Welcome to the study guide to John Stott’s Basic Christianity.

These notes were prepared by Dr. Christopher A. Faria, Ph.D. They are not endorsed by the publisher of Basic Christianity, nor by the author.

They are designed to assist an individual or a study group in considering the basic questions of each chapter.

**How to best utilize these study guides**

After printing out each set of questions, first, read each chapter with a pen in hand. Most of the questions were taken directly from the statements made in each chapter. Read the question and then read for the answer in the text.

Secondly, you will also find it valuable to have a Bible at hand. We recommend a New American Standard translation or the English Standard translation. Some of the quotes that Stott uses are from different translations. Do not let this throw you. Remember, this is a basic introduction to Christianity and the claims of Christ.

When you find the answer write it down. You do not want to depend on your memory when you attend the small group or the class where this is being taught. We recommend also having a highlighter where you can highlight valuable and important ideas that come to mind while you’re reading this book.

Lastly, and probably more important than anything else you must be willing to go where the information in this book leads you. In other words, you will benefit most when you are most teachable. Each person’s eternal destiny is of utmost importance.

You also might want to keep a folder with the lessons as you print them out and record your answers. This way it becomes a valuable resource to you and to the others that may benefit from your study of this book.

Since Stott wrote Basic Christianity in 1958 there have been many editions of his work. For this reason, we have chosen not to list page numbers on the questions since they vary from edition to edition.
Notes Prepared by Dr. Christopher Faria

1. Why do some reject the contemporary church?
2. Why is Jesus the starting point for study?
3. What does Stott say about examining the evidence for Jesus’ deity?
4. Why examine the nature of Christ’s work?
5. Why is intellectual assent to Christ’s divine person, man’s need and Christ’s saving work not enough?

Chapter 1 - The Right Approach

1. What do the words “in the beginning, God...” tell us?
2. How is God described: “Before man stirs himself to seek God, God has ________ man.?”
3. What does “God has taken the initiative in creation” mean?
4. Through whom does the Bible say that God speaks?
5. What does Stott say about God’s initiative to disclose himself?
6. What are the two ways that God has spoken?
7. Why is “the empirical method” inappropriate for the sphere of religion?
8. Why can’t we save ourselves? What must God do?
9. What was the principal reason Christ came?
10. According to Psalm 14:2-3 how does God describe us?
11. How are we to seek?

12. What does seeking God “honestly” mean? What are the implications?

13. What are your impressions of the Simpson quote?

14. How does Stott describe accepting Jesus Christ?

15. Stott recommends reading through the Gospel of Mark or John. Record some of your observations here.
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<th>Question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>What does Stott say the crucial issue is?</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>What did Jesus say about the scripture he quoted in the synagogue?</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>What two reasons are given as to why we begin with Christ?</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>How did Jesus offer himself to his contemporaries?</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>What is our basic concern about Jesus?</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>What did Jesus’ audaciously claim?</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Why are the four basic studies, or “Gospels” trustworthy?</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>What did Jesus say in his first recorded word of public ministry?</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>What is Stott trying to prove by marshalling evidence about Jesus?</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>How did Jesus address God?</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>What are the two wrong ideas about Christ?</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>What impact did Jesus’ claim to intimacy with God have on his listeners (John 19:7)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>What did Archbishop William Temple say about Jesus?</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>What did Jesus claim about himself in relation to Abraham?</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>What is the most striking feature of Jesus’ teaching?</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>How did Thomas address Jesus after the resurrection (John 20:26)?</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>What are your impressions of the “I am” sayings of Jesus?</td>
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Notes Prepared by Dr. Christopher Faria
**Christ’s indirect Claims**

18. What was Jesus’ first indirect claim?

19. What was Jesus’ second claim? Why is this significant?

20. What was Jesus’ third claim? How did this impress his hearers?

21. How did Jesus describe his own words?

22. What was Jesus’ fourth claim? Why is this outrageous if Jesus is not who he said he was?

23. How did John construct his gospel?

24. Why does Stott say that these claims “do not in themselves constitute evidence of deity?”
1. What does Stott mean when he says, “His character does not prove his claims to be true, but it strongly confirms them.”?

2. In the story of the woman caught in adultery, how does Jesus describe himself (John 8)?

3. What are a few of the metaphors that Jesus uses to describe himself?

4. What two reasons does Stott give about moral discontent and sense of fellowship with God being remarkable?

5. Why are the stories about Jesus by his friends so important?

6. Why is it vital to study what Jesus’ enemies conceded?

7. What are the four criticisms of Jesus that Mark records (Mark 2:1-3:6)?

8. What do the portraits of Jesus tell us about Jesus?

9. Note and jot down several observations Stott makes about Jesus in the close of this chapter.
1. Why is the resurrection significant in assessing who Jesus is?

2. How did Jesus always describe his death?

3. If Jesus hadn’t risen from the dead, when the Apostles began preaching it, what could people do for themselves?

4. What is the first theory listed about the resurrection?

5. What is the second explanation about the empty tomb? Why is this absurd?

6. What is the third explanation offered about the empty tomb?

7. What is the forth explanation about the missing body of Jesus?

8. What is the fifth explanation for the missing body of Jesus?

9. Among these four “explanations” what stands out to you most?

10. What do the Gospels say about the grave clothes of Jesus?

11. What does John’s Gospel say about these burial linens?

12. From the book, write a short list of who witnessed the resurrected Jesus.

13. Why are these accounts not inventions?

14. Why are these accounts not hallucinations?
15. Why can’t these accounts just be “wishful thinking” on the part of the apostles?

16. What does Stott say is the greatest evidence of all for the resurrection?

17. What happened to Simon Peter?

18. How does Stott describe James, the step-brother of Jesus?

19. Why is the resurrection evidently reasonable according to Stott.
1. What is the “preoccupation” of the New Testament?

2. To appreciate the work Jesus accomplished what must we understand?

3. Why does Stott say that, “Sin is an unpopular subject?”

4. What has the history of the last one-hundred years done to convince us of...?

5. What do the biblical writers say about sin?

6. What do the prophets of the Old Testament say?

7. What two ways does Stott say the Bible defines sin?

8. What is the “negative category”?

9. What is the positive category?

10. What do these two categories imply?

11. What does Stott say about those who don’t necessarily have the Mosaic Law?

12. On what does our sense of failure depend?

13. When do we break the first commandment?

14. How does Stott define sin here?

15. What does the second commandment demand of us?

16. How does Stott define “Taking the Lord’s name in vain?”

17. What is the purpose of the Sabbath?

18. How does the fifth commandment relate to God’s authority?
19. Complete the following sentence: “If murder can be committed by cutting words...”

20. Under the seventh commandment what are men and women responsible for?

21. What we call “scrounging” God calls...?

22. What do the last 5 commandments express?

23. How is the 10th commandment so different from the other 9?

24. What is the purpose of the Law?
1. What is the most terrible result of sin?

2. How is God described by Stott?

3. What was the result of all the men of God in the Bible who have caught a glimpse of God’s glory?

4. How does the tabernacle in the Old Testament visually depict our separation from God?

5. What is hell?

6. How is our separation from God confirmed by human experience?

7. How does sin bring us into captivity? To whom does it place us in slavery?

8. How does Jeremiah describe the heart?

9. What is sin?


11. What is the effect of sin on our relationship with other people?

12. What does the first commandment refer to?

13. How does Archbishop William Temple describe original sin?

14. How does sin contribute to our quarrels with others?

15. What is the one purpose of the exposure of our sin?
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<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. How does Stott define Christianity?</td>
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<td>2. How did Paul the Apostle describe his own work?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. What does “reconciliation” mean?</td>
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<td>4. How does Stott describe Old Testament religion?</td>
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<td>5. Complete the sentence, “Without the shedding of blood there is ______” (Heb.9:22)</td>
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<td>6. What did Jesus know about himself when he came?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. How do we know that the cross of Christ in the New Testament so important to the author’s of the New Testament?</td>
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<td>8. What does the cross as “mystery” mean?</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Why can we draw confidence from Peter?</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. What does, “Christ died as an example” mean?</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. If Christ is an example, then why does Stott say that his death was “…hardly one of courage”?</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Why do we need more than an example?</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. How does Peter describe Jesus in 1 Peter 2:24?</td>
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<td>14. What did the Old Testament teach about somebody else accepting the responsibility for our sin?</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Complete the following: “For our sake he made him [Jesus] who knew no sin to be made ______ “ (2 Cor. 5:21).</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. What is the baffling paradox about Jesus of Nazareth?</td>
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</table>
17. What does the curse that Christ redeemed us from mean?

18. What are the parallels between 1 Peter 2 and Isaiah 53?

19. What does “sprinkled with his blood” refer back to in the Old Testament?

20. Why is the message of the cross a “stumbling block”? 
1. Why is it a great mistake to think salvation is merely a synonym for forgiveness?

2. How did Jesus illustrate the symptoms of an inward moral disease?

3. Can human nature be changed?

4. How does Paul describe this change?

5. Who is the Holy Spirit?

6. How can Jesus’ teaching ministry sometimes be described as a failure?

7. What happened on the day of Pentecost?

8. When we become a Christian what does the Holy Spirit do?

9. Will we still sin... and why?

10. How does Paul describe the gradual change God makes in us?

11. We are saved to God and to something/someone else: ____________.

12. How are all the families of the earth blessed when God made a promise to Abraham?

13. What did Jesus of Nazareth announce?

14. How is the church described?

15. Why do many today reject the church?

16. What is the “visible” church and why are some in it not members of the “real” church?

17. What is the Christian to seek in the local Christian community?
1. What are the two responses that Stott uses as examples?

2. How does Stott describe a personal response?

3. Jesus’ religion included what two ideas?

4. What three responses are given in Luke 14:25-30?

5. What is the “scandal” of Christianity?

6. What did Jesus ask of his disciples?

7. What is the first element in following Christ?

8. How would you define repentance? What might it include?

9. What is the second element of following Christ?

10. How is “taking up one’s cross” described?

11. What is the third expression Jesus used to describe the renunciation of self?

12. What does it mean to make Jesus Christ Lord?

13. To what does God call every Christian?

14. What example does Stott use to illustrate our trust of Christ?

15. Why are all our relationships and our attitudes towards relationships likely to change?

16. Does our money come under Christ’s Lordship? If so...why?

17. What does confessing Jesus Christ publically mean? What does it entail?

18. What is the first incentive for following Christ? Why is this a paradox?

19. What is the second incentive for following Christ?
20. What is the greatest incentive to follow Christ?

21. What happens when we have a “sight of the cross?”
1. What are some mistakes people make when it comes to reaching a decision about Christ?

2. What will faith do to mental assent?

3. How does Stott describe himself when he was told he needed to appreciate Christ and salvation for himself?

4. How do the few Bible verses at the opening of the chapter describe a relationship with Christ?

5. What are some of the interesting facts about the church of Laodicea in Revelation? How do they line up with Jesus’ words?

6. What does a “lukewarm” person mean?

7. What conclusion is warranted about this “man from Nazareth”?

8. How is Jesus described by Stott- as one giving orders or giving counsel?

9. What does “eat with him and he with me” portray?

10. How does one of Stott’s student’s summarize this decision to trust Christ?

11. How is trust in Christ comparable to trust in marriage?

12. What are some of the ways that God draws us to Christ?

13. What does “it is a definitive act” mean?

14. What does it mean that trust in Christ is an individual act?

15. Should we just wait for a light or a flash from heaven before we trust Christ? Why not?

16. Why is faith in Christ described as an indispensable act?

17. What stands out to you about C. S. Lewis’ story of his conversion?
18. What stands out about Stott’s own conversion story?

Perhaps you were raised in a Christian home, grew up in a Christian denomination. Then again you might have never graced the door of a church, or left when you were younger.

This chapter is the culmination of all the evidence about Jesus Christ. If you remember from the beginning pages of the book, Christ is not easily dismissed. The evidence for his deity is clear. Therefore his words about himself and our eternal destiny ring true. Won’t you stop for a moment, and if you never have trusted Christ as your Savior do it now. Read aloud the prayer that Stott closes this chapter with.

It is not the prayer that somehow makes “magic” one’s faith. It is like a marriage ceremony. It is a formal way to indicate to God that you repent of your sin, and trust Christ alone for your salvation.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What happened to you when you trusted Christ as your Savior?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. How does Stott answer the question, “Isn’t God the Father of all Men?”</td>
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<td>3. What is the unique privilege of being born anew?</td>
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<td>4. What is the first aspect of our relationship now to God?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Why isn’t faith in Christ just... “hoping for the best?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. What do some people do at the beginning of their Christian life when it comes to assurance?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. What is the basis of our knowledge that we are in relationship with God?</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Where do we find the promises about our relationship with God?</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Of the verses listed by Stott, which one(s) do you find you like best?</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. How does Stott describe God, “...speaking to our hearts?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in our relationship with God?</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. What happens when we sin after becoming a Christian? Do we lose our salvation or forfeit our sonship?</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. When we sin, what are we to do in our relationship with God?</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. What does the phrase mean: “We can be justified only once, but we need to be forgiven every day”?</td>
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<td>15. What are the two main spheres in which the Christian is meant to grow?</td>
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<td>BASIC CHRISTIANITY STUDY GUIDE</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>What are the “three main secrets of spiritual development”?</td>
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<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Why is it important to read the Bible and pray?</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>Stott recommends the Revised Standard version- this was in 1958. There are better translations: The New American Standard Bible, the New King James, the New International version and the English Standard Version.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Why isn’t the Christian life just a private affair of your own?</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>What are the two concerns about a church that Stott lists?</td>
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<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>What is baptism according to Stott?</td>
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<td>22.</td>
<td>If our relationship with God and relationship with Christ’s church are the first two obligations of the Christian life, what is the third that Stott lists?</td>
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