

*Is it possible to be a Christian if you struggle to believe that Jesus was born a virgin?*

If one denies essential Christian doctrine, then he is outside the kingdom of God. The bible is able to make one "adequate, equipped for every good work" (2 Ti 3:17). The psalmist wrote, "The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul" (Ps 19:7). Apart from scripture, no spiritual truth can be known. The gospel is simple enough for a child to understand (Matthew 11:25, KJV). God's word is able to make wise the simple (Ps 19:7).

Belief in: the trinity (Is 6:3), incarnation (1 Jn 4:2-3)<sup>1</sup>, virgin birth (Is 7:14)<sup>2</sup> and bodily resurrection (1 Co 15:14) is essential Christian doctrine.

Certain teachings of scripture carry threats of damnation to those who deny them: acknowledgment of sin (1 Jn 1:6-10), justification by faith (Ro 4:4-5)<sup>3</sup>, Lordship (Ro 10:9) and love for God (1 Co 12:3, 16:22).

Faith is essential to have a right relationship with the Lord (Heb 11:6). Belief in the fundamentals of Christianity is a matter of eternal life and death. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6).

One must believe (1 Jn 2:23) in the Jesus of scripture (Jn 17:3; 14:6; Ac 4:12). He is God incarnate (1 Jn 5:20; Jn 8:58; 10:30). Jesus is worthy to receive all honor like the Father and the Spirit (Jn 5:23). The truth of his divine Sonship and Messiahship is essential (Jn 20:31).

Those who misrepresent scripture will be destroyed (2 Pe 3:16). A high, lofty view of scripture<sup>4</sup> is the mark of a true Christ-follower.

The person and the work of Jesus<sup>5</sup> is all-important (1 Co 3:11). God's word can be trusted (Mt 5:18, Jn 1:1, 14). Those who set it aside for their own traditions (Mark 7:6-9) and do not abide in his teachings (2 Jn 9-11) will be damned.<sup>6</sup>

Individuals who have difficulty believing are encouraged to come and reason with the Lord (Is 1:18); so that they do not condemn themselves (John 3:18). The Lord is able to open blind eyes and change unbelieving hearts (Mk 9:24, Ac 9:8-9).

Those who deny essential teachings or aid and abet the enemy heap judgment upon themselves (Mt 12:30, 2 Jn 11, 1 Co 5:1-3). Satan uses them for his own purposes and then flips them like a cigarette butt (Pr 21:28, Mk 4:15).

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<sup>1</sup> E.g. the virgin birth, his deity, his humanity, his sinlessness.

<sup>2</sup> Those who deny the virgin birth are in essence claiming that he would be merely human, not eternal God come in the flesh (1 Jn 4:2-3, 2 Jn 7).

<sup>3</sup> Imputation of His righteousness not one's own (Ro 3:27-28, 10:3-5, Ga 2:16-3:29).

<sup>4</sup> A sound method of Bible interpretation (e.g. hermeneutics).

<sup>5</sup> The essential doctrines related to his work: his atoning death, his resurrection, the reality of his miracles (1 Co 15:1-4; Heb 2:3-4).

<sup>6</sup> How can we determine what doctrines are essential and what are they? Psalm 19:7; Hebrews 11:6; John 5:23; 2 Timothy 3 QA146. Grace to You. Aug 18, 2016: <https://www.gty.org/library/questions/QA146/how-can-we-determine-what-doctrines-are-essential-and-what-are-they>

Jesus asked his disciples, "Who do men say that I am?" Mk 8:27. How one answers that question determines his destiny (Jn 14:6). Paul Begley said, "You cannot shack up with another God and think you're a Christian."