave today—come find one of our staff members, our pastors. You can come find me up front. Talk to the person that you came with or stop by the welcome center. We'd love to meet you and help you take the next step.

And I wonder ...could it be that the reason you're here is because God is drawing you to Himself? What would it look like, maybe not to have every question answered, but to simply

ask, “Jesus, if this is true, would You show Yourself to me?” God would love to answer that prayer too.

Kids, on your piece of paper you’ve got ten reasons to believe. You may not understand all of them, but hold onto those. Talk to your parents. Ask them today, “Mom, Dad, what are some reasons that you believe in Jesus?” And my prayer for you is the same one that I pray for my daughters every night: that Jesus would draw you to Himself and you would know and follow Him all the days of your life.

That’s my prayer for all of us. Grace, as we head into a new year, that’s my prayer—that we would know and follow Jesus more and more closely; that we would be men and women in a church that grows and becomes more and more like Christ in all of life. Let’s do that together.

Would you please pray with me?

Heavenly Father, we thank You for who You are. We thank You that You loved us. God, even while we were still sinners You loved us and You sent Jesus to die for us. God, thank You that You don’t leave us as we are or on our own, but that You sent a Savior.

God, thank You for the ability to reason and to think and to search and to discover and to know You more and more closely. Jesus, I pray that we would follow You more and more; that we would be a people, that we would be a church, that is a light to others in a dark world; that we would be a church that is kind and compassionate and speaks the truth with grace. Help us to do that.

Holy Spirit, fill us, be with us, guide us. I ask that You would set up some of those conversations to happen this week; that out of nowhere, but really out of somewhere, a friend or a family member or a neighbor would ask us, “What’s your reason? Why do you have hope?”—and that we would be able to share with them in boldness and confidence in who You are.

We pray all of this in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.