

# discernment

## what is discernment?

2 Types: Will  
Truth

## premise

There is Truth and error

## general worldviews

No Ultimate Truth  
Many truths

## what is discernment? - from the bible

- Hebrews 5: 11-14
- Philippians 1: 9-10
- Romans 16: 19
- Ephesians 5: 8-10
- Romans 12: 2
- 1 Thessalonians 5: 21-22
- 1 John 4: 1

## what is the gospel?

1 Corinthians 15: 1-5 (*shamelessly plagiarised from John Piper*)

- Planned
- Historical
- Objective Accomplishment
- Offer
- Application to you
- Joyful, eternal future

**warning!!!** Galatians 1:6-9

## case studies

# discernment: case studies

## *what is good? what is bad?*

### What are humans like?

*'While we have spent centuries arguing over the doctrine of original sin, pouring over the Bible and huge theological tomes to prove the inherent sinfulness of all humankind, we have missed a startling point: Jesus believed in original goodness! God declared that all his creation, including humankind, was very good. And it's this original goodness that Jesus seeks out in us'*

Bible Passages: Genesis 1-3, Psalm 51, Romans 3, Mark 7

### God is incapable of forgiveness!

*"The traditional understanding says that God asks of us something that God is incapable of Himself. God asks us to forgive people. But God is incapable of forgiving. God can't forgive unless He punishes somebody in place of the person He was going to forgive. God doesn't say things to you Forgive your wife, and then go kick the dog to vent your anger. God asks you to actually forgive, and there's a certain sense that, a common understanding of the atonement presents a God who is incapable of forgiving. Unless He kicks somebody else."*

Bible passages: Hebrews 9: 22, Romans 3: 21-26

### How do I become a Christian?

*"A little over 2,000 years ago, they crucified Jesus on the cross; they put him in the grave; they thought that was the end of it. But thank God on the third day, he arose. He said, 'because I live, you shall live also.' He wasn't talking about just breathing; he was talking about living an abundant life. Not a barely get by life, not a life filled with bad habits and addictions and lack and mediocrity. Because of the price He paid, we have a right to live in total victory... not partial victory."*

Bible Passages: John 14:19, 2 Corinthians 12: 7-10

### Virgin Birth?

*"What if tomorrow someone digs up definitive proof that Jesus had a real, earthly, biological father named Larry, and archeologists find Larry's tomb and do DNA samples and prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that the virgin birth was really just a bit of mythologizing the Gospel writers threw in to appeal to the followers of the Mithra and Dionysian religious cults that were hugely popular at the time of Jesus, whose gods had virgin births? But what if, as you study the origin of the word 'virgin' you discover that the word 'virgin' in the gospel of Matthew actually comes from the book of Isaiah, and then you find out that in the Hebrew language at that time, the word 'virgin' could mean several things. And what if you discover that in the first century being 'born of a virgin' also referred to a child whose mother became pregnant the first time she had intercourse? What if that spring were seriously questioned? Could a person keep on jumping? Could a person still love God? Could you still be a Christian? Is the way of Jesus still the best possible way to live? Or does the whole thing fall apart?...If the whole faith falls apart when we reexamine and rethink one spring, then it wasn't that strong in the first place, was it?"*

Hint question: What does this say about Jesus and about the Bible? What falls apart?