

Do you believe God exists? Why?

There are many reasons people believe in God. Some base their beliefs on the teaching of Scripture, or perhaps on role models and people they admire.



Some say they've been convinced by the Holy Spirit of His presence in their lives. Others had an emotional experience or even saw something amazing that led them to believe God is real.

The Holy Spirit is at work in the world, but we need to ensure that the spirit we choose to listen to is in fact the Spirit of God. While supernatural signs and wonders have drawn many to God—including [Saul, who became Paul, the world's most famous missionary](#)—we must be careful not to be guided exclusively by circumstances and emotions. In fact, [Hebrews 11:1](#) tells us that faith is the evidence of what we do not see. As humans, what we can see is never the whole picture.

When Jesus was on Earth, He performed many supernatural miracles and signs. But even then, many people still didn't believe He was God ([John 12:37](#)). In [Matthew 12](#), we read of some of the Jewish religious leaders who ask Jesus for a sign from heaven. Jesus responds by telling them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign” ([Matthew 12:39](#)).

Later He tells the Jews through [a parable](#) that if the ancient law and prophecies He had given them could not convince them, neither could a miraculous sign ([Luke 16:19-31](#)).

While Christ obviously has the power to perform signs, miracles are not where we should be putting our trust.

Deception—the Order of the Day

Christ also taught about the coming destruction at the end of time. The disciples asked Him, “When shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world.” The first thing Jesus told them was, “Take heed that no man deceive you” ([Matthew 24:3-4](#)) to show us that deception would mark the closing years of this Earth's history.

We are indeed seeing these deceptive signs today, another indicator that we are living in the end time.

The symbolism in [Revelation 16:13](#) tells us that demonic spirits are deceiving the world. God is all-powerful and is able to perform more supernatural signs and wonders than we can imagine. However, we must guard ourselves against these evil spirits that are trying to imitate God's power in order to snatch us away from His truth.

The second thing Jesus told His disciples was that many would come claiming to be Christ. In fact, Jesus tells us that their deceptions would be so strong, that if it were possible, they would even deceive “the very elect” ([Matthew 24:24](#)).

The elect are those who make the Word of God their basis for faith—those who cling to the Reformation’s central belief: *Sola Scriptura*. The elect want to follow God and love the truth.

From Jesus’ words, we know that deception will be rampant during our times. What sort of deception should we be looking for?

In Matthew 24:24, Jesus tells us that in the end times, Satan's deceptions will be rampant in an attempt to deceive everyone—even God's elect people. One way Satan tries to deceive us is to counterfeit God's wonder-working power.

An apparition of Mary appearing in the sky. Note the picture had to be put... [read more](#).

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In the last century, [signs and wonders](#) have appeared more and more in connection with the Catholic Church.

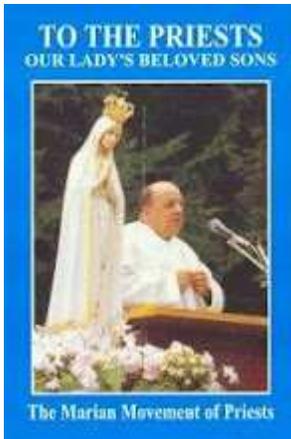
The Catholic belief that [Mary is the queen of heaven and mediator between us and Christ](#) has been bolstered recently by [apparitions of Mary](#) appearing around the world. She has become [a key figure to be worshiped](#).



Catholics have experienced all kinds of strange occurrences, but this should not be surprising, considering the Catholic statement that apparitions are more important than theology:

The theologian Karl Rahner has pointed out that **we are moved much more readily and effectively** by those divine interventions that we call **apparitions** than by **abstract teachings of knowledgeable theologians** or the hierarchy of the Church (emphasis added).¹

Some of the miracles occurring in Catholicism seem very similar to the experiences of [New Age](#) mystics.



In 1973, for example, [Catholic Father Stefano Gobbi](#) received over 600 dictated messages that he wrote down. He published them in a book entitled [To the Priests, our Lady's Beloved Sons](#).

In the book, he urges priests to be faithful to the Pope and to render "total obedience to his commands," "ready to fight even to the shedding of their blood in order to remain united to him."ⁱⁱ

The New Age and Catholicism should have nothing in common, but in reality the lines have always been blurred. Both [New Age](#) and [Catholic](#) practices are adaptations of ancient Babylonian paganism, and now New Agers and Catholics alike are seeing the same deceptive signs and wonders in their respective spheres.

The prominent New Age organization Share International lists many instances of miraculous signs and wonders in [Catholicism](#), [the New Age movement](#), and even [Islam](#) and [Hinduism](#):

We are witnessing a huge increase in the number of miraculous appearances. People worldwide describe seeing the Madonna or Jesus, while many others report meeting 'angels'. Hundreds see Maitreya in dreams, visions, or in person...religious statues and icons weeping tears, real blood and even pearls; the extraordinary Hindu 'milk-drinking' statues in 1995; appearances or sightings of the Madonna; holy messages in fruit and vegetables...ⁱⁱⁱ

A Holland news service says this about miracles taking place in Teheran, Iran:

"It is reported in various parts of the city that an image of Jesus has been seen on fences or in windows. People have gathered to witness it for themselves." So writes the Iranian newspaper Akhbar in its 25 December 1995 edition. Reuters news agency quotes newspaper reports of the face of Jesus appearing on the wall of a flat in the Iranian capital of Teheran. The report also mentions the spontaneous healing of a paralysed girl from a Christian family. Rumours spread like wildfire within the city and hundreds of Iranian Christians and Muslims alike flocked to the apartment building. An elderly woman in a black chador claimed it had happened before and that a Muslim man suffering from cancer had been healed on that occasion.^{iv}



Statue of Lord Ganesha drinking milk.

Source: [The Miracles Page](#).
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New Age teacher Benjamin Creme says that the signs occurring in every religion are proof that the New Age Christ—[the Maitreya](#)—is coming:

These events are occurring on a world-wide scale, and are part of the signs which people expect and look for in connection with the reappearance of the Christ today...

They are signs that we have come to the end of one era and the beginning of a new one, and that the Christ has returned to the world to inaugurate this new cycle...

I was contacted by one of the disciples of the Christ in January 1959, and soon afterwards was given, by Maitreya Himself, the task of preparing the way for Him. I have been doing this for nearly 20 years now. My role is to create a climate of hope and expectancy for the return of the Christ, so that He can enter our lives without infringing our free will.^v

Here are other examples of signs and wonders happening around the world:

- [Healing water in Nordenau, Germany](#)
- [Crosses of light appearing](#)
- [Circles of light appearing](#)
- [Milk drinking icons](#)
- [Crystal tears](#)
- [Native American White Buffalo](#)
- [Don Bosco](#)
- [Signs of his presence](#)
- [Apparitions at Medjugorje](#)

Can the signs in New Age circles regarding the Maitreya and signs in Catholic circles regarding Mary be one and the same? The similarities in these supposed miracles seem to indicate that they came from the same source. But as we will read in our [next article](#), these signs rarely align with the character of the true God and therefore could not have come from Him.

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