

Common objections to Christianity

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Basics

Having known the joy of being a Christian, I am certain Jesus is the (only) Way, the (real) Truth and (Abundant) Life.

Unfortunately, it appears to be a narrow, lonely road and it would seem many don't appear to see that his walk to be of relevant to them – and they raise many objections. This document tries to address them.

In reality, those who want to believe will believe and those who reject it will keep rejecting it.

The bible makes it clear that:

For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.ⁱ

This article is therefore written for those who want to believe, and need a reason to believe and want to understand – in truth and in Spirit.

Common objections to Christianity (and answers)ⁱⁱ

1. Christians are hypocrites.

A hypocrite is an actor, a person who pretends to be something she isn't. Jesus' harshest words were reserved for hypocrites.

The reality is, there always have been and always will be some hypocrites in the Church. But Jesus doesn't ask us to follow others; he asks us to follow *him*.

Although Christians can represent Jesus either poorly or well, the real question isn't whether there are hypocrites in the Church, but whether Jesus is a hypocrite. If someone can prove that Jesus was a hypocrite, then the whole structure of Christianity falls into ruin. The Bible, God's Word, presents Jesus as nothing less than perfect. Jesus' disciples testified that Jesus was without sin (1 Peter 2:22; 1 John 3:5). Even Jesus himself challenged others to prove that he'd ever sinned (John 8:46).

2. What about the atrocities Christians have committed?

Some blame Christianity for religious wars, the Crusades, burning witches, the Inquisition, slavery, even the Holocaust.

The issue of atrocities is simply an extension of the question of hypocrites. So-called believers who didn't practice true Christianity have perpetrated evil. In reality, these people were Christian in name only. Focusing on their atrocities is a smoke screen to avoid the real issue. Christianity has far more positive achievements than negative influences.



Start

Grow

Mature

Examples of this positive influence include:

Science and education

Many primary developers of key scientific disciplines were God fearing scientists. For example:ⁱⁱⁱ

- Galileo Galilei (1564 – 1642) – Astronomy, mathematics and physics
- Isaac Newton (1642-1727) – dynamics
- Blaise Pascal (1623 – 62) – mathematics, physics and theology
- Robert Boyle (1627- 91)- chemistry
- Michael Faraday (1791-1867) – electromagnetics
- Gregor Mendel (1822-84) - genetics

Many of today's world famous leading universities have their origins in Christianity.

- *Harvard* was named after a Christian minister.
- *Yale* was started by clergymen
- *Princeton's* first year of class was taught by Reverend Jonathan Dickinson. Princeton's crest still says "Dei sub numine viget," which is Latin for "Under God she flourishes."
- *Oxford University* was established by various religious orders.
- *Cambridge University* was established in 1209 by Christian leaders.
- *Saint Andrews*, Scotland's oldest university, was founded principally for the teaching and study of theology.^{iv}

Laws and morality

In America, the Constitution and the rules and laws that govern society have their roots in the Bible, through moral codes like the Ten Commandments.

In the UK, the Magna Carta was written by a Church Minister.

Human rights: The concept of universal human rights and equality comes exclusively from the biblical idea that all people are created in the image of God.

Women's rights. In ancient cultures, a wife was the property of her husband. The church forbade its members to do so. Greco-Roman society saw no value in an unmarried woman, and therefore it was illegal for a widow to go more than two years without remarrying but Christianity was the first religion to not force widows to marry.

Slavery. Historians credit the British Christian evangelical William Wilberforce as the primary force behind the ending of the international slave trade (which happened prior to the American Civil War). Two-thirds of the members of the American abolition society in 1835 were Christian ministers.

Benevolent practices

Many of today's largest charities and similar entities have their roots in Christianity for example:

- Barnado's homes
- The Samaritans
- Salvation Army
- Red Cross
- Oxfam

- Save the Children
- YMCA

3. Christianity is for weak people.

Karl Marx, author of *The Communist Manifesto*, said, "Religion is the opiate of the masses." Critics such as Marx have charged that religion is an invention designed for people incapable of coping with life's pressures. Some critics respond that they don't need this type of emotional comfort, as though that fact falsifies Christianity. Such individuals often claim to be "stronger" because they're brave enough to face life without a "crutch."

To imply non-religious people don't need a crutch is misleading. Dependence on drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sex, money, power, other people, and material possessions demonstrates some people's need for a crutch.

Atheism—the belief that there is no God—can become a crutch for those addicted to a lifestyle contrary to God's standards of morality.

4. It's narrow-minded to think Jesus is the only way to God.

Jesus claimed he was the only way to God (John 14:6). Such a claim is either totally true or totally false. Some people claim to be Christians, yet ignore Jesus' claim to be the only Saviour. Critics argue this view is exclusory. But if Christianity is true, then we must accept Jesus' own teachings. If one believes Jesus' assertions to be true, then the issue is settled.

5. Being a good person is all that really matters (I am not a sinner).

Some argue that even if a person's religion is false, what really matters is that she's sincere about being a good person. This notion is based on the mistaken belief that God is pleased by "religion." Sincerity doesn't determine truth, however. One can be sincerely convinced of the truth—and be sincerely wrong. For example, many evil men such as Hitler were very sincere in their beliefs. God judges people based on truth, not opinions—and that truth is Jesus Christ.

To not be a sinner means you've never broken any Law of [God](#)? Have you ever lied, cheated, or stolen? If you have, then you have broken his law and are a sinner whether you think so or not. The laws of God have punishments (a law without a punishment is only a slogan). As a sinner, you are separated from God ([Isaiah 59:2](#)). However, God loves you enough to want you to be with him. He sent [Jesus \(1 John 4:10\)](#) to pay for the sins of his people by dying on the cross and paying that penalty which is death ([Rom. 6:23](#)).

So, the only way to have your sins forgiven is to put your trust in Jesus and the sacrifice he made ([Rom. 10:9-10](#)). Otherwise, you will have to face him on your own on the day of Judgment. After all, the Bible says that everyone has sinned ([Rom. 5:12](#)). That means you, too.

6. What about those who've never heard about Jesus?

Such a question implies that God lacks compassion because he's imposed his plan of salvation on us. Often such inquirers seem to imply that they're more compassionate than God.

An important biblical principle to understand is that no one has ever remained lost who wanted to be found. Just as God sent the apostle Philip to the seeking Ethiopian (Acts 8:26-39), Jesus promises all who seek will find (Matthew 7:7-8).

7. The Bible is filled with errors.

Because the Bible is God's Word and God cannot lie (Isaiah 55:10-11; John 17:17; Titus 1:2; Hebrews 4:12), it's totally trustworthy, free from any error. God's Word is described as "the word of truth" (2 Corinthians 6:7; Colossians 1:5; 2 Timothy 2:15; James 1:18). Inerrancy isn't a theory about the Bible; it's the teaching of the Bible itself.

What most people claim as errors in the Bible aren't errors but difficulties. People think they've stumbled upon apparent inconsistencies when they haven't taken the time to find out all the facts, or made an in-depth study of the passage.

Many Bible questions have been answered as new discoveries have been made in fields such as language, history, archaeology, and other sciences.

Regardless of the kind of difficulty found, not a single irreconcilable error can be found in the Bible's pages.

8. If God is so good, why is there evil?

The thrust of this charge is that evil's presence disproves God's power. But is the presence of evil consistent with the God of the Bible? Consider:

- God didn't create evil. Sin entered the world through Adam's disobedience (Genesis 3).
- Evil is necessary for a free world. Freedom, or free will, gives humans the opportunity to make wrong choices.

God hesitates to stop evil for an important reason. Just as parents often allow their children to make mistakes and suffer the consequences, God acts in a parental fashion with his creation.

God has the solution for evil. Jesus accomplished the ultimate defeat of evil on the cross. But just as we don't yet have eternal bodies, evil has yet to be removed from the world.

9. Why is there suffering?

Everything has a purpose and the bible says, there is a time for everything. It says:

*There is a time for everything,
A time to be born and a time to die,
A time for war and a time for peace"*

Many hold that pain is evidence against God's concern for humankind. However, pain can be used for good and bad purposes. Not all pain is bad. Pain is an essential mechanism for survival. Without pain, the body is stripped of vital protection. Pain is an important signal to warn of even greater danger.

As an example, for you to be born, a mother has to go through so much pain.

If you saw her in pain while giving birth, you would be very upset –and perhaps think God is bad or the doctors who keep her in pain are but - but then a good thing comes out of the pain, you are born.

Suffering is a signal. It also can be a spiritual signal that reminds us of the fragile balance of life and our mortality. In *The Problem of Pain*, Christian apologist C.S. Lewis writes, "God whispers to us in our pleasure, speaks to us in our conscience, but shouts to us in our pain; it is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world."

Some suffering actually helps to bring greater good. This is best seen in Jesus' own suffering. Jesus travelled down the road of pain, loneliness, and death—a road that led to the cross.

At the heart of this issue is the underlying challenge that God isn't fair. The problem is, society holds pleasure as its chief goal in life. This philosophy is known as hedonism, and those who live by this philosophy find any form of suffering offensive. To say God isn't fair is an extremely dangerous charge.

What is most important is to remember that at the end of it all, God himself says:

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb [Jesus] down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.^{vi}

10. If there's a hell, why would a loving God send people there?

God hates evil, and one day, evil will cease. While evil and suffering and pain are very real, they are also very temporary.

The day God deals with evil, he will deal with *all* evil. In the meantime, God strives for as many people as possible to accept Jesus' death and resurrection as payment for their sins, so they can live eternally with him. The sad fact is, many will make the decision not to be a part of God's heaven. God won't send them to hell; they'll send themselves.

For God to force people to go to heaven against their wishes wouldn't be heaven—it would be hell.

Atheist author Jean-Paul Sarte noted that the gates of hell are locked from the inside by the free choice of men and women.

11. How about Science disproving a lot of “religious things” said in the bible?

It sometimes feels that science (or naturalism) is the “prevailing god” in our day and age.

The interesting thing is that this “conflict” between Christianity and science wasn't always so.

It was only at the turn of the 19th century (1800s) that secular thinkers begun to teach naturalism (denial of God) and separate Christianity's role in the scientific community. Until then, many primary developers of key scientific disciplines were God fearing scientists.

“The scientific method” – discovery by empirical reasoning – is, unquestionably a byproduct of Christianity. To know the truth of God's creation, it's not enough to rely on human logic. It's also necessary to observe closely what God has created.”^{vii}

So, what does God have to do with science?

To understand this question, I will use an example^{viii}:

“Why is the water boiling in the tea kettle?”

The scientific answer might be:

“The water is boiling because at this temperature it undergoes a phase transition from liquid to vapour.”

Another acceptable, though non-scientific, answer is:

“The water is boiling because I put the kettle on the stove.”

A third answer might be:

“The water is boiling because my prayer partner is coming over for tea.”

None of the answers is wrong; rather, each gives a different perspective to the question. The scientific answer does not tell the whole story.

One of the reasons why science has been successful, where others have failed is the “scientific method”. The scientific method begins with an inside, working outside view, starting with very simple questions if you like. For example:

Why does an apple fall?

Why does a sinking stone also displace water?

It then goes on to investigate such a simple question logically until for example the *theory of gravity* or *Archimedes’ principle* is born.

Science is therefore tremendously successful in understanding the physical world, but we should not let that tempt us to think it can be used to understand everything in life.

Science at its core tries to study the physical world and natural world through observation and experiment. As you see, science can therefore not fully explain God and his ways (though God uses science and nature to reveal himself to us) because the bible says:

God is Spirit ^{ix}(and so is not physical or natural – you cannot see or touch him).

God is not in the “natural world” - as his Home is in heaven^x, a place we cannot reach in the physical world.

12. No one knows what happens when someone dies!

The bible makes it clear that it does.

When humans were created, God said this about the creation:

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” ([Genesis 2:7, KJV](#))

When someone dies, they are buried (and people cry), but as human beings have a body and a spirit. The Spirit belongs to God. The body returns to the Ground.

The bible says:

"The dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it" ([Ecclesiastes 12:7, NIV](#))

The soul of the believer (someone who believes in Jesus) goes to be with God. The soul of the unbeliever goes to torment or "hades". A place of suffering.

If you believe in Jesus, there is no need to fear for at the end of it all, this is what the bible says:

"There shall be no more death" ([Revelation 21:4](#)).

13. I'll take my chances

With what, eternity? Eternity is a long time to be wrong. Why would you want to gamble with something as important as your eternal destiny? It takes only a moment to trust Christ for your salvation. There will be an eternity of pain and regret if you don't.

You don't take chances with guns do you? You don't take chances and run red lights do you? Why would you take a chance on something that is far more important than these? Don't take a chance on something eternal. It isn't worth it.

14. I tried Christianity once

The [Bible](#) says that once you are saved, you are never the same again; you are a new creature ([2 Cor. 5:17](#)). If you have gone back to your old ways, then most probably you were never saved ([1 John 2:19](#)). If, however, you were saved, then [God](#) won't let you stay in rebellion for long. He will deal with you in whatever way is necessary to bring you back into fellowship with Him.

Did you become a Christian by going to church or by asking [Jesus](#) to forgive you of your sins? The latter makes you a Christian, the former doesn't.

15. All religions are different paths to the same place

If all religions are different paths to the same place, then why do the paths contradict each other? Does truth contradict itself? Let's review the teachings of just three religions:

Buddhism is pantheistic and says there is no personal God and everyone can reach "godlikeness" on his own. Islam says that Jesus was just a prophet, and not the only way to God. Christianity says that there is a personal God and that the only way to Him is through Jesus ([John 14:6](#)). If these three religions are, as you say, different paths to the same place, then why do they contradict each other? Does truth contradict itself?

16. Christianity is boring

Then you haven't experienced it. No one who is a [Christian](#) will ever say that it is boring.

How do you know? Have you tried it? There are millions of Christians who have a lot of fun being Christian. We just do it with a lot less sin, and therefore, a lot less problems. Maybe it's only your problems that keep you from getting bored.

What do you think we do all day, sit around fireplaces and read [Bibles](#)? We ski, swim, play sports, read, have friends and problems like anybody else. Christianity is not boring. It is an adventure.

17. I am an atheist. I don't believe in God.

An atheist is defined primarily in two senses: Someone who says he believes there is no [God](#), and someone who simply lacks belief in God. An atheist cannot rationally say he/she knows there is no God because they would have to know all things in order to know if there is or isn't a God.

If there is no God as you say, then, in the end, I lose nothing. But if there is a God like I say, in the end, you lose everything.

Is there any reason for you to intelligently reject His existence? Or, do you simply desire not to believe in Him?

The Bible doesn't attempt to prove that God exists. It simply speaks as though He does. Maybe I can't prove to you there is a God, but I can introduce Him to you through His Son Jesus Christ, and you can judge for yourself if the Words of Christ in the Bible convince you of His existence.

Today's perspective

Christianity is practical for many of the situations Christians face on a day to day basis and it addresses some of those matters including:

How should we take care of the Environment?

We should take care of it well as good stewards who are "borrowing it" because it does not belong to us. God says: "...the land is mine and you are but aliens and my tenants..."^{xi}

How do you treat other people?

A lot of so called Christians like to discriminate on the basis of many reasons such as race, gender, sexual orientation. Sin and the person must be separated. God hates sin but not the person.

Everyone must be treated with respect and should be loved. In fact the bible makes it clear that you cannot claim to love God if you hate others. This is what it says:

Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen.^{xii}

Should I work hard to have a lot of money?

Yes, working hard is good and having money is good – but money should not become your master, or you will hate God. In fact the bible says in Matthew 6: 24:

No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

How about having fun as a Christian?

Fun is good and there are many stories of people having fun in the bible. Jesus' first recorded miracle was to turn water into wine, at a wedding.

Just like there is a time of war and a time of peace, the bible says this about fun in the book of Ecclesiastes 3: 4:

*[For everything there is a season...]
A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
A time to mourn, and a time to dance;*

Are there aliens?

The Bible does not explicitly confirm or deny the existence of intelligent life from other planets – and many bible parts when read together seem to point to the fact that the universe was created for us here on earth. It is worth noting that over the years scientists have searched for alien life and found none (they will add ...YET).

BUT even if they did, according to the bible it would seem they will not be “superior to man”.

[Psalm 8:5](#) says that man was made a little lower than the angels and crowned with glory and honour.

This means that in the ranking order of all created things God made, there are the angels, then man.

This should make you realize again and again that God has created us special – a MASTERPIECE and so it means your life, should be lived – for his highest glory (your utmost for his highest).

Your turn

What will you now do differently? Examples to think about include:

Related starter content

Reading the bible
Praying
Fasting
Giving

Write here

Notes

ⁱ <http://biblehub.com/matthew/7-8.htm>

ⁱⁱ Various sources used including:

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/biblestudies/articles/evangelism/tcw-2000-002-7.62.html>

: <https://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/how-does-the-bible-influence-society/#ixzz50i9zFgjz>

<http://www.faithfacts.org/christ-and-the-culture/the-impact-of-christianity#impact>

<https://probe.org/the-social-and-historical-impact-of-christianity/>

https://www.huffingtonpost.com/john-ortberg/six-surprising-ways-jesus_b_1773225.html

<https://carm.org/objections-and-answers>

ⁱⁱⁱ The bible's answers to 100 of Life's biggest lessons, Norman L. Geisler & Jason Jimenez, Baker Books, 2015.

^{iv} <https://answersingenesis.org/christianity/harvard-yale-princeton-oxford-once-christian/>

^v Ecclesiastes 3: 8

^{vi} Revelations 22: 22

^{vii} <http://www.smh.com.au/business/the-economy/economy-rests-on-christian-foundations-20160324-gnq5io.html>

^{viii} <http://biologos.org/common-questions/christianity-and-science/science-and-religion>

^{ix} John 4: 24

^x <http://biblehub.com/isaiah/66-1.htm>

^{xi} Leviticus 25: 23 - 24

^{xii} http://biblehub.com/1_john/4-20.htm