

# **Vector Academy Doctrine Projects**

## **Class of 2021-2022**

### **Essays**

#### **Table of Contents**

1. "Jesus and Cars" by Walker Young
2. "Why I Believe the Bible" by Clayton Venhaus

# Jesus and Cars

by Walker Young

---

Jesus and cars; there are many correlations to be made:

## **The Car and The God**

Everyone has had experience with cars (positively or negatively), but there are no neutral positions about these machines. They affect all of your life; they have left no other option for you. Whether one of these machines is considered personally yours or not, you have interacted with them. You can borrow your parents' car for a while or you can borrow a friends'. But when it comes down to the wire and you want to join in that all glorious race,—where they have sacrificed many things in life to participate in that race— you can't race unless the car is under your name. So too is racing for Jesus.

Jesus affects your life just like cars; you have had experience with Jesus positively or negatively, and there is no option to ignore Him. You can have Him in your heart or you can borrow your parents' Jesus or even a friends' Jesus, but when the day comes to be called home (in that all glorious Home where your parents and friends have sacrificed many things in this life so they could participate), if you don't have the personal Jesus, you can't come in.

## **Problem solving and Identification of Wrong Heart Position Idols**

In order to get to the bottom of any particular car issue in any situation, there are certain levels of identification and diagnostic tests. For example, if you have a cracked radiator in one of your many cars, your temperature gauge will go wack or straight to reading "overheated."

You can start with replacing the lost fluid, and that will temporarily fix the problem. Or you can JB Weld the crack on the actual radiator (another temporary fix). The latter would seem to stand up to the test, but under any real scrutiny and usage pressure, it would give out after any given amount of time, and you'd be back to square one.

You could also save yourself the money and just park in the gravel the minute you see fluid and just don't diagnose the problem. Or with a quick glance at the temp gauge which reads "overheating," you could replace the water pump which, in itself, isn't a bad thing, but that wasn't the actual problem. In the long run you are better off. You could also just do a full diagnosis with a friend or a certified mechanic if needed to find the problem and fix the main problem the first go around. This is also how getting rid of idols in our lives is. We can see the temp gauge of our life starting to go wack or overheated in life. We can ignore the problem and park that part of our life in the gravel, continuing on with other cars and pretending we never saw a thing, but that means a part of our life that isn't blessing people.

We can also do a hasty diagnosis and change the position of our heart in a different area which is good in the long run, but not for this particular problem. Or we could also ask a friend with some experience in this area to come over and make sure the problem is correctly identified and fixed. With true repentance and a turning of the heart, that blessing in our life that had become cracked and an idol, is restored as an important part of your everyday life.

### **Prayer and Bluetooth**

Hands free Bluetooth is a wonderful thing. It is so handy to have when you're alone or when you're with a group of people, and you all want to talk to the same person. All you have to do is start talking, and soon you are having an everyday conversation with your person of choice while doing whatever you need to do. So too is talking with God: all He is is a word away— better yet, a thought inside your head away.

Alone or in a group of people, no problem for Him. Alone? You can tell Him anything and everything that's on your mind. In a group? That's not a problem either. You all can talk at once or take your turns; He will hear all of you. And this connection never fails.

### **Life and Trails**

Any off-road trip is cool, but the ones that give the most satisfaction and offer the most reward are the ones where you sweat, bleed, give things up, and continue to push on because of a promised reward you can't experience here at the trail head. It takes listening to

experienced drivers, reading manuals and maps, preparing your vehicle, learning what are good anchor points, and ultimately who goes on the trip with you.

This is also how it is living life. You must go find more experienced men and women who have gone the distance and sometimes traveled many trails in life. There are things to be learned from people who are on completely different trails than you plan to travel. Learning about Jesus, how He works, and who He is. These are all things that you can find out through ultimately reading the Bible (the "Jesus Manual") where He describes who He is, what the end of the trail holds for you when you get there, and what to expect along the way. He won't tell you how exactly to get there, but He does say to stick to the trail.

Don't stray away even when the grass is greener and seems easier; it is always harder to get back to the trail after leaving it. The ground is always rockier and sometimes softer off the trail, grabbing at you, slowing down your progress. As you progress along the trail, sometimes it will camber away from the mountain, causing you to fall away from the trail, losing sight of the trail, and potentially making you forget what the trail looks like, but ultimately it's not the trail creator who caused you to slip away, it's what you choose to do when you slip away: will you power through on your own? Will you ask to tag on to the more experienced truck in front of you to keep you on the path? If there is no truck, will you use one of the trees along the trail (Jesus)?

You must also hook the line somewhere on your truck. If you hook it to the frame, which is the frame of your whole truck, you will be kept safe. By safe I mean by the end, you will still have your life; the cool stickers, your status and reputation, your wheels, your job, your body panels, and your body might all be missing, cracked, broken, scratched, and possibly unrepairable by your standards, but you still have your life which is committed to Jesus and all those things were just given to you by Him. He can restore all of those things to better than new if you allow Him.

Sometimes the path will become steep. Will you quit because it requires discipline, commitment, possible change of "driving style," and maybe some uncomfortable grinding of

gears to make it? Rocky and narrow is where the trail winds sometimes. Will you just drive through the grass to the side because it's easier on you? Because "see they're doing it too, and they're headed toward the mountain?" But you can't see the swamp water rusting away their frames and water logging their air box.

Seeming to wind about, occasionally you'll have a flat tire and blown hub in the bottom of a canyon where the sun doesn't reach the trail. With the mountain towering above you and these seemingly dreadful circumstances, will you leave the promise of that glorious reward for one blown hub and flat tire (your job that didn't work out and your girlfriend leaving)?

After you have fought through the harder parts of the trail, made repairs, received some dents, and scratched up the truck you've been given, you're not going to give up now because some of the most glorious stories are the ones where the most broken and battered trucks make it to the end of the trail limping into view, but they made it.

Who is in your truck matters— it matters a lot. Like you're not comprehending how much it matters on a trail that is worth traveling. When you're bogged down in a foggy, cold, wet, miserable valley surrounded by negative options and you don't know what the next step is, the last thing you need is someone bragging about how "when they had this happen, they did it this way." If you see a long steep drop that's rocky and dry— one you can barely see the trail on, but you know it's the way to go because, looking back, all the big points that are in a straight line along your trail have pointed you to this way, you don't want your partner to steer you way because "that doesn't look fun. That's scary; I wouldn't do it."

You want someone who is reading the map, knows the manual, looks at the next part of the trail and asks, "is this the right way?," confirming you have previously looked at the map and considered experienced opinions. Someone who prays to Jesus that He will bless this trail and keep you both safe. That is an invaluable asset to your life because they will point out things on the map to watch out for that you never saw. They have different gifts and abilities, and sometimes they might have a louder Holy Spirit that they listen to saying, "wrong trail!

They make hard times and hopeless times better because, while you're freaking out, they are reading the Manual, looking at the map, looking at where you've been, getting advice from the driver of the passing King of Hammer truck (someone like Josh Mcpherson), and coming back to you and showing you where to go and what the next turn is and how fast you can "be back at it." But you still have to make the final call as the driver whether or not you're going to do the plan.

### **The Church and the Off-road community**

There is a large community of off-road drivers. They come from all backgrounds and ways of life. Some, it came too easily; some it is a family heritage, and for others, they are the firsts in their family. There are the real off-roaders who immerse themselves in the off-road world and help others along the way, teaching and encouraging younger drivers and their peers. This is how the Church is as well. Everyone is at a different stage: there are first timers, family generations, and others who come to just check it out and see what it is all about. But following Jesus is like off-road communities: encouraging others along the way, pointing out broken things, and modeling how to better conquer different obstacles.

# Why I Believe The Bible

By Clayton Venhaus

---

There are many different reasons as to why people don't believe the Bible, but truthfully, I think all their issues with Christianity, the Bible, and ultimately God, all come down to one central concept: "Why do bad things happen to good people?"

At least in my life, I have heard this question asked extensively, and it is a concept with which I have struggled with as well. Although it has been a persistent issue for me in the past, it is an issue that I have overcome by the way of God's revelation; and through that revelation, I have found that the answer to this question is a genuinely good reason to trust the Bible.

Most of the conversations I've had and heard regarding this topic start off the same way, but separate further on into two distinct conversations. One with the more philosophical person, and one with the more science-oriented person.

To start off with both, let's return to the question at hand: "Why do bad things happen to good people?" At first, this question can seem like an advantageous argument against the morality of God, but it is very much not so.

I reply with: "Well yes, bad things do happen, but you're making the assumption that people are good. The Bible says: 'for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23), so I don't think any of us are really worthy of being considered good."

"Yeah we all make mistakes, but that doesn't mean we're bad. I'm sure lots of people's good deeds outweigh their bad deeds."

"Not quite. As the prophet Isaiah stated: "We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment"(Isaiah 64:6). The Bible is pretty explicit about no man being righteous. I think the question you asked needs to be rephrased. If we're all bad then 'why do good things happen to bad people?' Have you ever had anything good happen in your life?"

"Well yeah, of course I've experienced good things in my life."

"Exactly. I don't think I've ever met anyone or heard of someone who has never experienced something good. Even the absence of negative circumstances can be viewed as good, turning the dull moments in life into something adequate; and if all mankind is incapable of doing good, why do you, as a sinful being, receive anything good in this life? The only reliable answer to this is God's grace and mercy."

Now that all sounds good and everything, but none of any of this matters if God doesn't exist, because without God, the Bible is void of any meaning. This is also where the



two types of conversations diverge, so I will start with the philosophical conversation before the scientific.

"You're only using the Bible to explain your views. I don't believe in the Bible, so all your reasoning is pointless to me. Why should I believe in God?"

"Alright. Well earlier you asked the question: 'Why do bad things happen to good people?' When you ask me that question you are indicating that you believe an objective, universal, moral standard exists. The only way universal morals can exist is if one individual is the standard. So the person asking the question either simply doesn't want to admit to themselves that a higher power exists, or they're just a narcissist who thinks they are that standard. Are you a narcissist?"

"I could be."

"Have you ever made a mistake?"

"Well, yeah. Like I said, everyone makes mistakes."

"Very true. Not to be rude in any way, but if you are that standard, then you're a pretty terrible one because you've made mistakes; and for one to believe that they are the moral standard means that morality only exists within their lifespan. Not before they were born or after they die which is absurd and based on nothing but their self-centeredness, and

ironically self-centeredness is societally considered to be non virtuous, but you don't look like someone who would claim that responsibility."

"Yeah no, I am definitely not the moral standard."

"So then the standard must be a perfect being right?"

"I guess."

"Well since everyone makes mistakes, then no human being is capable of being that perfect standard; and since the animal kingdom is extremely inconsistent with how animals act, I don't think animals are the standard either. To me, some form of God seems like the only reasonable conclusion."

This argument might convince some, but the more scientifically inclined may not be so easily swayed by it. So to appease them let's switch over to the more "scientific" argument.

"You're only using the Bible to explain your views. I don't believe in the Bible, so all your reasoning is pointless to me. Why should I believe in God?"

"I mean you've probably heard this argument used a dozen times already, but I think the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics is a good reason to believe in a god. The universe is becoming increasingly more chaotic, which goes directly against the theory of evolution."

"That's not how Thermodynamics work. It only applies to a closed system. I bet you don't even know the other 3 Laws of Thermodynamics."

"Whether or not they are factual does not depend on my knowledge of them. So if the universe isn't a closed system then that means that the universe is infinite."

"Well I guess it has to be."

"Alright, so then that means you've got 4 possible conclusions to make about the beginning of the universe - (1) the Big Bang was a finite amount of gasses and material that spawned an infinite universe, (2) the Big Bang was an limitless amount of gasses that created an infinite universe, (3) the universe itself is infinite and has simply always existed, or (4) there is a higher power."

"Well I don't believe in a higher power so number 4 is out of the question. I don't think the universe has existed forever because there's no good evidence to support that, so that's also out of the question. I guess I'll have to go with one of the first two then, the two involving the Big Bang, but I don't know which one I'd choose over the other."

"Well personally I think the first two options are honestly just absurd. Specifically when the matter of an infinite universe is brought into the equation. The infinite universe coming from a non-infinite gas is very hard to believe, and an infinite mass of gas just always existing is even harder for me to believe. Do you really believe that an infinite cloud of gasses that has always existed is more plausible than an infinite and intelligent being?"

"Yeah I see what you're saying; and truthfully, I don't know the answer."

"Fair enough. As you said a second ago, the third option of the universe being infinite doesn't seem likely, and I agree. Although I do think it is the most reasonable of the atheist views; at least in my opinion. Scientifically, if matter cannot be destroyed, it's reasonable to follow that it cannot be truly created either; but as you said, this theory is still completely based on zero evidence, and as with the Big Bang theory, it really seems more faith based than science based because it cannot be observed. Honestly I can't see a reasonable way to explain the question of creation without a higher power, so I must conclude that a higher power exists."

These discussions have never outright convinced people that they're wrong or converted people to Christianity on the spot, but it does make them think. Whether or not my discussions with people ever changed someone's mind is unknown, but having these discussions with people is all we can really do.

So to finalize, the only way for this bizarre yet oddly organized world to make any sense is if a perfect God exists; and if a perfect God exists, then His word to us must also be perfect and truthful. That is why I believe the Bible.