

COLD-CASE CHRISTIANITY

FOR KIDS

INVESTIGATE JESUS WITH A REAL DETECTIVE

CAUTION



Case #0041983
Jesus of Nazareth



J. WARNER WALLACE AND SUSIE WALLACE
WITH ROB SUGGS

COLD-CASE CHRISTIANITY

FOR KIDS

INVESTIGATE JESUS WITH A REAL DETECTIVE



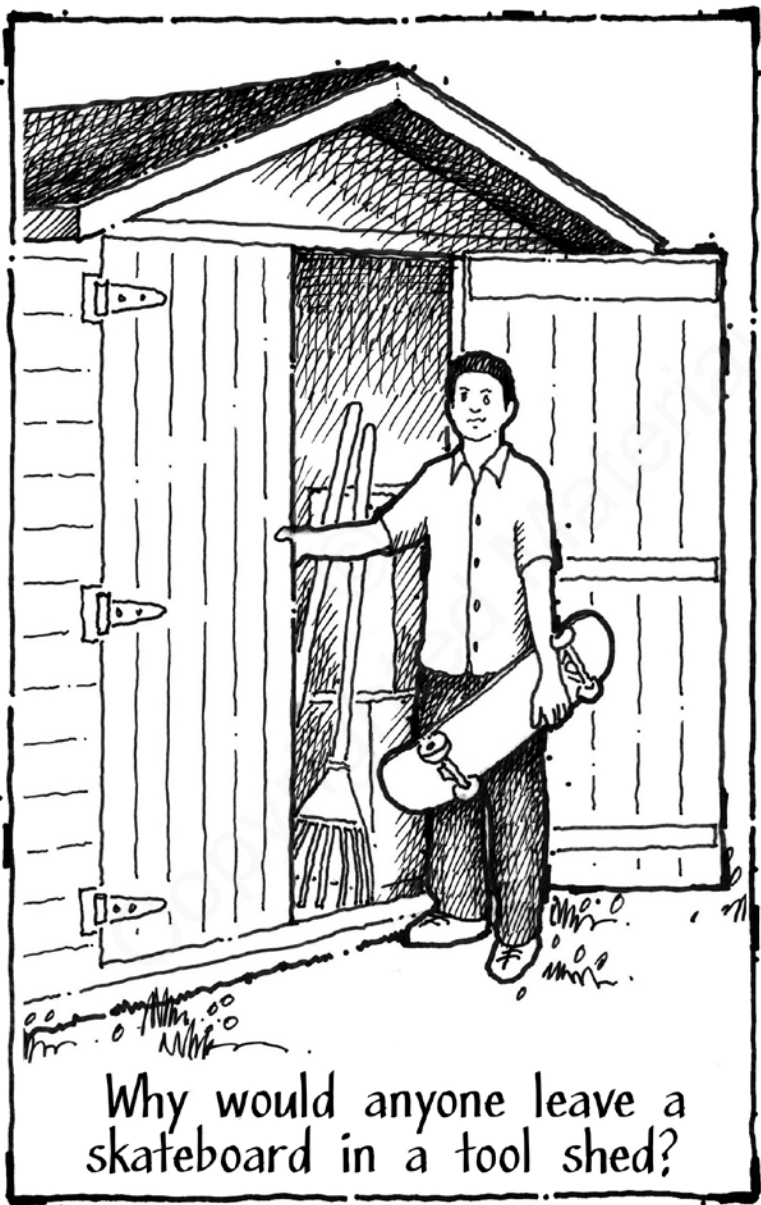
J. WARNER WALLACE AND SUSIE WALLACE
WITH ROB SUGGS

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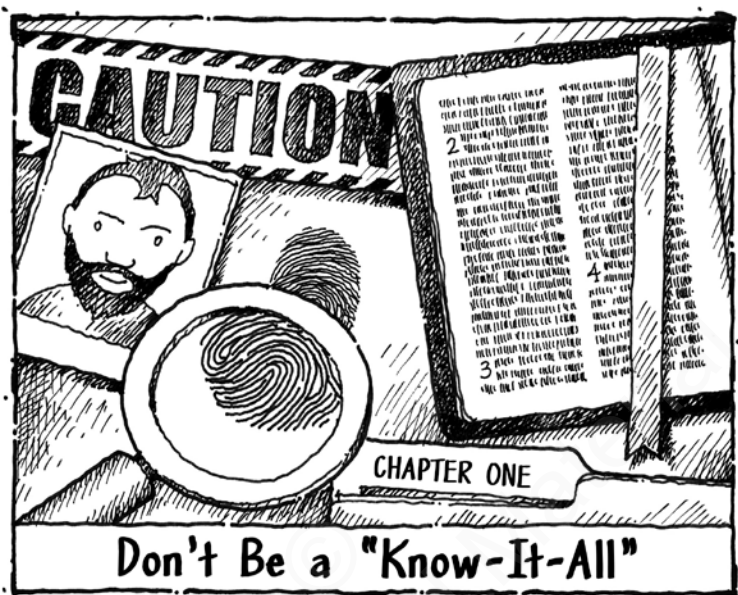
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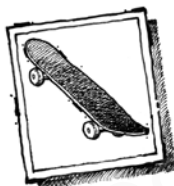
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Why would anyone leave a
skateboard in a tool shed?



Start Every Investigation Like a Detective!



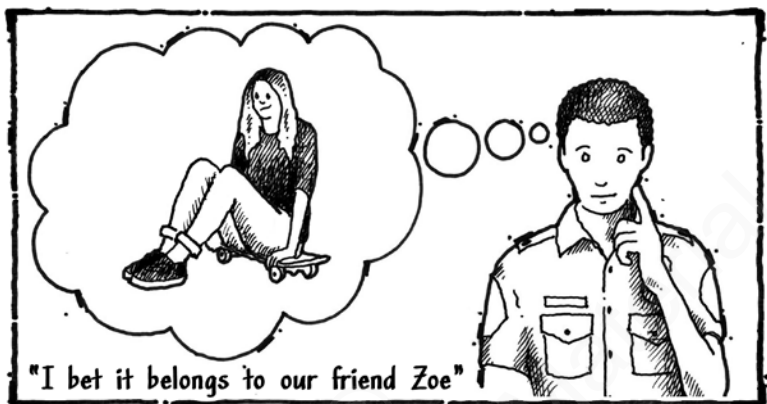
The next week takes forever to go by. Tuesday afternoon finally arrives. You enter the police briefing room with Daniel and Hannah. Daniel is carrying a backpack and telling Hannah about something he found. After class, he saw an old shed at the school.

The door had always been locked, but today it had been open.

Daniel saw a few rusty tools and things the custodian might have used. But there was something else. A skateboard. The custodian arrived and told Daniel he could take the skateboard if he wanted, so Daniel put it in his backpack and carried it to the police station. The skateboard looked a little old, but ... *still!* Why would anyone leave a skateboard in a tool shed?

“It’s a mystery!” exclaims Hannah.

“Nah, probably not,” says Daniel. “I bet it belongs to our friend Zoe. She’s the only one around who likes skateboards.”



Detective Jeffries is standing with his arms crossed, waiting for everyone to take their seats. He looks right at Daniel. “Hold that thought,” he says. “Sounds like a cold case.”

You speak up, “Yeah, but Daniel already solved it.”

“Maybe,” says Jeffries, with his signature smirk forming on his face. “But lesson one is—don’t be a know-it-all.”

You, Daniel, Hannah, and the others look at one another, wondering, *Who’s a know-it-all?*

“Do you know what it means to ‘jump to a conclusion?’” asks the detective.

“When you assume something before you know it’s true?” you suggest.

“Exactly,” replies Jeffries. “If we’re going to solve mysteries, we have to look at the facts and not assume we know the answer before we gather *all* the evidence. Can you imagine what would happen if

I arrested someone without first investigating *everything*?”

“You might arrest the wrong guy!” Daniel reports.

“There you go again! Don't be a know-it-all! Who says the suspect has to be a *guy*?” notes Jeffries with a growl. His expression turns into what could pass for a smile.

“Oops!” The whole class laughs.

Then Jeffries clears his throat and says, “Or take that skateboard.” You and your friends look up, surprised.

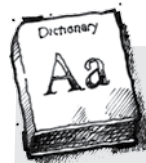
“Who owns the skateboard?” asks Jeffries.

“Zoe,” Hannah says. “Daniel said so.” Jeffries doesn't answer—he just looks at her. Hannah gets the hint and admits, “But I guess we don't know that for sure.”

“Bingo! You're a quick learner,” Jeffries rewards her. “To be a good cold-case detective, you can't start with your mind already made up. Who has another example?” inquires Jeffries.



Jason, the boy from the other school, has something to say. “Well, my next-door neighbors invited our family to their church, but I didn't really want to go. They say it's about Jesus, and they think He did miracles and even came back from the dead! Like in a fairy tale or something. I just don't believe



Detective Definitions

Assume:

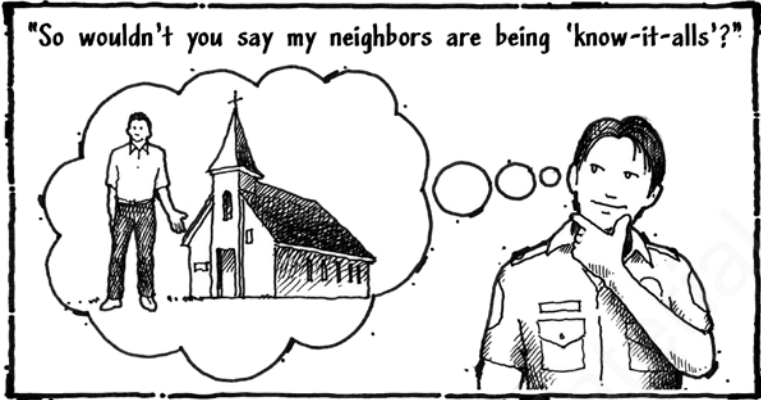
To suppose something is true without proof.

Presupposition:

Something you assume to be true, even before you begin investigating.

We have to be careful not to assume things before we begin investigating a case. It's important to keep an open mind!

it. So wouldn't you say my neighbors are being 'know-it-alls' by assuming all that stuff about Jesus is true?"



“That’s really interesting,” replies Jeffries. Jason looks pleased with himself. “But,” the detective adds, “you might have it backwards.”

Jason’s expression changes and he looks down to the floor of the room. Jeffries walks toward him and asks, “How do you know they’re *assuming* it’s true? What if they’ve *decided* it’s true *because* of the facts?” Then Jeffries points out, “Aren’t you being a ‘know-it-all’ by assuming all that stuff about Jesus *isn’t* true?”

Jason thinks for a moment and then says, “Hmm, I never thought of it that way. But how do they know this Jesus stuff is true? I mean, He could just be made up, right? Like in a fairy tale? I’ve heard a *lot* of people say it’s just a legend somebody made up.”

“But that doesn’t mean those people are right, does it? We need more information before we make any judgments on the subject. Wouldn’t you agree? We don’t want to start with our minds made up,” adds Jeffries.

"I guess not," Jason mumbles, looking down at his shiny uniform shoes.

"You asked a great question. I'm glad you brought it up," says Jeffries, trying to encourage Jason. "As a matter of fact, it's a lot like a cold case. It's a mystery we can investigate, just like the Case of Jesus—or the Case of the Mysterious Skateboard. Why do some people think the Jesus stories aren't true?"

"Like I said, Detective Jeffries," Jason responds, "He does miracles—and that's impossible."

"All right. So you think miracles are 'impossible.' Are you sure about that?" asks Jeffries.

"I never see any ..." Jason says.

Jeffries walks back toward the whiteboard and explains, "When people talk about miracles, they're usually describing events that conflict with what we expect according to what's called 'natural laws.'

Some people, for example, think everything in the universe can be explained 'naturally,' using only the laws of physics and chemistry. But these same people can't seem to explain the universe itself! Did you know that scientists now believe our universe began from nothing?"

Daniel looks confused. "What do you mean, 'nothing'?"



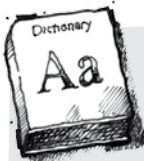
CSI

Assignment

God has given us more than enough evidence to know He exists. Read Romans 1:18-20.

"For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been _____, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse."

Now read Romans 1:21-23. So why do you think some people still refuse to see the evidence?



Detective Definitions

Naturalism:

The view that everything in the universe can be explained "naturally" with only space, time, matter, and the laws of physics and chemistry. According to this view, nothing "supernatural" (like God) can ever exist or cause anything.

But can we really explain the *beginning* of the universe with only space, time, matter, and natural laws? If "naturalism" *can't* explain something this important, why should we deny the existence of anything "supernatural"?

The detective continues: "I mean every 'natural' thing—all space, time, and matter—came from nothing. That means whatever caused our 'natural' universe was something other than natural."

"What do you mean 'other than natural'?" asks Hannah.

Detective Jeffries picks up the skateboard. "Can this skateboard create itself?" he asks.

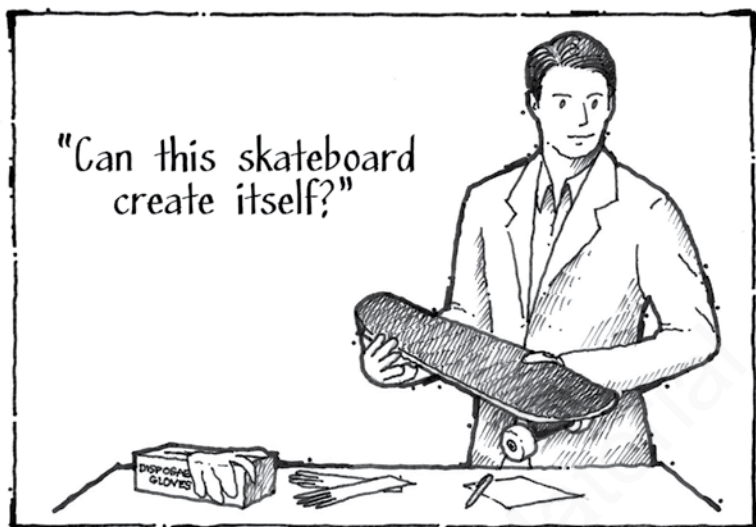
"If skateboards could create themselves, we'd all own one!" says Jason. Everyone laughs.

"Wouldn't that be great?" asks Jeffries. "But we know skateboards can't create themselves, and space, time, and matter can't create themselves either. So whatever created the universe must be something other than space, time, or matter. That's what I meant when I said it must be something 'other than natural.' In other

words, it must be something supernatural."

Jeffries turns to Jason. "So, let's think about this. If something, or someone, was powerful enough to create everything we see in the universe from nothing, wouldn't you consider that 'miraculous'?"

"I guess so," answers Jason.



"And if that something, or someone, could do that kind of miracle, do you think it could also do other miracles?"

Hannah gets it: "The miracles of Jesus seem easy compared to creating the universe."

"I think you're right," states Jeffries. "If the story about Jesus is true, we can't let our bias against miracles keep us from seeing the truth."

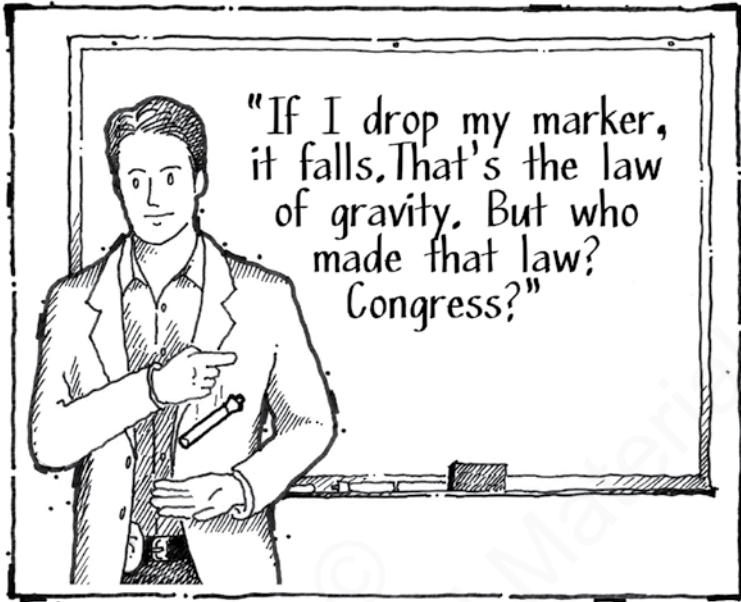
The detective picks up a marker from the whiteboard tray and starts drawing while he talks.



CSI Assignment

Investigate the most incredible miracle in the Bible. Read Genesis 1:1. In the beginning God created the _____

If God can create the heavens (the entire universe), what kind of power must He possess?



A
"Tool"
for
Your
Detective Bag!

An Open Mind

Don't allow your doubt to stand in the way of the truth, and don't start an investigation assuming you already know the answer. Be open to following the evidence wherever it might lead.

"If I drop my marker, it falls. That's the law of gravity. But who made that law? Congress?" Everyone laughs. Jeffries drops the marker but then catches it with his other hand before it hits the desk. "I'm able to stop the law of gravity from pulling this marker to the floor, and I'm only a man! Do you think the creator of the law of gravity could do even more? Could the source of the law 'override' it for a moment if he had a good reason?"

"You are talking about God, right?"

Daniel offers.

“Sure,” says Jeffries. “But for today, let’s just agree to keep an open mind and be ready to listen and learn. Don’t assume Zoe is the owner of the skateboard, and don’t assume the story about Jesus is impossible. For next week, see what you can learn about that skateboard, and about Jesus. Start with the biggest miracle of all: His resurrection.”