

# Welcome to the Jury

Part 1 of the *In Defense of Christianity* Series

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Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience.

1 Peter 3:15–16

Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!” But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

John 20:24-25

Reasoning with the other side rather than denouncing the other side opens the door for understanding.

A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!”

Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.” Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!” Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

John 20:26-29 NIV

Rather than be upset or offended by our doubts and questions, Jesus lovingly invites us to take a closer look.

In order to come up with the right verdict you need to...

- Open your heart to the possibility that God exists and that the claims of Christianity are valid.
- Trade in your preconceptions for an attempt at objectivity.
- Allow the evidence to speak for itself
- Invite God to show you that He’s real.

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## Next Steps

- Pray this Prayer: *God, if you’re real, would you please show me.*

Take some time to answer the following questions with your spouse, children, or small group...

- Icebreaker Question: What are the top 3 movies you’ve seen this past year and why?
- Have you ever had some preconceptions about a person that caused you to misjudge them or their character? Explain.
- In today’s cultural climate, there doesn’t seem to be a whole lot of room for “reasoning together” any more, it’s mostly talking down at or denouncing one another. Why do you think this is? What can you do to change this?
- How do you tend to respond to people who criticize your faith? Read John 20:24-29. How does Jesus respond? What needs to change for your response to be more like Jesus’?
- What are some of the questions you have about God and Christianity?
- Take some time to pray for those you know who have doubts & questions.