

2. **May I ask you... In YOUR faith, do you know for SURE you will go to heaven?**

“I’m not trying to get you to *change* your **cultural traditions**, but to have a **direct and Personal relationship with God**, through the Lord Jesus Christ.

[i.e., We are **NOT** promoting a particular church or **church activities** (or rituals) but **one-on-one connectedness** with **JESUS—the eternal God of this life and *universe***].

3. [“I’m a Muslim, Mormon,” etc.]

Well, are you a SINNER too? Have you ever done anything wrong?

[i.e., have you ever committed even one evil deed, such as **lying, cheating** or **stealing**?...]

Then I have **GOOD NEWS** to share with you—**Not** about pushing a *religion*, but about how **you can KNOW GOD** and have a *personal relationship with Him*.

Apologetic Answers to 250 Questions

APOLOGETIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS OF NON-CHRISTIANS

(**MOST POPULAR QUESTIONS**: * = Paul Little’s; * = Dewitt’s; # = Little’s and Dewitt’s; + = Larry Moyer’s)

GOD

- #1. How do you know God exists and that Christianity is true? God is dead.
2. If God existed, He would be impersonal.
3. Who made God? Where did God come from?
4. Do Christians believe in three gods or one? The doctrine of the “Trinity” is irrational.
5. Is the God of the Old Testament different from and meaner than the One of the New Testament?

CHRIST

6. Did Jesus Christ actually exist, historically (i.e., in time and space)? Is the Christ of history the same as the Christ of faith?
7. Was Jesus Christ God/divine deity? Did Christ fulfill the attributes of God?
- *8. Did Christ resurrect (i.e., rise, raise, arise) from the dead? Was Christ’s death a sham and His resurrection a hoax? Was Christ’s body really absent from the tomb?
- *9. Is Christ the only way to God? Isn’t it the height of arrogance and exclusivity for Christians to claim to have the only truth regarding how all men are supposed to get to heaven?

MAN, SIN AND EVIL

10. If God made us, our moral failings and sins are His fault.
- #11. Why does God allow so much evil in the world and why do the innocent suffer, if He’s a God of love, and totally in control?
12. Christians have a low, negative view of humanity. Not every person acts like Hitler.

THE BIBLE AND GOSPEL, SCIENCE, EVOLUTION AND MIRACLES

- *13. Is the Bible God’s Word, true and completely accurate and “inerrant?” Are the Bible documents reliable? How accurate? Isn’t the Bible just a myth or fairy tale, full of contradictions?
- *14. Does the Bible conflict with Modern Science? Evolution has proven the Bible to have errors.
- #15. Are the miracles of the Bible real, or possible?
- *16. Does the Bible conflict with archaeology? Does archaeology confirm or contradict Christ’s biographies?

17. Don't pleasant, near-death experiences of non-Christians disprove Christianity?
18. Specific difficult passages (Ex.: God is a male; baptism for the dead; seeming inconsistencies in the same Gospel accounts)

SALVATION, FAITH AND ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

- *19. What about those (i.e., "the poor native") who have never heard of Christ: will God judge them?
- *20. Can anyone be sure of his salvation (i.e., that he's going to heaven)?
- *21. Isn't salvation by faith ("just believing") too simple/easy?
- *22. What does it mean to believe? Isn't faith contradictory to reason and logic?
23. Why would God require faith vs. just making Himself obvious, and ask for obedience?
24. Why bother to pray?
25. To be a true, genuine Christian is almost impossible—the required standards are too high, and are beyond me, or it costs too much to become a Christian.
26. I am so weak.
27. I cannot break from my sins.
28. I am afraid I cannot hold out.

WORKS/RELIGIONS

- *29. Can good deeds get us to heaven? What is the role of good works in salvation?
30. It doesn't matter what you believe—only if you believe it sincerely.
31. The person who sincerely asks for pardon will never be refused.
32. All named Gods are really just the same Person/entity.
33. All religions are good, or about the same. Have you researched all other religions to see which is best so you can make an informed decision (i.e., have you conducted a comparative religion study)? We all believe the same...be good and love people (let God handle the details—we can't force Him to accept us into heaven anyway)
34. We cannot know who's right and who's wrong in religious matters.
35. You want me to change religions?
36. What about the "law of attraction" teaching, (Ex.: focused faith causes change, God is in you, you cannot fail, see yourself having whatever you want and ask the universe for, etc)?

CHURCH/CHRISTIANITY

- *35. If Christianity is true, why are there so many hypocrites in the Church? Your behavior is contradicting your claim to be a Christian. There are too many hypocrites in the Church. Your message's credibility is downed by the fact that Christians sin (and some, greatly)
36. A professing Christian wronged me.
37. Christian "superstars" are (only) after money.
38. Christians are bigoted, racist, sexist and homophobic.
39. Religion has sparked wars and exploitation. What about the Christian Inquisitions and Salem Witch trials?
40. Many non-Christians are more moral than many claiming Christians.
- *41. Is Christianity rational? Is truth knowable, logical (or illogical, and totally emotional)?
- *42. Isn't Christianity just a psychological crutch for weak people? That stuff is only for societal losers and down-and-out'ers.
43. Christianity is out-of-date.
44. Christianity is on the decline.

PERSONAL

45. Isn't death the end of it all, with no afterlife? Why doesn't God just snuff out and annihilate everyone? We all just decay when we die.
46. I hate God.
47. I'm answerable to no one. I am my own boss.
48. I don't need religion. I don't need God.
49. What's in it for me? Why should I become a Christian?
50. I'm not convinced.
51. I don't believe that.
52. I have no feeling.
53. I'll think about it.

127 OTHER QUESTIONS ASKED OR STATEMENTS MADE BY NON-CHRISTIANS

GOD

54. The Trinity belief arose in the 1300s.
55. God loves all men, so He wouldn't destroy them (i.e., in Hell).
56. Why didn't God create only those He knew would follow Him?
57. God is going to save "the elect." If I'm one of the elect than God will save me; if I am not, then it really doesn't matter what I do.
58. Hell is a state of mind—not a place.
59. How can God send children to hell?
60. Why does everyone suffer the same in hell?
61. Why are people punished infinitely for finite sins, or crimes?
62. Can't God force everybody to go to heaven?
63. How can hell exist alongside heaven?
64. Is God an environmentalist?

CHRIST

65. Who was Jesus?
66. Was Christ really convinced He was the Son of God?
67. Was Christ crazy (or deluded) when He claimed to be the Son of God?
68. Did Christ—and Christ alone—match the identity of the Messiah?
69. Why is Jesus better than other religious leaders and teachers?
70. Was Christ seen after His death on the cross?
71. Christ was only a good man.
72. Christ was only a moral teacher.
73. Jesus sinned (i.e., turning over the temple tables, or reproving the Pharisees).
74. Jesus was culturally biased for whites.

MAN, SIN AND EVIL

75. What is the origin of evil?
76. What is sin?
77. There is no evidence of sin in the world (or the evidence disproves God)
78. Sin in the world is not why men die, but their bodies obey the law of entropy (i.e., wear out)
79. Everyone sins every once in awhile.
80. I am a sinner, but so are you, Christian—what's the difference?
81. You are still going to sin after you get saved.
82. God will weigh my good deeds against my bad deeds, and I'll be fine.
83. The sins I have committed are not serious--I never killed or raped anyone.
84. I am as good as others.
85. My sins are small, so why worry?
86. I have never sinned (i.e., the rich young ruler excuse or attitude). I am not a sinner. Why am I blamed for something I didn't do?

BIBLE/GOSPEL, SCIENCE AND MIRACLES

87. Is truth absolute or relative? What happens when absolutes conflict?
88. I can write something and claim it as inspired, as well.
89. Do Christians engage in circular reasoning (i.e., I believe the Bible is God's Word because it says it is).
90. The Bible was written to make Christ look like He fulfilled prophecy.
91. Men decided the contents of the biblical canon. Why do we have no original manuscript autographs?
92. Hasn't the New Testament been changed since it has been copied and recopied throughout history?
93. Is the best way to interpret the Bible to interpret it literally?
94. There are so many different interpretations of the Bible, why should I believe yours?
95. Don't the two Creation accounts' orders contradict both themselves and what we know from modern science (Gen. 1-2)?
96. Where did Cain get his wife, and how were they able to populate an entire city?
97. Why doesn't the Bible record the existence of prehistoric man or dinosaurs?

98. What is the probability that Noah's Flood actually occurred, given what we know from modern science and archaeology?
99. Is the existence of the Jewish nation proof of the Bible's inspiration as a fulfillment of prophecy?
100. The Gospel is irrelevant (i.e., for social issues/too heavenly minded/suicidal argument).
101. The Gospel message has been disproved.
102. Luke-Acts was written before the Gnostics allowed the Book of John to enter the canon. The message of the Synoptics differs from John's Gospel, and the Synoptics are the true Gospel.
103. Jews wrote the New Testament (presumably meaning they were inaccurate or biased).
104. The biblical writers were biased/partial.
105. The Gospel's appeal is based on the ultimate fear tactic (hell) vs. the love of God.
106. Which Bible do you believe in? (Ex.: Jews' O.T., Catholics' apocrypha, Christians' O.T. and N.T., Muslim's Koran; KJV-only believers, etc.).
107. Can the biographies (Gospels) of Jesus be trusted? Do they hold up under scrutiny? Were Jesus' biographies preserved for us?
108. Is there credible evidence for Christ outside the biographies of Christ?
109. The Bible is not intellectual enough for me (i.e., its too simplistic).
110. The Bible is a story book. That stuff is for children.
111. The Bible has some weird beliefs and ethics (Ex.: God is male).
112. You call yourself educated, yet still believe in a literal 6-day Creation story and a 6,000 year old earth?
113. I'm going to live forever through electro chronics or time machines.
114. Do you believe in the Shroud of Turin?(i.e., that it's authentic/the real thing/Christ's burial cloth).

SALVATION, FAITH AND ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

115. Why did Christ have to die on a cross for me to go to heaven?
116. Why did Christ have to shed blood?
117. How can the death of one man 2,000 years ago help me today?
118. What is salvation?
119. Why would God give you the only reward which alone motivates men to live good?
120. What must I do to be saved?
121. Should Christians give away all their possessions?
122. What makes Christian conversion valid? Can't it be explained psychologically?
123. Can Christianity be proved?
124. That's naive, easy believism that isn't intellectually honest and clings mindlessly to the Bible, even when facts dispute and challenge the beliefs. You mean I can believe for, say, five minutes, then return to a life of sin?
125. There have to be strings attached to this "gift."
126. Is baptism necessary for salvation?
127. There are things I must do before I become a Christian.
128. God can save people without human intervention in the process (cf.: lifestyle evangelism and Rom. 1)
129. Isn't God going to save everybody in the final analysis, anyway?
130. What's the big deal about salvation—you may lose it later anyway?
131. I think you're making too big a fuss about this.

PSEUDO-THEOLOGICAL/PHILOSOPHICAL/RELIGIOUS OBJECTIONS

132. What do you know of Greek, Hebrew or textual criticism? (i.e., are you a Bible scholar?).
133. You can know God without "receiving Christ," or being "born again."
134. Why are we here? Why did God make us?
135. Heaven and hell are not real (symbolize euphoria and punishment/judgment for evil). Hell is only a state of mind. I don't believe in heaven or hell
136. The devil is not real. Are you one of those who believe there's a demon behind every doorstep?
137. If Satan does exist, so what?
138. Isn't demon-possession really mental illness?
139. Respect others' beliefs (i.e., "tolerance").
140. Religion is whatever you feel is right.
141. That's your opinion.

142. Everyone has God in them (i.e., Universalism/Secular Humanism/New Age Movement).
143. Everyone must live by his own moral compass (moral relativism).
144. I am seeking, but I cannot find Christ.
145. Wouldn't the world be boring if all believed the same and no one had any fun (i.e., sinful type)?
146. Jesus is going to solve every problem and I'll enjoy a life on a bed of roses thereafter (i.e., pie-in-the-sky philosophy).
147. All Americans know the story of Jesus (i.e., America as a "Christian" nation theory).
148. I know God already. I attend church regularly. I am already a member of a church.
149. I believe in God (i.e., intellectual assent only)...For example, the Apostle's creed. I already believe in God—I'll choose Him later.
150. I used to be a Christian, but that was last week (i.e., I lost my salvation or salvation as a temporal experience). I tried Christianity once.
151. I did that when I was a little boy.
152. I have tried before, and failed.
153. I ask forgiveness for my sins everyday (i.e., Catholic penance, and confession to human "fathers").
154. I was born a Christian. I was raised a Christian.
155. I'm Catholic, or Jewish.
156. I pray to Mother Mary daily.
157. My mother is a saint.
158. I'm going to purgatory. Why doesn't God give man a second chance?
159. I may be punished, but not eternally.
160. I'm an agnostic: I don't know if you can know there's a God. The bottom line is I just don't know.
161. Are you one of those Jehovah's Witnesses (i.e., are you a cult member?). You've been brain-washed.
162. Look at the Mormons (religious and moral, but you call them a cult).
163. Jesus is going to make me become a monk, be unmarried, miserable, poor or a foreign missionary.

WORKS/RELIGIONS

164. God grades on the curve. I'm a good person and have hurt no one (i.e., the 10 Commandments, or Golden Rule argument).
165. I am good enough as I am.
166. Works are required for Christians.
167. What do you think about the various alternatives to Christianity, such as Agnosticism, Atheism and Humanism?
168. What is the difference between a cult and a mainstream church?
169. Does Christianity welcome or reject 'New Age' teaching?
170. Have you been around the world and seen how different cultures believe different things (variant morals) change.
171. I'm going to be reincarnated in the after-life. Isn't reincarnation more reasonable than hell? Fulfillment, peace, meaning and satisfaction in New Age (meditation, hypnotism, inspirational audio tapes, retreats/seminars, unification movements, men's movement, etc.).
172. God's name is Allah
173. You've never read the Koran, so how do you know?

CHURCH/CHRISTIANITY

174. Don't you really just want to increase your church membership (ulterior agenda/motive argument).
175. Have you ever known a good preacher's kid (offered as proof that the more serious one takes our "religion," the more its morals fail?).
176. Christian theological disputes and church splits (Lordship vs. Saviorhood Controversy ex.).

PERSONAL

177. I'm too bad to be/get saved. I am too big a sinner. God could not love me.
178. I think I have committed the unpardonable sin.
179. I am afraid Jesus will not receive me.
180. I am not respectable enough to be a Christian.
181. I have no encouragement at home.
182. I'm afraid of persecution

183. I've heard that so many times before.
184. I don't know enough yet to make that decision.
185. I cannot understand.
186. You need to speak to my wife (pawning you off method).
187. I'm really busy right now.
188. I'll deal with that subject (and with death) when I'm older (i.e., the death as a million-to-one odds argument).
189. I'm too young or too old.
190. I do not think I am old enough to make a decision.
191. I'll take my chances.
192. I'll worry about that in the next life.
193. Would not suicide be the best way out of my trouble?
194. I see no harm in worldly amusements.
195. I'm happy, and like my lifestyle, living in sin. Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die. I like my life as it is presently, thank you.
196. There is too much to give up.
197. I would like to be a Christian, but I cannot forgive my enemies.
198. My friends mean so much to me.
199. People would laugh.
200. Does this have to be done publicly?
201. I'm Not Interested.
202. Please do not talk to me about it.
203. My parents preached religion to me so much, I want nothing to do with it.
204. I'm just not ready yet.
205. I want to get established in business first. After that, I'll become a Christian.
206. Door slammed in your face (rudeness). **[RARE, in my experience!]**
207. Sharing one's faith is too personal.
208. That's none of your business: keep that to yourself.
209. I prefer to remain open-minded.
210. Moralistic, dogmatic Bible-beater fanatic extremist/fundamentalists turn me off.
211. I'm not religious.
212. I'm trying to be a Christian.
213. I'm already religious.
214. I am doing the best I can.
215. Can I be a Christian without losing my moral integrity?
216. You're trying to convert/proselytize me. Oh, no, he's talking about God; He'll probably try to convert me to try to make me live right and believe as he does. Are you one of those "born-again"-type Christians? (as if that's bad)
217. Are you pushing a religion or denomination?
218. I don't like your method/approach.
219. The Gospel is for poor people.
220. God will make me be poor, like a Monk. "Will I have to drive a Cavalier?"
221. You can't have any fun as a Christian. Christianity is just a bunch of prohibiting rules.
222. Didn't that Discovery Channel filmmaker find Jesus' crypt and bones Feb. 26, 2007?
223. Have you ever sincerely thought something (to be true), only to discover later that it wasn't? That is, have you ever changed an opinion, or been wrong? Ill.: the bowing pillars of Egyptian landmarks look straight from a distance

APOLOGETICS UPDATE:

Responses to Issues Raised in Bill Maher's movie, "Religious"...

224. The virgin birth and a talking snake are not credible, and years of Christ's life are unaccounted for.
225. New Testament prophecy (Ex.: "Revelations") was written by those who knew Old Testament.
226. Those who wrote of Jesus never met Him, and the Gospels should all have the same accounts.
227. Religion is just selling the invisible—which is easy.
228. Religion shuts off rationality and impedes human progress—grow up already.
229. There's no proof Christ existed. He's like Santa Claus and Jack and the Bean stalk.

230. It's fishy that God spoke privately to His prophets instead of simply audibly to everyone. And isn't it a low emotion that God is a jealous God?
231. Fully surrendering to "God" just opens one up to manipulation by men with agendas (such as money, control over other's hopes, adoration by the masses, etc.).
232. Why don't the 10 Commandments include rape, child molestation and torture? All men could agree with no stealing or murder, without the need for religion.
233. If God's all powerful, why doesn't He eliminate the devil and solve the problems? God is to blame for everything negative or evil as he could have stopped it (illness, lost legs in war, etc.)
234. Many ancient gods were born on December 25—Christ's not unique.
235. The Gospel is a story of God birthing Himself through a virgin, as His Son and Himself/God. The trinity is not monotheistic.
236. Religion just makes men arrogantly feel they have the answers to all life's questions. Doubt is more humble.
237. Christians call coincidences "miracles," and many have a low threshold for identifying miracles.
238. The Old Testament has non-credible parts, such as Lot being a holy man who offering his daughter to be raped, God killing off a lot of people in the first 5 books, Jonah inside a big fish for 3 days, a 900 year old man and 39 acts being guilty of the death penalty.
239. Doubt is a luxury for those who have. Those who are desperate cling to faith, as a jailed inmate or someone in a fox hole.

Additional Questions

240. If Christ is God, how was he omnipresent while on earth? Can one be both God and yet not possess all God's powers?
241. Isn't Christianity just true for you, or because you were raised to believe it by what your parents told you?
242. You cannot prove God exists without seeing Him, hearing His audible voice, a video of the same or the testimony of eye witnesses.
243. Don't the good deeds/lifestyle of Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons prove their theology is superior?
244. Doesn't the sinful ("carnal") deeds and lifestyle of so many claiming Christians disprove their claimed beliefs?
245. The writers of the Bible were biased, and wrote their stories to prove the conclusion they sought to prove.
246. How do we know Christ literally lived on our earth?
247. Anyone can claim their Scriptures are perfect and from God. Claiming is much easier than proving the claim.
248. Many religious leaders have taught ethics, performed miracles, and many other men have claimed to be God.
249. Christ studied the Old Testament from childhood. He could easily have chosen His life path to fulfill prophecies about Messiah, and made claims based on those verse He already knew.
250. Don't Christians have 2 separate/different Gospels? Is God's word that confusing?

223 APOLOGETIC ISSUES ANSWERED

GOD

#1. How do you know that God exists? Is there a God? Can you prove God exists or that Christianity is real/true? God is dead (i.e., a philosophy). I don't believe there is a God. There is no God.

Bible Reference(s): Rom. 1:18-32, Ps. 14:1, 53:1, Ac. 17:27, Ac. 14:15, Ps. 97:6, 50:6, Ecc. 12:1

Response(s):

- Your conscience and your intuition just from observing the greatness of the created order tell you you know there is one. Perhaps, some time in your past, you chose to shut off the sensory messages being preached to you by these two sources.
- "God has placed inside all His human creatures a knowledge of His existence, or, as some may call it, a "God-shaped vacuum." --David Strawn
- How do you know that He does not exist? Can you prove it either way, or is there evidence to sustain your claim?
- Because I have personally MET Him, through the experience of salvation in the factual, historic life of His Son, who died on the cross for my sins and yours, some 2,000 real/actual years in our past.
- If you truly believe there is no justice outside that meted out in this world, why haven't you become as selfish and evil as you could possibly imagine (cf.: Holy Spirit's general restraint in the world).
- What type of God do you believe does not exist, because I may agree with you? That is, describe the traits of a "god" you assert does not exist.

Answer(s): Tests of objectivity; BIS tape on God is dead (obituary, etc.)

The Nature of General Revelation.

General Revelation answers the question, “What can man know about God?” General revelation is non-propositional; that is, not disclosed in verbal truth statements. It is:

- a) Universal; i.e., accessible in some sense everywhere in creation: Ps. 19:1-6.
- b) Available to (and to some extent innately understood by) all mankind: Mt. 5:45, Ac. 14:17, 17:27, Rom. 1:20, I Cor. 11:14.
- c) Accessible by conscience, the senses and by reason. Albeit marred by the fall, the image of god is ‘defaced but not erased.’

“General Revelation” may be defined as that which is revealed about God to people of every time and culture, through nature, common history and greater humanity.

Definition of “Proof.”

- A. Not Possibly True—a Hoax, Myth or Lie/Deception.
- B. Unlikely, Unreasonable, Very Doubtful.
- C. Beyond a Reasonable Doubt/More Likely Than Not/Tipping The Scales (civil standard).
- D. Clear and Convincing Evidence (criminal standard).
- E. Beyond a Shadow of Doubt.
- F. Scientifically Provable Fact.

Note: At any stage of strength of evidential weight, men may choose to reject the conclusions the evidence most reasonably leads one to make (J W Monty and **Illustration that dead men do bleed**—a moral vs. evidentiary issue).

The Five Traditional (and Two Other) “Theistic Proofs” for God’s Existence

1) **Ontological (God Concept).** Because man has a concept of a Being who is the greatest of all conceivable beings—perfect, holy, loving and just—therefore that Being must exist, or else He would not be perfect. (First five arguments from Thomas Aquinas, 1125-1274).

Pros:

Cons: Ill.: Cindy Crawford may have tremendous physical assets, but such may not be recognized in worlds which are unaware of her existence.

2) **Cosmological (First Cause/Cause-and-Effect).** The universe is an extraordinary effect that necessitates an adequate cause; the first and ultimate cause is an intelligent Creator. Stated another way (as a syllogism), (1) every effect has a cause (there cannot be infinite egress), (2) every effect depends on a cause for its existence, (3) the universe or nature cannot originate itself. Therefore, there must be a First Cause, and that cause is God.

Four Possible Responses:

- a) Something in a fundamental sense (energy, space, time) always existed; our universe came into existence by pure chance (atheism).
- b) Everything that exists is God; the universe is an emanation of an all-inclusive cosmic force (pantheism).
- c) All that exists was brought into being out of absolutely nothing (ex nihilo) by an intelligent Creator (theism).
- d) Nature was self-created. Something came out of absolutely nothing, with absolutely no external force or God (evolutionism?).

Pros:

Cons:

3) **Teleological (Design and Order).** The apparent purpose, order and design in the universe would necessitate an intelligent Creator. The amazingly intricate order, micro and macroscopically, implies a Designer.

Pros:

Cons: Darwinism arguments.

4) **Anthropological (Man’s Capabilities).** Man is an intelligent, volitional and emotional being with innate capacity for both ruling and relationship, and again with a sense of eternity. These extraordinary human characteristics reflect a superior personal Creator.

Pros:

Cons: One can posit a moral and rational God, or a concept of no God at all.

5) **Moral Argument (Innate Right and Wrong).** Man’s apparently innate sense of right and wrong—together with man’s universal cry for justice (i.e., punishment and retribution) when injustice is committed—powerfully indicate that man is made in the image of a moral God. (Rom. 1:32-2:16, esp. 2:14-15).

Pros:

Cons: Hitler, and man's equal capability to do tremendous evil could be used to argue that men were created by a personal devil, using that logic.

6) **Universal Religious Experience.** Humankind, until the 20th century, has nearly always and in every culture believed in some deity, afterlife and final justice. Not a few atheists have become quite religious in a foxhole or on the operating table. (From: A.E. Taylor and Richard Swinburne):

Faith and Reason, by Richard Swinburne (Oxford University Press: Oxford), 1984

The Faith of a Moralist, by A.E. Taylor (London), 1937

Pros:

Cons: Some (though a small minority) people and groups have no apparent religious experience. Sincere, real jailhouse conversions?

7) **The Wager (Happy Life Loses Nothing).** Given the options of belief in the Christian God and a life of obedience versus disbelief and a life of sinful pleasures, the reasonable choice would be obedient belief in God. (From: Blaise Pascal, 1623-1662).

Pros:

Cons: Satisfaction of sinning, if there is no ultimate consequence when all's said and done.

SUMMARY: The value of the major natural arguments is not that they necessarily prove the existence of God, but rather they (1) point toward the need for further investigation, (2) demonstrate the rationality of the faith, and (3) are tools of general revelation that the Holy Spirit can use.

Source: Adapted and excerpted from Dr. Scott Horrell's Trinitarianism classnotes, 1999, pp. 5-8.

See also: Philosophy of Religion, by Norman L. Geisler

One Further, More Modern Evidence for God's Existence.

---Some proffer the effect of Christianity in society and individually changed lives. (Josh McDowell, etc.); cf.: common sense, logic/analysis ability; and God-shaped vacuum?

Response:

The Bible teaches that God exists and that He has made Himself known at all men through His general revelation in:

1) Creation (Ps. 19:1-4, Rom. 1:18-20).

2) Conscience (Rom. 2:14-16).

3) History and Experience (Ac. 17:24-26; Rom. 1:18-32), and holds them accountable to respond to this knowledge.

---If there is no God, then how do you explain the origin, order, complexity and balance of the world and yourself? Without God, there is really no meaning and purpose in life.

---In fact, God has put into every person a longing for and desire to know Him (Ecc. 3:1-14, Ac. 17:27-28).

---If you truly seek God, He will let you find Him (I Chron. 28:9).

Source: Adapted from Bible Training Centre for Pastors: Missions, Evangelism, Discipleship, pp. 124-125, by Dennis J. Mock, Sept. 1991, Atlanta GA

Answer(s):

VanTil's Apologetic

"1. If God does not exist, the world is unintelligible.

2. God does not exist.

3. Therefore, the world is unintelligible...

Since it is agreed that the world is intelligible, then God must exist. However, Frame points out that the same argument can be stated in a positive form:

1. If the world is intelligible, God exists.

2. The world is intelligible.

3. Therefore, God exists."

Source: Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, p. 755, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

For Further Study:

I'm Glad You Asked, pp. 21-47, by Kenneth Boa and Larry Moody (ChariotVictor Publishing: Colorado Springs, CO), 1982

A Ready Defense, pp. 405-406, by Josh McDowell, (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993

Defending Your Faith, pp. 19-31, by Dan Story (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, MI), 1997

Answering the Tough Ones, pp. 119-121, by David A. Dewitt, (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

The Existence of God, by John W. Montgomery (Cassette)

Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 46-49, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000

When Skeptics Ask, pp. 15-25, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1990

Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 36-44, 154-156, 160-165, 253, 275-283, 289-296, 318-320, 399-401, 498-501, 554-564, 606-608, 670-674, 714-721, 722-723, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

The Open Bible, p. 1348 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

The God Who is There, by Francis Schaeffer

Evidence for Faith: Deciding the God Question, by John W. Montgomery
www.probe.org

2. If God existed, He would be impersonal.

Response(s):

- And how, or, based on what authority, do you know this for certain?
- How could an impersonal being create a personal being, if personal is more valuable?
- You are making an absolute statement about something you are not even absolutely certain exists, so how could your conclusion be certain, if the object of your conclusion is not even certain, in your own mind?
- How can there be an absolute trait that you are absolutely certain of, for an entity you are doubtful exists?
Taking your fault-ridden premise that you doubt His existence, that would be as absurd as me confidently asserting that the Easter bunny is yellow.
- If man is made in God's image, and mankind is personal, doesn't that sort of destroy your way of thinking?
- If He were impersonal, what benefit would relating to Him be for humans?
- Why do you believe that? Do you know with certainty that personality is exclusively limited to man and animals? It is conceivably possible that the Creator imbued His creatures with amoral attributes He did not possess, but as the Bible says that mankind is made in the image of God, I find it much more plausible that He bestowed upon us several features and aspects different in quality from yet, nevertheless, like unto His own Self, just like personality (i.e., mind, will and emotion). Also, the Bible directly teaches that God does have personality and is personal God, as well as the fact that I know Him that way too. Being made in His image implies just the opposite of that conclusion as to impersonalness.
- You state that with authority—what is your authority?
- Is it sensible that the creatures created by such a God would not share many traits of God, such as being personal, as it's better/preferred to be personable vs. aloof and impersonal?]

For Further Study:

Issues That Make Christians Squirm!, by Grantley Morris, net.simplenet.com/

Evidence That Demands a Verdict, pp. 111-140, by Josh McDowell, (Here's Life Publishers, Inc.: San Bernadeno, CA), 1979

Why I Believe in a Personal God: The Credibility of Faith in a Doubting Culture, by George Carey

3. Who made God? Where did God come from? God's just a figment of your imagination. What is the logic in a self-existent God concept?.

Bible Reference(s): I Chron. 16:36, Heb. 13:8, Gen. 1:1, Dan. 7:9, Isa. 40:28, Ecc. 12:1

Response(s):

- No one—He is self-existent (:). If something or someone had made "God," that something or someone would, in fact, be God, as God is the Creator, not the created/creature, by nature of His own being, existence and nature.
- That question is like asking what or who invented inventing. The nature of the concept itself innately implies the Creator was not created, or He would not be Creator, but creature.
- Men's minds certainly did not invent the idea of God to meet some deep psychological need. Our innate or intuitive knowledge that God exists comes as standard equipment in the consciences of people who have (at least not yet) not chosen to disregard and block out that evidence, because it does not fit well with their desires and aspirations.
- By pure definition, or description of "god," He would have to have never been birthed, or born/created at all, by anyone, or that other party would have superior powers, and He therefore could not be God. Also,
- The nature of God is, in part, understandable by we mere mortals, and in another sense so far superior and greater than any of our human capacities, to try to limit and shrink His greatness/glory

into a finite mind, requiring Him to not be eternal, is to make the creature into the structure or form of the creature/created, which is a sad reversal in logic.

---If anyone or anything created God—THEY would be God, originator/creator, and not Hw who has made us.

---That's like asserting what came before the beginning.

For Further Study:

Answers to Tough Questions, p. 68, by Josh McDowell, (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

Reason to Believe, pp. 111-113, by R.C. Sproul, (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1978

The Complete Book of Bible Answers, pp. 65-96, by Ron Rhodes (Harvest House: Eugene, OR), 1997

When Skeptics Ask, pp. 26-34, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1990

Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 283-288, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

4. Do Christians believe in three gods or one? The doctrine of the "Trinity" is irrational.

Response(s):

---One God in three Persons. They are not three gods, and there is not just one Person. It is the divine Godhead, or "Trinity," and, if you search the Scriptures and fairly evaluate the evidence, you can come to no other consistent conclusion (which happens to be the historic Christian position down through the centuries).

---Not everything/all concepts are purely logical to our limited and fragile/depraved human minds. God is, to some extent, beyond our full comprehension (transcendent and accommodation)...

---There is a difference between rational, irrational and that which is higher than or beyond rationality, such as miraculous spiritual truth. That's the category in which this doctrine belongs.

---One God, not three.

---Almighty God has no room for a competitor's power or influence (Ex.: omniscience, omnipotence and omni-presence), and there is but one true God. There is but one God, but, from a Christian and biblical perspective, by what he has revealed we know that that fact does not mean that Jesus or the Holy Spirit are any less divine, as they are three Persons of the one Godhead.

For Further Study:

Defending Your Faith, pp. 99-108, by Dan Story, (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, MI), 1997

A Ready Defense, pp. 409-411, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993

www.probe.org

5. Is the God of the Old Testament different from and meaner than the One of the New Testament?

Bible Reference(s):

Response(s):

---If that premise/theory were true, there would be two Gods, yet Scripture tells us there is but one. What that question can imply is a misunderstanding of the fact that God differs in/varies His dealings with mankind, in certain ways and at given times, and because He has, apparently, deemed to execute more of His direct, evident judgments in the Tribulation period, at least on those out of covenant with Him, than He did in the Jews O.T. theocracy (wherein He disciplined His people seemingly more visibly often and more physically severely—as well as executing final physical judgment on His enemies in evident ways the people could NOT misunderstand, as we may be prone to do), in no way implies a different Person acting in the New Testament, nor that God has changed His ethical positions or character. To understand these differences, and some of the reasons for them, will give you a great insight into more clearly understanding His book, the Bible.

---He is exactly the same God. Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. However, as that was at a different time/dispensation, primarily the Jewish people He was directly dealing with, and the progress of God's revelation had not been fully unfolded (not to mention the different maturity and advancement of mankind at that time), God did seemingly act more often in direct intervening fashion than we typically expect in our day—and for good reason(s).

---Examples of God's judgment in the N.T. include: Mt. 23:37-38, Ac. 5:1-11, 12:18-23, 13:8-11, I Cor. 5:1-5, 11:27-32, I Jn. 5:16-17, Heb. 12:25, 29, Rom. 1:20-24.

---Admit and don't hide or deny the fact that judgment is in the O.T.: Ex.: Ps. 7:12, 78:35-72, Deut. 9, etc.

---Examples or verses indicating God's love, grace, mercy, forgiveness and patience in the O.T. include: Ps. 103:8-18, Deut. 7:7-8, Gen. 18:20-33, The Lord returned from His anger, II Sam. 24:25, Pv. 3:33-

- 34, Ps. 30:1-4, 78:35-38, Num. 25:11, Ac. 17:30 (referring to O.T. times).
- Examples of both the kindness and severity of God: Ex. 34:6-7, Heb. 3:15-18, Rom. 11:17-23, Ex. 12:12-13. The presence of both of these traits within the same God does not teach a schizophrenic personality (as mercy is almost, if not always patiently shown before punishment is inflicted), but does teach that we should love God as our intimate Father, yet, at the same time, fear and revere Him as God, and avoid the errors of either being scared and afraid of Him, or taking Him lightly, or for granted.
 - God always judges righteously, and though He has righteous indignation, He never judges out of sinful or uncontrolled anger, and it is always needed and deserved/earned/called for.
 - A picture of Jesus often under-emphasized, overlooked, ignored or unknown is the picture of Jesus as Judge in the Book of Revelation. If God's wrath appears to be at its zenith in the flooding of the earth, so much so that He promised never to flood the earth in that fashion again (reminded to us every time we see a rainbow), 'you haven't seen anything yet,' when you read of God's terrifying and horrific wrath, judgment and punishment He is presently holding back, until the day mankind's sins store up deserved judgment and He unleashes the seven year Tribulation. God may, in our dispensation, be showing even more patience and restraint, in waiting to give every last person one final chance to receive His Son, but once His extreme patience comes to its end, it will LITERALLY be all over (Heb. 12:26, Rev. 4-20)

Answer(s):

"The Old Testament allegedly depicts only a God of wrath, while the New Testament allegedly depicts only a God of love. The Old Testament contains stories of God's commanding the destruction of Sodom and the annihilation of the Canaanites, and many other stories of God's judgment and wrath" allegedly in contradistinction to "the advanced teachings of Jesus to love one another and to turn the other cheek, as contained in the Sermon on the Mount." "...a moment's reflection" will show that these two concepts are not in direct conflict.

1. "Jesus Himself declared that the Old Testament may be summed up by the commandment to love God and love your neighbor. (Mt. 22:37). He also observed that, in the Old Testament, God had continually desired love and mercy rather than sacrifice. (Mt. 9:13, 12:7)."
2. "God would have not destroyed certain nations except that he is a God of justice, and their evil could not go unchecked or condoned." Ex.: Eze. 18:23.
3. "The proper Old Testament picture is one of a very patient God who gives people untold opportunities to repent...and only when they continually refuse does He judge and punish them for their evil deeds." For example:
 - a) God gave the Amorites hundreds of years to repent, yet they would not (Gen. 15:16).
 - b) Also, Noah preached 120 years to his generation before God brought the great flood (Gen. 6:3).
4. In actuality, and contrary to popular opinion, "the strongest statements of judgment and wrath in the Bible were made by the Lord Jesus Himself. ...In Mt. 23, for example, He lashed out at the religious leaders of His day, calling them hypocrites, and informing them that their destiny was eternal banishment from God's presence." (Mt. 23:1-39, See also: Mt. 10:34-35).

"We find judgment as well as love scattered profusely throughout the New Testament, and love and mercy as well as judgment throughout the Old Testament. God is consistent and unchanging, but different situations call for different emphases. Therefore, when the two testaments are read the way they were intended, they reveal the same holy God who is rich in mercy, but will not let sin go unpunished."

Source: A Ready Defense, pp. 407-408, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville, TN), 1993

For Further Study:

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 69-70, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

CHRIST

6. Did Jesus Christ actually exist, historically (i.e., in time and space)? Is the Christ of history the same as the Christ of faith? How can a person today come to really know who Jesus is?

Response(s):

- What year is it/What is the date on your calendar? Isn't it proper to add to that number the initials, "A.D.?" If most of the civilized and scientific world is willing to plan their lives based on a calendar rendering of time, centered totally on the date in which a certain Man of history was either born or died, do you think any intelligent person would want his life's chronology judged based on a fictitious cartoon-like mythical being?
- Why would non-religious, secular, or "neutral" historians have written of Him, if they would lose credibility as being accurate if they had written in historical fashion about a mythical figure (and especially if they never noted that such person was merely a historically believed myth)?

- People don't sinfully cuss with expletives like Santa Claus or Pinocchio.
- Do you take the calendar date of A.D. 2002 seriously? Do you think that the millions of people over the centuries who have "followed Christ" have simply been following mythical beliefs about someone who never even existed in history? If so, how peculiar it is that such a fairy tale usually leads them to changed lives, for the moral betterment of both themselves and our society.
- I'm quite sure you're aware that Jews in our generation, for the first time in 2 millennia, have been returning to their homeland of Israel, Right? If you have no reason to question THAT fact, and even if you did, you know that that history could be researched, WHY would you exhibit a stronger doubt about historical facts occurring in the same area at nearly the same time-frame, just because they are recorded in a "religious" book, the Bible, along with other secular book sources? Is that a bias you cannot understand, or is there a good reason for it?
- Do you believe Socrates, Abe Lincoln existed? Why is it that when it comes to morals and God, People doubt His historical appearance, but not for lesser Persons? Could there be a spiritual battle going on (behind the scenes)?

Answer(s):

For Further Study:

- Evidence That Demands a Verdict, pp. 81-87, by Josh McDowell (Here's Life Publishers, Inc.: San Bernadeno, CA), 1979
 - Ready With an Answer, pp. 23-66, by John Ankerberg (Harvest House: Eugene, OR), 1997
 - A Ready Defense, pp. 191-208, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993
 - The Case for Christ, pp. 110-128, 261, by Lee Strobel, (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1998
 - Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 42-43, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980
 - The Case for Faith, p. 265, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000
 - The Complete Book of Bible Answers, pp. 97-130, 141-152, by Ron Rhodes (Harvest House: Eugene, OR), 1997
 - When Skeptics Ask, pp. 101-117, by Normal L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1990
 - Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 135-150, 381-385, 708-709, 759-764, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999
 - Defending Your Faith, pp. 75-86, by Dan Story (Kregel: Grand Rapids, MI), 1997
 - Christianity: Hoax or History?, pp. 85-88, by Josh McDowell (Tyndale House: Wheaton, IL), 1971
 - Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 36-37, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000
- www.probe.org

7. Was Jesus Christ God, divine deity? Did Christ fulfill the attributes of God? Was Jesus uniquely innocent and sinless?

Response(s):

- Yes. He both humbly admitted it by not denying it, lived a sinless life, and exhibited the exact traits of the father/God. His followers, and the human writers of the Bible claimed and affirmed it, and His resurrection from the dead, never to die again, further and finally sealed the evidence.
- Of all the alternative choices for what Christ was (Ex.: a good man, prophet, etc.) do any of those alternatives fully and accurately match the Bible's description of both Christ's words and deeds, honestly?
- Yes, as shown by His claims, miracles, sinlessness, prophecy fulfillment, quality of teaching, effect on lives, and fulfillment of all of the divine attributes (save for any self-limiting brought about by the incarnation).
- In a word, YES, Jesus fulfilled the attributes of God. Omniscience (Phil. 2 limitations), omnipotence, omnipresent, perfect, sinless, holy, claims, miracles, etc. Proof/Evidence:
God is...spirit (Jn. 4:24), Creator (I Pet. 4:19), sustainer of the universe (Col. 1:16, Heb. 1:3, Ps. 47:7, Dan. 5:21), personal (Ex. 3:14, Ps. 103:14), judge (Heb. 12:23; Ps. 7:11), sovereign (I Tim. 6:15), only-wise God (Rom. 16:27), good (Ps. 86:5), one (Mk. 12:29; Gal. 3:20), blessed (I Tim. 6:15), holy (I Pet. 1:15-16), just (Lk. 7:29?; Heb. 6:10), loving (I Jn. 4:8), faithful (I Cor. 1:9, 10:13, II Tim. 2:13, II Th. 3:3), merciful (Lk. 6:36, Ps. 86:15, 145:8), ever-present (Ps. 50:10-12, Ex. 3:13-14), unchangeable/immutability (Heb. 13:8, 6:18, Ps. 102:25-27), all-knowing (Jn. 21:17, Ps. 139:26, Isa. 40:13-14), all-powerful/almighty (gen. 17:1), immortal, invisible, living/alive (Rom. 9:26?), feeling (Heb. 4:15), thinking/intelligent (Isa. 55:8-9), compassionate (Deut. 4:31), authoritative (Mt. 28:18-20), sensible/reasonable, beyond man/our thoughts (Isa. 55:8-9), accommodation (Phil. 2:5-11), predestining (Ac. 9:28-30), foreknowing (Ac. 2:23), choosing/deciding (Eph. 1:4), peaceful (Phil. 4:9), non-confusing (I Cor. 14:33), the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb. 13:8), honest (Tit. 1:2), above all (I Chron. 16:25, Jn. 3:31, Eph. 4:6), in all and through all (Eph. 4:6, 1:23), triune (Mt. 28:18-20), perfect (Deut. 32:4, Mt. 5:48), true (Jn. 3:33), gracious (II Chron. 30:9), kind (Rom. 2:4), jealous (Jas. 4:5), mystery? (Isa. 55:8-9, Ex. 3:14), free (Job 41:11), infinite (Ps.

147:5, I Tim. 6:16, Rom. 16:26), self-existent (Ex. 3:13-14, Ps. 50:10-12), self-sufficient (Ex. 3:13-14, Ps. 50:10-12, Col. 1:16), united (Mk. 12:29, Mt. 28:19, II Chron. 13:14), outside of time (II Pet. 3:8), unlimited (Gen. 18:14, Jer. 32:27), able (Mt. 3:9), in heaven (Mt. 6:9), all things sum up in Him (I Cor. 15:28), not a man (Num. 23:19), God of gods (Deut. 10:17), safety (Deut. 33:27), power > man (Job 33:12), mighty (Job 36:5), the Lord (Ps. 33:12), indignant (Ps. 7:11), wrathful/angry (Rom. 1:18, Rev. 4-20), patient (II Pet. 3:9), gentle (Ps. 18:35, disciplines/self-controlled (Ex.: Gen. 18:24), compassionate (Jas. 5:11), love (I Jn. 4:8), truth (Ps. 31:5, Jn. 17:3), holy (Levit. 19:2, I Pet. 1:15), eternal/everlasting (Ps. 45:6), helping (Ps. 54:4), near/close by (Lk. 21:31), impartial (Ac. 10:34), a consuming fire (Heb. 12:29), light (I Jn. 1:5), sinless/cannot be tempted (Jas. 1:13), hearing/seeing, detailed and general, delegatory and directly involved (cf.: laissez faire v. micro-manager), trusting?, trustworthy, lovingkindness, planner, spontaneous, generous/benevolent, efficient?, effective, rich, sharing, caring, a rewarder, a motivator, thorough?, thoughtful, affectionate?, affable?, friendly?, knowable, ruling/reigning, preserving, persevering, constant, viable, protector, provider, responsible, moral/ethical, forgiving, remembering?, full of glory/glorious, hard-working, the only eternal being in the universe, supreme, knowable, personal, male?, etc. See Psalms for attributes to praise, especially attributes personally beneficial (Ex.: for and with us). God is most holy, and has no equal. God alone holds the power of salvation. He is the supreme being (Gen. 17:1),

God is not...lonely, dictator/hard man?, proud/prideful, pretentious (any sins list), she, it, dead, errand boy, Santa clause, just there to rescue when you get in trouble, myth, superstition, imagined hope, slack/lazy, irrelevant, mysticism, hands-off/detached, forgetful, mechanical, etc. **1 attribute per alphabet letter.**

(cf.: Christ is author and finisher of our faith—relate God attributes to Christ to show Christ's deity).

Answer(s): See Also: Answer to Question # 8, Above.

For Further Study:

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 39-41, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

Evidence That Demands a Verdict, pp. 89-102, 111-140, by Josh McDowell (Here's Life Publishers, Inc.: San Bernadeno, CA), 1979

The Case for Christ, pp. 155-170, 261, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1998

Ready With an Answer, pp. 67-97, by John Ankerberg (Harvest House: Eugene, OR), 1997

A Ready Defense, pp. 246-267, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993

Issues That Make Christians Squirm!, by Grantley Morris, net.simplenet.com/

The Case for Faith, pp. 131-190, 266, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000

Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 30-31, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000

The Supremacy of Christ, by Ajith Fernando

Christian Apologetics, pp. 329-352, by Norman Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1976

Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 129-135, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

True for You, but Not for Me, pp. 116-122, by Paul Copan (Bethany House: Minneapolis, MN), 1998
www.probe.org

***8. Did Christ resurrect (i.e., rise, raise, arise) from the dead? Are there any supporting facts that point toward the resurrection of Christ? Was Christ's death a sham and His resurrection a hoax? Was Christ's body really absent from the tomb?**

Response(s):

---Yes, the Bible says He did, He had predicted He would (and He never lied or was in error), eye witnesses attested to the fact, even biased opponents made note of the undeniable fact, Christians today will testify of His being alive and having changed their lives, and lastly, has anyone ever found His bones in any grave in the Middle East?

---YES, there are supporting facts pointing to the resurrection.

---Has anyone ever found His gravesite with His bones inside? How do you explain the influence a supposedly dead man has had on people throughout history, and continues to have, and NOT simply because they read about His moral life of 2,000 years ago?

For Further Study:

Defending Your Faith, pp. 87-98, by Dan Story (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, MI), 1997

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 52-53, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

The Case for Christ, pp. 191-257, 262-264, by Lee Strobel, (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1998

A Ready Defense, pp. 215-240, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993

Evidence That Demands a Verdict, pp. 179-263, by Josh McDowell (Here's Life Publishers, Inc.: San Bernadeno, CA), 1979

Ready With an Answer, pp. 99-139, by John Ankerberg (Harvest House: Eugene, OR), 1997

Know What and Why You Believe, pp. 171-177 by, Paul Little (InterVarsity Press: Westmont, IL), 1980

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 47-49, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980
The Case for Faith, pp. 191-269, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000
The Possibility of Resurrection and Other Essays in Christian Apologetics, by Pater Van Inwagen
The Complete Book of Bible Answers, pp. 131-139, by Ron Rhodes (Harvest House: Eugene, OR), 1997
10 Reasons to Believe Christ Rose From the Dead, RBC Ministries (Grand Rapids, MI), 1993
When Skeptics Ask, pp. 118-127, 246-254, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1990
Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 585-586, 644-670, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999
True for You, but Not for Me, pp. 110-115, by Paul Copan (Bethany House: Minneapolis, MN), 1998
Christianity: Hoax or History?, pp. 13-44, by Josh McDowell (Tyndale House: Wheaton, IL), 1971
www.probe.org

***9. Is Christ the only way to God? Isn't it the height of arrogance and exclusivity/elitism for Christians to claim to have the only truth regarding how all men are supposed to get to heaven?**

Bible Reference(s): Jn. 14:6, Ac. 4:12, Jn. 3:16-18; Jn. 10:9 and Mt. 7:13.

Response(s):

- The Bible and Jesus Himself say "yes." One of the reasons this is so is because His sacrificial death on the cross as a payment for sins was done on behalf of all men. No man is excluded, so the once-for-all provision has been made, and there is no other plan God has instigated/initiated whereby a person can be saved (Ac. 4:12).
- If there were more ways than one to approach God for eternal life, God would be inconsistent, and Jesus would not have had to die to pay the penalty for your sins.
- If science determined that the only way to cure Polio was through Penicillin, would you think them arrogant or naive to shun other methods attempting but failing to solve the problem?
- Sometimes in life there are several ways to approach a problem, but when reality (or God, more importantly) determines an exclusive way, I would propose that it is we who are arrogant to try to tell God either that He's mistaken/wrong, or to try to create and invent another way.
- Christ was a prophet (), and prophets never lie/always tell the truth, and He Himself said He was the only way. Being all-knowing, surely He could have proposed another way, if it had existed, as He would have all that knowledge.
- I'm sorry, but God gave us only one way, and anything less, however close, is as far off in effect as if we had been totally off track.
- If there were another way, do you think God would have required His only Son to die and suffer so much?
- There are MANY ways to the "god of this world," satan, and his eternal hell, but only one way to the God of the universe and His eternal dwelling.

For Further Study:

The Case for Faith, pp. 145-167, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000
I'm Glad You Asked, pp. 149-171, by Kenneth Boa and Larry Moody (Chariot/Victor Publishing: Colorado Springs, CO), 1982
Defending Your Faith, pp. 109-119, by Dan Story (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, MI), 1997
A Ready Defense, pp. 408-409, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993
Answering the Tough Ones, pp. 19-22, by David A. Dewitt (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980
Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 62-64, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980
Reason to Believe, pp. 41-49, by R.C. Sproul (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1978
The Case for Christ, pp. 145-168, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1998
Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 60-61, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000
www.probe.org

MAN, SIN AND EVIL

10. If God made us, our moral failings and sins are His fault.

Response(s):

- That assertion would be true, if there had been no intervening event, known as the sinful choice and fall of man. That is to say, the way Adam and Eve lived and behaved, before THEY succumbed and gave into satan's temptation, IS the way God made man to live. It is, however, because of the wrongful, warped way man chose to exercise the (relatively) free will God had given them which is to blame for every sin ever since.
- God made us, but he did not make us as sinners. That choice was ours, through our original parents,

and more specifically through Adam (though we condone and participate in that type of decision every day).
---With that way of thinking, am I to credit satan with any good we seen in the world?
---Only if He made us exactly in the state we presently exist/find ourselves, which would be to deny and ignore man's sinful Fall, in Adam.

For Further Study:

The Complete Book of Bible Answers, pp. 153-174, by Ron Rhodes (Harvest House: Eugene, OR), 1997
Issues That Make Christians Squirm!, by Grantley Morris, net.simplenet.com/
Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 120-123, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

#11. Why does God allow evil? If there is a God, why is there so much evil in the world? (i.e., the "Problem" of evil in the world--Ex.: "acts of God"). God is evil to allow sin and evil in the world (i.e., doubting God's character). How can a kind, loving God allow so much suffering, evil and injustice in the world? Why does God allow the innocent to suffer, if He's a God of love and totally in control? Isn't evil really good in disguise? Why do bad things happen to good people?

Response(s):

- The Bible does not say?
---God allowed for the possibility of evil, but never created or wanted it, and though He is powerful enough to have forbidden it, He also deemed that man (and satan) would be imbued with a somewhat free will.
---God allows it, but not forever, and will you be ready when God says, "enough is enough? He cares about man's pain? an chose to bring it into the world moral agents, therefore, or only Adam?); not God's perfect will, but man's doings (don't blame God; allowing is not commissioning?); not a cosmic dictator with moral robots down here (who can't save selves)--world, body ill & decaying (must work); devil me do it? No you allowed him to deceive you (will of man!?)
---Why, in your question, is the blame directed toward GOD, for actions clearly committed by man? Can man say that he was coerced and forced (Ex.: at gunpoint), and even if he feels lured, be assured that it is not God, but His arch rival—the devil—who is in that business. God is pure, and has nothing to do with and cannot even look on sin and evil (:). We are not moral robots, or puppets, and though God is in complete control and nothing occurs without His knowledge and permission, that does NOT mean that He specifically engineers ever detail of every move to achieve His moral will purposes—obviously not. Take Hitler, for example. That was allowed, but opposite what God wanted to happen, as it was immoral and God's will is moral. The devil is allowed a degree of freedom to work, for a time, and he really works hard to not only produce evil, but to solicit man's cooperation in it, and even to get man to believe that God authored that evil.
---Let me ask you a question...are there certain sins that you particularly like to engage in? Though that is admittedly evil, aren't you a bit glad that you are not immediately terminally judged, and at least allowed some freedom to decide to engage or not (not that you should, but recognizing your freedom as choice as a gift)?
---Why do you do evil? Is anyone making/forcing you to do it?

Answer(s):

- All evil, suffering and injustice in the world is the result of sin—it is not caused by God. (Gen. 3:13-24, Ps. 53:1-3).
- God, in fact, loves kindness, righteousness and justice. (Jer. 9:23-24, Ps. 33:5).
- God, in His own way and time, will right all wrongs, reward righteousness and punish evildoers. (II Pet. 3:3-13, Rev. 21:1-4, 22:1-5).
- Nevertheless, God still can and does use suffering, evil and injustice to cause people to turn to and trust Him, and to accomplish His purposes. (Gen. 50:19-20, Phil. 1:12-14, II Cor. 1:3-11).

Source: Adapted from Bible Training Centre for Pastors: Missions, Evangelism, Discipleship, pp. 127-128, by Dennis J. Mock, Sept. 1991, Atlanta GA

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www.probe.org

12. Christians have a low, negative view of humanity. Not every person acts like Hitler.

Response(s):

- You are correct that not all men act like Hitler, but are in error in asserting that Christians have a low view of humanity. In fact, believers believe that man was created in God's image, as one of His highest creations (lower only than angels?). Christians have an accurate view of man's inner self/spiritual capacity, given that they are totally estranged from God. This does not mean that the image of God remaining yet tainted by the Fall, in man's heart, as well as the continuing restraining presence of the Holy Spirit in the world (as well as peer pressure, self-motivation and government laws) do not prevent men from experientially behaving as evil-ly as could be possible. That is, not all men act like Hitler, or worse, though, before God, we are guilty as if we had committed all sins imaginable, many times over, even if we have only committed one sin in our life. That's what we mean by the term, "total depravity."
- Christians do not think that, experientially, ever human chooses to exercise his sinful nature in as severe ways as Hitler did, but we do speak of latent potential for evil (and, technically, no ability to produce good before God or meritorious good works), as evidenced in all the external manifestations thereof, of which merely one sin, biblically, classifies us in the status of sinner, before God (as opposed to saint).
- Total depravity does not mean... (cite Gromacki).

For Further Study:

Issues That Make Christians Squirm!, by Grantley Morris, net.simplenet.com/

THE BIBLE & GOSPEL, SCIENCE, EVOLUTION & MIRACLES

***13. Is the Bible God's Word, true and completely accurate and "inerrant?" Are the Bible documents reliable? How accurate is the Bible? Isn't the Bible just a myth or fairy tale, full of contradictions and errors? Christ's story has been disproved. There's no evidence to believe the Bible. You don't believe those stories do you? Those stories are in there to teach moral lessons. What are the guidelines for handling difficult passages? Why should I accept the Bible as final authority?**

Response(s):

- Yes. Read it for yourself, and pray that God would show Himself powerful unto you, and I'll be praying the same thing as well. Soak up its contents. Does the deepness of its pages strike you as just another novel you can skim lightly through in your spare time? The Bible itself claims to be the Word of God. That claim would either be a lie, misguided error, or absolutely and certainly true. By the grace of God I am blessed to know with all certainty that the latter is the only valid choice.
- Before passing judgment on a matter, it is fair and important to know the facts concerning the matter. Similarly, I would suggest that you thoroughly investigate the contents of the Bible, before too quickly jumping to any conclusions as to its truthfulness, or errant nature—isn't that reasonable?
- Yes, in the autographa (i.e., original writings). Completely inerrant and inspired in the original manuscripts.
- The Bible is accurate enough for you to believe in Christ, and to hold you morally accountable for rejecting God's offer so to do.

For Further Study:

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www.probe.org

+*14. Does the Bible conflict with Modern Science? Evolution has proven the Bible to have errors. What about the eternal earth option?. In this scientific age, haven't we outgrown Christianity?

Response(s):

---No, the Bible, accurately interpreted, does not contradict any conclusion of science, accurately and objectively (vs. biasedly, with a presuppositional agenda) arrived at..

---As has been said, "all truth is God's truth," (as God cannot lie), so all real and honest and accurate scientific conclusions will be consistent with all real, accurate and honest interpretations of God's holy

Word. Viewpoints of scientists with political, economic or philosophical-moral agendas are not to be placed in the same category of veracity as those sincerely and accurately presenting reality as we find and know it.

--Phenomenological language and Bible first and foremost a religious text?

--Really? Evolution has proven the Bible to be wrong? That's quite a feat, given that it is just a theory, assumed things unreasonable to assume, and presents as it's greatest tenet that the order we see all around us randomly came into existence, as a fluke of luck, from a chaotic explosion.

--The Bible only disagrees with junk science.

--If we've outgrown God and the Bible, why are our morals declining vs. maturing/improving?

--Every honest scientist still refers to Evolution as a "theory." How can you prove something when you weren't there, and can't re-test the idea?

--That's funny, the Bible has proven modern science to have errors (**give examples**).

Answer(s):

Although I believe in Creationism as a personal religious belief, I am never afraid or opposed to all truthful scientific evidence and investigation. As they say, 'all truth is God's truth.' I do not believe it took God billions of years to create the earth, nor do I deny that things change and mature, though not always to a better state, however (Ex.: not all political decisions of man are "progress" toward a better condition)." When you account for creatures (i.e., mankind and animals) and matter (i.e., plants, trees, etc.) having begun full term, as well as the 'unnatural' effects of the intervention of a global flood, it's easier to see how the evidence is in a form which would have taken "billions and billions" of years were it to have been started and grown in the way and at the pace we now observe human beings to develop or "evolve."

I am no expert on this subject, but there are scientists and theologians much more well-versed, and they are not all Evolutionists. There's even the mediatory position between Darwinism and Intelligent Design, where some people believe evolution was how God created the world. People are free to disagree on these matters, but always remember that evolution is a theory—none of us were there to testify with absolute certainty from having witnessed how it all began.

In summary, ask yourself these questions:

1. When you observe the aftermath of a bomb (Ex.: Hiroshima), is your 'natural' inclination to think that a Swiss watch might come forth from that explosion (as opposed to having existed and endured it)? Then why would a "Big Bang" create the complexity of our universe, the sophistication of the human body and order of our regular days and nights? [By the way, how can a 'certain' theory have changed from bang to soup, like global warming changed to climate change, when some counter-evidence of cooler temperatures surfaced? Might we be a bit too confident than the evidence allows?].
2. When eating a bowl of Campbell's Soup, wouldn't it be ridiculous if a friend suggested that it can turn into a Self-sustaining computer-automated robot? Well, just as when we study ancient history, our minds relate much less, so if we add in the concept of "billions and billions" of years to the mix, somehow a primordial soup transforming into the body human becomes more believable.
3. When you see natural wonders like the Grand Canyon (on our web site), Rocky Mountain National Forest, or any great scene, isn't there some thought that enters your mind—if only for a second—that this came to us in ways outside the natural process?
4. As Rev. John Bisagno said, "If you teach a man he comes from animals, he'll act like it." (*paraphrased*). If I derive from an ape, I'll be a monkey's uncle! And, by the way, why are there still apes and monkeys—very slow-learning relatives?

Many evidences of daily life confirm what the Bible says about origins, the fallenness of man and our world, and human nature. For instance,

- a) Why do most people not go out in public totally nude, besides public decency laws? The majority wouldn't want to, even if it was legal.
- b) When you do genealogy studies, the further you go back, the more united all sources become, ultimately back to only 2 ancestors.
- c) Why do most people have an instinctive disdain for thinking about their own mortality and date with death? Why do people staring their demise straight in the face often feel the need to try to clean the moral slate of their lives?
- d) Why don't most people kill others regularly, besides criminal laws forbidding such behavior? Could it be there really is an image of God resident within sinful beings? How does Evolution explain these 'moral' forces?
- e) Why does every person choose to do morally wrong? Why after supposedly millions of years can't we have evolved far enough to delete that portion of our DNA?
- f) Why are their two separate and distinct categories of human and animal, with their differences in intelligence, consciousness, conscience, communication and creativity skills? Have you ever seen an architectural structure

designed or built by any animal?

- g) Why is there such order and beauty, yet there are also destructive acts of nature in that same system?
- h) Why do things tend toward deterioration over time (Ex.: dust, rust, worn out or broken products, wrinkles and hair loss, beer bellies), if we are constantly improving, evolving and progressing?
- i) Why will mankind never in this era find a way to completely eliminate all diseases, thorns in roses, lethal snakes and wild animals that attack and bite humans? Are these mere anomalies to the otherwise positive and inevitable and progressive evolving of the human race? No, they are the effects of a fallen world since the choice of Adam and Eve, which will never be fully prevented or ended until after the Tribulation has ended.

“Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth! Tell Me, if you have understanding, Who set its measurements, since you know? Or who stretched the line on it? On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone, When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy? Or who enclosed the sea with doors, When, bursting forth, it went out from the womb; When I made a cloud its garment, And thick darkness its swaddling band, and I placed boundaries on it, And I set a bolt and doors, And I said, ‘thus far you shall come, but no farther; and here shall your proud waves stop? Have you ever in your life commanded the morning, and caused the dawn to know its place; that it might take hold of the ends of the earth, And the wicked be shaken out of it?” (Job 38:4-13)

All these questions are clearly explained in God’s word, which is more than can be said about Darwin’s theory.

--J. Meroney (Winter 2010)

“To this day **I have never had one individual show me one error or contradiction.** All we are doing, many times, is reciting something we heard someone else say, and it becomes terribly embarrassing when we discover that that person never carefully read the Bible. You would be wise to check the facts for yourself.

But there is something else you are missing that you should consider. What part of the Bible are people most likely to question? It is portions of the Old Testament which describe supernatural events. It is interesting that **it is just such events that Jesus Christ acknowledged as true in the New Testament!** If Christ is God—if Christ is who He says He is—all of these events are true. If He isn’t, none of them really matter. In other words, **the Bible stands or falls with the person of Christ.** If He is who He says He is, you had better listen to what He is saying. If He isn’t, it doesn’t matter. Thus, we end where we begin. The real question is, “hat will you do with Christ?” (Jn. 5:39).

Source: Adapted from N.E.T.S., pp. 108-109, by Larry Moyer (EvanTell, Dallas, TX), 1992

---No; in fact, true science corresponds to and corroborates true interpretation of God’s Word, as “all truth is God’s truth.”

---Regarding evolution: (Rom. 1 worship creation/mother earth and fool said no God exists)

- a) Intuition, common sense and your own gut, or conscience tells you humans are different from animals, so we are not from monkey ancestors (JM). To say such could explain or justify your acting as such (BIS)
- b) Why are today’s monkeys not advanced to humans?
- c) No fossil evidence of species transforming into a different one—mutations and cross breeding, yes—species transformation, NO.
- d) [Have you studied the philosophical, scientific, archaeological and physical evidences for Evolution, or are you taking a (biased) professor’s opinion?]
- e) almost anything seems possible when you retrogress billions (huge numbers) of years, until you take that regression slowly, day by day and year by year
- f) Scientific proof requires laboratory re-testing, which is impossible for both the Evolutionists and the creationist
- g) Look at the beauty found in our world, the orderliness, balance and stability of natural laws, then tell me that a bomb exploding could cause such non-chaos (ill. Find a watch in the desert, you assume an intelligent designer vs. happen-chance over time put the parts together).
- h) You’d better be right—huge risk of hell to rely on Darwin vs. the fish logo on your car.
- i) ETC. see my notes at chapter end on subject (Boa?)
- j) Evolution is a theory asserted as proven fact. No way to test Big Bang scientifically, as cannot re-create it in a lab.
- k) Study the size of the universe, the complexity of DNA, and research how many years it would take for amino acids becoming complex DNA and the odds take more faith to believe that occurred than Creation (scientist radio caller, The Voice, 700 A.M., Houston)

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Science and bible—
www.icr.org/article/young-earth-creationist-bibliography/

#15. Are the miracles of the Bible real, or possible? Miracles are against and contrary to science. Isn’t Christianity based on supernatural miracles like the Virgin birth and bodily resurrection of Jesus, which are not reasonable for the modern mind to accept? Are miracles possible, credible, scientific, historical, mythological, definable or valuable? How do biblical miracles differ from other accounts of the miraculous? Were the biblical miracles magic tricks which fooled simple, primitive people?

Response(s):

---If someone has a presupposition, or biased agenda against the belief in God’s existence, certainly they will never consider the possibility of miracles to be rational, no matter what evidence they may be shown.

---Are miracles normative today is a related but different investigation.

Answer(s):

- Miracles authenticated Jesus as to both His Messiahship and His message. (Ac. 2:22-24, 10:36-43).
- Since the God of the Bible is supernatural, miracles are perfectly natural for Him. What is supernatural to natural man is natural to supernatural God. (Job 5:9, Ps. 77:13-14, Lk. 18:23-27).
- The natural mind cannot accept the things of God. (I Cor. 2:12-14).
- One is not asked to believe in the miracles, but in the God who performs them. (Jn. 20:30-31). (“**believe the works or because of them?**”)
- Faith in God enables the human mind to believe. (Heb. 11:-13, Rom. 1:16-17).
- Faith is not a blind leap in the dark, but a bold step of trust in the light of who God is. (Ac. 27:25, Gen. 15:6, Heb. 11:11).
- The reality of God is spiritually discerned. (Mt. 16:13-17, Jn. 1:12-13, II Cor. 4:4-6).
- Do you live such a deprived and boring life that you cannot envision miracles happening ever? Unless you are all-knowing, you cannot legitimately rule out their possibility.

Source: Adapted from Bible Training Centre for Pastors: Missions, Evangelism, Discipleship, pp. 127-128, by Dennis J. Mock, Sept. 1991, Atlanta GA

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www.probe.org

***16. Does the Bible conflict with archaeology?**

Response(s):

---No, and in fact, many formerly disputed biblical matters have in recent years been uncovered and discovered to fully vindicate and corroborate the text of God's Word. Consistently, over time, archaeological discoveries continue to corroborate and verify biblical data—not debunk them. There are many books you can read about that subject, if you're willing. And if getting that information is a requirement you need before you are willing to pray to receive Christ, I would strongly suggest that you do just that.

---[**The archaeological verification of excavations world-wide far exceed any corroboration of any other book in history?**]

---No, and if you will check the historic record, it is the proponents of the viewpoint that the Bible does conflict with archaeology who should be called on the carpet to explain the many incidences where their former colleagues or heroes made such assertions on specific Bible incidences, which were later uncovered and found to verify the biblical account.

---Only with pseudo-/junk archaeology.

For Further Study:

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17. Don't pleasant, near-death experiences of non-Christians disprove Christianity? Did you ever hear people describe the white light in their out-of-body experiences?

Response(s):

---No. All they can ever "prove" is that the subject had an unusual, subjective and/or mind-altering experience of some kind.

---Near-death experiences simply prove one had a near-death experience.

---The devil can come as an angel of light, and if someone has not the Holy Spirit of God, they are inadequately equipped to accurately discern the difference (which is precisely what they devil wants to happen to them).

---Yes I have, and one of them was the Apostle Paul, who agrees with God that all men need to receive Jesus Christ for their personal salvation (II Cor. 12:1-10, etc.)

Answer(s):

For Further Study:

Issues That Make Christians Squirm!, by Grantley Morris, net.simplenet.com/

18. Specific or technical difficult passages and arguments (Ex.: God is a male; baptism for the dead; seeming inconsistencies in the same Gospel accounts, God does not hear the prayers of sinners). What does this passage (i.e., obscure or difficult) mean? What are the guidelines for handling difficult passages?

Response(s):

---**See also:** Answers to questions numbers 80-83, below.

---List specifics YOU have problems with, and then I can address or research them.

---Do you conclude based on the exception or the rule/majority (i.e., of clear teachings and passages)? Do the small number of alleged difficulties disprove the majority of clear teaching, or might the balance of presumption be that we simply have not yet come to conclude how they are to be properly interpreted?

---If you are not a scholar, and I am not a scholar, let's at least study their findings before passing judgment with less-than-informed reasonings.

Answer(s): [(Ex.: on-line, Archer, and two other books and McDowell)]

Principles of Interpreting Difficult Passages:

- Make sure your interpretation is made within the context of the paragraph, chapter, book theme and whole of the Bible.
- Obscure teachings should be less believed as the bulk of passages with clear meanings.
- Investigate all the definitional possibilities, before concluding that an odd interpretation must be right. Look for the same grammatical phrase (especially that used by the same human author), do a word search and look to Bible Commentators for more soundly thought-out ways to handle the passage, if the way you are leaning appears to be quite weird to your common sense.
- The Bible will never contradict itself, so if your "new/novel" idea on a passage's meaning does not coincide with but conflicts with clearly established truths elsewhere in the Scriptures, more than likely you have come to a wrong conclusion.
- ETC.

For Further Study:

I'm Glad You Asked, pp. 112-114, by Kenneth Boa and Larry Moyer (Chariot/Victor Publishing: Colorado Springs, CO), 1982

Generally:

When Critics Ask, by Norman L. Geisler and Thomas Howe (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1992

Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties, by Gleason L. Archer (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1982

Answers to Tough Questions, by J. Carl Laney (Kregel: Grand Rapids, MI), 1997

The Complete Book of Bible Answers, by Ron Rhodes (Harvest House: Eugene, OR), 1997

735 Baffling Bible Questions Answered, by Larry Richards (Revell: Grand Rapids, MI), 1993

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 82-99, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

When Skeptics Ask, pp. 163-178, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1990

Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 74-80, 150-153, 430-435, 527-538, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

SALVATION, FAITH AND ASSURANCE

***19. What about those (i.e., "the poor native") who have never heard of Christ: will God judge them? What about those who have heard?**

Response(s):

---Most Christians need to worry less about them and more about reaching them so that this question becomes irrelevant.

---That question is superseded in importance of the question I would ask those who HAVE heard the Gospel, such as yourself, concerning what do you think God will do to those who HAVE heard the message, thereby having the opportunity to receive salvation, and snub their noses at God in rejecting His free gift.

---Romans 2:12-16 seems to give a very good description of how God will likely judge them.

---In addressing this theological question, there is one danger which must first be addressed. If we find any biblical evidence that they have any hope of heaven, having never heard the Gospel, due to no fault of their own, we must concurrently not use that evidence to at all de-motivate Christians from making every attempt to reach those people with that Gospel as soon as possible.

---Some have said that if one is seeking to know God, God has promised that—some way or another—He will be found by them, usually or likely by Christians getting to them. I have a slight disagreement with this, as, if there are remote people civilization has never learned of, or absolutely cannot physically reach, does that mean all of that people group were not seeking for God? I don't think so.

---Quotes from Dr. Tan

Answer(s): Rom. 4--you worry about having heard; Rom. 1 gen. Revelation.

- All men are born in a state of sin, are sinners by nature, commit acts of sin (by choice), and stand condemned before the Holy God. (Rom. 3:9-20, 5:19, Eph. 2:1-3).
- People who have heard about Jesus Christ will remain lost or be saved, depending on whether they choose to believe or reject Him. (Jn. 3:36, I Jn. 5:10-12).
- People who have not heard the Gospel will be saved or remain lost depending on how they respond to what God has revealed of Himself to them. No person ever goes to hell based on not having heard the Gospel. People today who have not heard of Christ are like Old Testament people before Christ came to the earth. (Rom. 1:18-25, 2:8-11).
- People who do respond in a positive way to God's truth will be given the light of special revelation in Christ and the Bible. (Heb. 11:6, Pv. 8:17, I Chron. 28:9, Ac. 10:30-43).
- God will always deal justly with each person, individually, not holding them responsible for what they do not know, though all men are given a general revelatory knowledge of God, principally through creation and conscience. (Rom. 1:18-32, Gen. 18:25, Eze. 18:4, 20:32).
- Hearing the Gospel is a help to salvation, not a hindrance. (Jn. 1:14, 17-18, Rom. 10:8-21).
- Better: What about those who have heard and reject, among which, I trust, you will not be found, or those who otherwise might have responded affirmatively, if the Christians had been doing their job (which, again, I hope you are not found to be among).

Source: Adapted from Bible Training Centre for Pastors: Missions, Evangelism, Discipleship, pp. 129-130, by Dennis J. Mock, Sept. 1991, Atlanta GA

For Further Study:

I'm Glad You Asked, pp. 172-194, by Kenneth Boa and Larry Moyer (Chariot/Victor Publishing: Colorado Springs, CO), 1982

Defending Your Faith, pp. 121-129, by Dan Story (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, MI), 1997

A Ready Defense, pp. 416-418, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993

Answering the Tough Ones, pp. 60-68, by David A. Dewitt (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 129-132, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

Reason to Believe, pp. 50-51, by R.C. Sproul (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 1978

never heard—

Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 303-307, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

True for You, but Not for Me, pp. 123-144, by Paul Copan (Bethany House: Minneapolis, MN), 1998

Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 10-11, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing), 2000

***20. Can anyone be sure of his salvation (i.e., that he's going to heaven)? How do you know? How are you sure?**

Bible Reference(s): I Jn. 5:11-13, Jn. 3:16-18, 36; I Jn. 2:12.

Response(s):

---The Bible very clearly teaches that one not only can know he has eternal life, but that he should make sure that he knows for sure, as to be (permanently?) unsure can be a sign that one has not been born again. The Spirit within testified that we are sons of God, and if one is not sure, walk them through God's promises for eternal life if they will believe, ask them if they believe what God has stated, then ask them to conclude—based on what God's Word says—what God says as to whether they currently have eternal life. If there is any persisting doubt, have them pray again, and ask Christ to forgive all their sins and make them a new person.

---If you are NOT sure, you had better be very concerned (or worried), as, not only is that a completely unstable foundation to build your entire life upon, it can have devastating and eternally negative consequences on the other side of the grave).

---If we cannot be sure, we will live our lives in fear and uncertainty, and we cannot believe that Christ's death secured anything for us.

---Jesus Christ, Who was raised from the dead (and is, therefore, deity), said that you could, so unless He was lying, uninformed and misguided, or a crazed lunatic (which no source—religious or otherwise suggested he ever was), He must be right.

---How can you live your life NOT being sure where you're going when you die, which could be anytime?

For Further Study:

I'm Glad You Asked, pp. 245-263, by Kenneth Boa and Larry Moyer (Chariot/Victor Publishing: Colorado Springs, CO), 1982

Free and Clear, by Larry Moyer, (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, MI), 1997

Christian Certitude: It's Intellectual Bases, by E. Diggs La Touche

The Complete Book of Bible Answers, pp. 175-232, by Ron Rhodes (Harvest House: Eugene, OR), 1997

***21. Isn't salvation by faith ("just believing") too simple/easy?**

Response(s):

---The Bible never condones a flippant attitude of accepting the gift of eternal life lightly. In fact, it requires faith in Christ "with all your heart." Apart from that one criterion—faith—however, God has made it very simple, likely because it is hard enough to get men to do that, and if He had complicated the matter, hardly anyone would ever be saved. Christ, in fact, has done ALL the work for us—we simply accept/receive a (free) gift. There are no works required, as, if there were, our sinful pride would want to claim merit and demand salvation—an obligation God is never under to anyone.

---God has made the foolish things to confound the wise. (:). Graciously and thankfully, God is so concerned for our salvation, He did not invent salvation as a complex math formula for the intellectually elite. Our finite and fallen minds have enough trouble grasping salvation in Jesus Christ in all its simplicity.

---Well, yes—let's tell God He needs to make some changes from His imperfect plan for us (ha—joke).

---What's hard is trying to work your way there yourself. In fact, it's impossible (unless you would assert that one could live perfectly all their life, without sin, as did the only One in whom you can place your trust for eternal life).

Answer(s):

- Christ died in vain if we must do anything other than believe/trust Him. (Gal. 2:17-21).
- If anything were required on man's part other than faith, then man could claim credit for his own salvation. (Rom. 4:1-3).
- Believing is the one thing which everyone can do—therefore, anyone can be saved. (Ac. 10:43).
- Actually, believing is very difficult—you must believe what you can't see or touch. (Heb. 11:1-6).
- Salvation by faith alone may seem easy, but it cost God the ultimate price of His own Son. It may be easy for you, but it was not easy for the Father (or the Son). (Rom. 5:8-11, 8:32, I Jn. 3:16, I Pet. 1:18-21).

Source: Adapted from Bible Training Centre for Pastors: Missions, Evangelism, Discipleship, p. 132, by Dennis J. Mock, Sept. 1991, Atlanta GA

For Further Study:

I'm Glad You Asked, pp. 228-233, by Kenneth Boa and Larry Moyer (Chariot/Victor Publishing: Colorado Springs, CO), 1982

Answering the Tough Ones, pp. 55-57, by David A. Dewitt (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

***22. What does it mean to believe? Isn't faith contradictory to reason and logic? Isn't it against our rational makeup to have blind faith, as Christians do? I can tell you there are holes in the moon—would you believe that too? You mean I can believe for, say, five minutes, then return to a life of sin?**

Bible Reference(s): Heb. 11:1.

Response(s): See Also: Cocoris quotes in Appendix—Lordship Salvation Errors.

---To fully trust, depend, rely on (illustrated as leaning on or against, expecting and needing the other to support or hold you up, or you will fall down, as its their strength that is making you capable of standing).

---There are verifying, historic, factual and intellectually sound bases for the faith we place in the risen Lord, and there is no connection between selling someone a bridge in the Florida swamps, except in the mind of the unlearned, who know nothing of the meaning or reality of biblical faith.

---Faith is not just a passing feeling; The somewhat "momentary" experience of receiving Christ by faith lasts a lifetime, and beyond, and the Spirit dwelling within maintains that event's effects, even in times when we don't feel so.

---Sitting on a chair illustration.

---To fully rely on (100%, from the heart), as in the amount of faith you exercise in sitting on a chair, or falling into a catcher's arms (i.e., your full weight relying on the object's ability to support you without

harm).

For Further Study:

I'm Glad You Asked, pp. 235-244, by Kenneth Boa and Larry Moyer (Chariot/Victor Publishing: Colorado Springs, CO), 1982

Answering the Tough Ones, pp. 105-111, by David A. Dewitt (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

The Case for Faith, pp. 247-262, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000

Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 239-243, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 52-53, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000

23. Why would God require faith vs. just making Himself obvious, and ask for obedience?

Response(s):

---I do not believe the Bible answers this question, but, since that is not how God chose to do things, the better and more relevant question is, what are you going to do about the way God HAS determined that man—that includes you—can be saved?

---You'll have to ask Him, if you are blessed to be going to heaven vs. hell, through salvation which is through faith in Jesus Christ.

---There would be no test of character, with no decision involved. Those who went to hell or heaven would only be going there because God deemed it to be that way, with zero involvement of human beings (though our actual involvement is minimal).

---I don't know, but what I do know is that we must face the facts and deal the hand which was dealt us, and if you don't get in line with the only thing God has said one must do to inherit eternal life, you will be sure to miss it.

24. Why bother to pray?

Response(s):

---Prayer is the vehicle or instrument through which we both communicate our desire to be saved and forgiven, and through which we express to the Object of our faith the fact that we are indeed fully trusting Him so to do. Praying does not save people, or those mourning and wailing (and even beating their bodies in repentance) in Arabian countries or the rosary would have the power to give us eternal life, even if we never trusted Christ for our eternity. But one can hardly get saved, through asking for forgiveness, in faith, without communicating with the Party sought for to give that forgiveness. Also, we are not heard for our many words, but a sincere heart full of trusting reliance upon God, through the work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

---That's like asking, why should I communicate with God? Prayer expresses the faith you sincerely exercise in God's saving promise and power.

---Why bother to breathe? You don't need to eat (food), do you? Prayer is life sustenance.

---What 'bother' is it to engage the privilege of speaking with the eternal God of the universe?

For Further Study:

Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 54-55, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000

+25. To be a true, genuine Christian is almost impossible—the required standards are too high, and are beyond me, or it costs too much to become a Christian. It's too big a commitment for me to pay. I don't know if I could live the Christian life.

Response(s):

---To work your way to heaven by a life of good deeds which you think and expect will cause you to deserve entrance into heaven IS impossible, simply because God's standards allows for not one moral mistake—so you're already disqualified, using that approach. On your own, salvation IS impossible (**Mt. 19:26**), but the great news is that God has not left us on our own/alone—Christ has provided the way for every man to be able to go to heaven, if we will trust Jesus Christ for our personal salvation. Not only is salvation through Christ not impossible, because He is God, it is totally possible. The question is, are you going to let Him save you and take Him up on His offer? Since the cross, it is no longer a matter of possibility or impossibility, but of willingness to receive the gift of eternal life.

---Yes and no. Too big for you to be able to pay so Christ did it for you. He offers it to you, not to lightheartedly accept but to soberly understand and accept because of your severe need for that which you are helpless to do for yourself. (avoid discussing Lordship theology if you can?)

Answer(s):

You must remember one thing. God is not asking you to be perfect; He is only asking you to receive His pardon. Once you receive His forgiveness, He will help you put into your life what should be there, and take out what should not be there. At this point, **He is not asking you to live the Christian life; He is asking you to enter the Christian life.** There is a lot of truth in the bumper sticker which reads, “Christians are not perfect—just forgiven” (Phil. 2:13).

Source: Adapted from N.E.T.S., pp. 107-108, by Larry Moyer (EvanTell: Dallas, TX), 1992

For Further Study:

Issues That Make Christians Squirm!, by Grantley Morris, net.simplenet.com/

26. I am so weak.

Response(s):

---You are not only morally weak, with failures and occasional human-side “moral” successes, you are in fact dead in sin, and totally/100% unable to please God or do any act which God (vs. man) considers meritoriously good, as regards your entrance into heaven. You are a sinner, and the power under which you, by birth and nature, live, spiritually, is massively more powerful than anything you could muster up on your best day, as that power is satan himself—the spiritual father of all lost people, even without their consent or even knowledge. That’s one of the reasons you so desperately need the power of God within your life, which comes through trusting Jesus Christ for your eternal destiny.

---Great, and congratulations! You are just discovering the fact and condition all men suffer from. You are not alone.

For Further Study:

The Open Bible, p. 1342 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

27. I cannot break from my sins.

Response(s):

---You are absolutely right. Even if people do break certain habits, many revert, or have occasional lapses, and, because God’s standard for acceptance into heaven is perfection, all our so-called successes in moral change will not ultimately benefit us, because no one can break 100% from sin itself, residing within, and if one could ever become perfect at the stroke of midnight, still they would have to expunge their sinful record before God from their pre-midnight life—which it is impossible for us to do, unless God chooses to wipe it clean through the forgiveness which is found in Jesus Christ.

---God does not ask you to, in your own power, and first things first—you need those sins forgiven first, before you deal with ceasing their frequency!

---Neither can I, and the good news is I don’t have to try—God is the one who changes me from the inside, so He can enable me to see changes on the outside thereafter.

For Further Study:

The Open Bible, p. 1346 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

28. I am afraid I cannot hold out.

Response(s):

---I admire that you want to be faithful to live for God, and that you are the type of person who only commits to something when he is ready to make a quality decision. However, I have to agree that your fear is well-founded, because you are a human. No one can hold out on God, and even if one could, they would still need forgiveness. Even Christians cannot hold out for God, in their own power, so God has instructed us all to rely upon Him. One thing I must warn you, however, is that to delay the decision to receive Jesus Christ because of a confusion or misunderstanding about what god is now requiring of you—to trust Jesus Christ for your eternal salvation—could mean that one would miss heaven and gain hell over a wrong understanding of God and His salvation—something which need not happen, as today is your day to understand correctly, and believe.

---Don’t be afraid. Be accurate and confident in the fact that you truly cannot hold out, and realize that God will be causing and empowering you to endure. He provides grace for that which, in fact, we CANNOT do—hold out to the end.

---I’m certain you can’t; neither can I/I’m afraid for you too...

Answer(s):

“The Bible says, ‘To as many as receive Him to them GAVE HE THE POWER to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.’ (John 1:12). The Apostle Paul said, ‘I am persuaded that HE IS ABLE TO KEEP that which I committed to Him against that day’ (II Timothy 1:12). It is God’s job to give men power to become His

sons and to keep them once they have.” Go Tell: The Soul Winner’s Encyclopedia, by Freddie Gage, p. 46 (Freddie Gage Evang. Assn., Euless, TX), 1980

For Further Study:

The Open Bible, p. 1345 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

Works/Religions

***29. Can good deeds get us to heaven? What is the role of good works in salvation? I believe if there is a God, all He would require is that we try to be good.**

Response(s):

---A clear, firm, biblically authoritative—NO! I will go even further and tell you that if you think your will, and you are relying on them to, you will go to hell, guaranteed. First, all of your “good works” are like filthy rags to God, and are sin-tainted because you, a sinner, performed them...they were not “wrought of God” (**Jn. 3:20-21**). Secondly, God is the debtor of no man; you cannot merit or earn your own salvation, and it is the height of insult for God to have sacrificed His only Son, only to have one of that act’s beneficiaries choose not to be its recipient, but to think they have a better way than the one God has chosen. Thirdly, no matter what a great moral hero anyone should ever aspire to become, they still have sins they have committed, and God’s standard for entry into heaven is perfection. Just ONE sin makes any man accountable before God as if he had broken every law in the “Good Book.” No, works are a good thing among men, and for believers, and even lost people should live righteously, but those relatively (or so-called) “good” (only God is truly good) deeds will never be able to add to, undo or countermand the loving and merciful act of God is securing your salvation by the death of His Son on the cross, if we will but receive that free gift and finished/final atoning work.

---“Good deeds” can only get you to heaven if heaven is less than perfect, as a perfect standard is required for a sinless place.

---Only if God has lied to us, while the Bible says that it is impossible for Him to do so.

For Further Study:

I’m Glad You Asked, pp. 208-227, by Kenneth Boa and Larry Moyer (Chariot/Victor Publishing: Colorado Springs, CO), 1982

Answering the Tough Ones, pp. 88-90, by David A. Dewitt (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 143-144, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

True for You, but Not for Me, pp. 63-68, 86-90, by Paul Copan (Bethany House: Minneapolis, MN), 1998

30. It doesn’t matter what you believe—only if you believe it sincerely. You believe what you believe, and I believe what I believe (respect for others’ opinions only/Open-mindedness with no stance taken). Does it really matter what I believe?

Response(s):

---There will be many sincere try-ers, wanting to go to heaven and trying sincerely to follow their (“innocent?”) beliefs, who will, nevertheless end up in hell, because they never trusted the Object of saving faith—Jesus Christ.

---[Do you really believe the words you are saying? If I was to entrust all my assets for financial counsel, investment advice and safe-keeping, to a person who knew nothing about finances, that person could have persuaded me that he was a Wall Street expert, and I may fully believe in his skills, but would my faith have been worth anything?]

---Tell that to the guy who sincerely believed he could, and ended up dead. Also, you can not only sincerely believe a lie, through the devil’s delusion, if everyone believed their own religion, and their beliefs were not crazy, what do we do with all the inconsistencies and contradictions between their differing beliefs, especially about God and salvation?

---[What if I told you I sincerely believe I need to jump off a cliff to relieve my headaches?] Faith is not foolishness.

For Further Study:

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 149-151, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

Reason to Believe, pp. 89-90, by R.C. Sproul (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 1978

A Ready Defense, p. 418, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993

True for You, but Not for Me, pp. 145-146, by Paul Copan (Bethany House: Minneapolis, MN), 1998

Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 12-13, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000

31. The person who sincerely asks for pardon will never be refused. God knows my heart/intentions/desires.

Response(s):

- Sincerity, as opposed to lying to God, is a wonderful and commendable thing, and I would encourage it strongly. However, one can be sincere in his heart, and in error in the way in which he pursues the wrong thing/object, and end up sincerely wrong. That is, if you only sincerely ask for forgiveness, but are thereby seeking entrance into god's eternal kingdom apart from Christ, and His work on the cross, that sincerity will only lead you to hell, because Christ is the only way to heaven. Sincerely trust God to save you, through Christ's sacrifice, and you will have properly channeled your God-given sincerity in a way that has eternal benefit and value to you. Many a person has sincerely believed a lie, and found out too late that they needed not only sincerity, but a proper understanding of what to be sincere about, and before and through Whom.
- Yes, if the forgiveness requested is based on and through Christ's death on the cross. That is, repeatedly asking for particular sins to be forgiven, without the new birth experience, though close, will not land you in heaven.

For Further Study:

The Open Bible, p. 1347 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

32. All named Gods are really just the same Person/entity.

Response(s):

- That would be like saying that all football players are the same person.
- How is it, then, that Buddhists worship a man, Hindu's have about 33 million Gods and one main God who is impersonal, while Christian have one God in three Persons and Jews have one God in one Person? These religions differ in their beliefs as to His attributes, in some respects, give Him different names, attribute different ways to salvation to Him, and have many other and differing opinions as to this supposedly same "god." How can we reconcile all these differences, opposite and variantly different, if we are speaking of the same party? Truly, the general aspiration to a higher power is in common, but that is about where the commonality ends, and if we are not referencing the true creator God, our "gods" are, in fact, emanations of the imagination, or representatives of satan.
- I would recommend that you compare the attributes depicted by the given "gods," and you will quickly see that it is impossible for them to be describing the same Being. Both their names, deeds and ethical standards are variant, and the lack of consistency (though some traits are in common) show a reasonable person that they truly are different "gods," as sincerely as their followers believe they are following the one true God.

For Further Study:

Jesus Among Other Gods: The Absolute Claims of the Christian Message, by Ravi Zacharias

33. All religions are good, or about the same. Have you researched all other religions to see which is best and so you can make an informed comparison and decision (i.e., have you conducted a comparative religion study)? There are so many religions—how could anyone know which one is right? Have you read the Koran? What's wrong with Buddhism? Aren't there many ways to heaven? Why should we reject religious writings other than the Bible? Have you studied the religion's own writings or their original writings, or have you only studied what Christians (or others) say about the religion's beliefs? Why discount other religions in favor of Jesus Christ?

Response(s):

- On the surface, these type questions appear to require you to have a detailed knowledge of every religion—something few if any will ever have or do. As with many religions of man (man-made), ask your God-given intellect and intuition/gut/conscience—does it make sense that an overweight man could ever attain godhood or already be God, and if not, why would you take the word of and follow someone who is not God? Could a cow possibly be of a higher order than man with all his God-given capabilities, even to the point of tending to the cow, and not vice versa? Do not most thinking Americans consider statements by people claiming to have been a certain person or profession 100's of years ago to be a sham and a wacky way to believe and live one's life? It does not naturally ring true to us in our general understanding of life, experience thereof, nor our God-given preceptors of truth. This is not to insult major religions of the world, but is to ask you to use your thinking abilities to assess the comparative truthfulness and validity of belief systems claiming to compete with the reality of Jesus Christ.
- Have you investigated many religions, yourself, because you will quickly see that they offer different concepts of God, of man's problem, of whether man is sinful, of how to get to heaven and even whether

there is a place called heaven (and hell). They hold differing views on their value placed on Jesus Christ, have different religious leaders and holy books, espouse differing practices and somewhat different ethics, and all of them are absolutely sure that at least their way of getting mankind to heaven is right. Common sense alone would tell any honest and rational being that they cannot all be either right, or “going to the same ultimate destination, just getting there down different paths.” Think about the implications of the beliefs to passionately espouse, and have a basis in fact and authority, before you risk your eternal destiny on the confidence you hold in these views.

--In the sense that most religions have leaders, holy books, traditional practices/rites/rituals, beliefs, and try to teach their adherents to obey God, be good and be faithful practitioners of their religion, there is commonality between most religions. However, when you actually go to compare the different beliefs, ethics codes and opinions about God—His name, character, and way to reach Him for a life in the afterlife, one could hardly continue to make such a claim. Just do a cursory investigation of the five largest world religions, and you will quickly see a picture of people worshipping different Gods, in different ways, with, at times opposing viewpoints of thought and ethical actions. The statement simply does not hold water when you begin to examine any depth of detail or particulars.

---There are around 4,200 religions of man in our world today. What kind of God would require anyone to study each and every one of them to be able to decide which one was right, and how to get to heaven? [Ex.: a maze]. Even if one were to go to that much trouble, their salvation would be based on their works—the work of seeking out knowledge—and I would know of no one who would end up in heaven.

Answer(s):

- World religions are man-made. According to the Bible, the only way to a right relationship with God is through Jesus Christ (Ac. 4:10-12, I Tim. 2:3-6, Col. 2:20-23, Jn. 4:19-26, 14:6).

Source: Adapted from Bible Training Centre for Pastors: Missions, Evangelism, Discipleship, p. 127, by Dennis J. Mock, Sept. 1991, Atlanta GA

For Further Study:

Defending Your Faith, pp. 63-73, by Dan Story (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, MI), 1997
Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 108-109, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980
Ready With an Answer, pp. 17-34, by John Ankerberg (Harvest House: Eugene, OR), 1997
A Ready Defense, pp. 168-171, 271-402, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993
Handbook of Today's Religions, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville, Atlanta), 1983
When Cultists Ask, by Normal L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1997
I Don't Have Enough Faith to be an Atheist, by Normal L. Geisler (Crossway Books: Wheaton, IL), 2004
Sharing Your Faith with a Muslim, by Abdiyah Akbar Abdul-Haqq (Bethany Fellowship: Minneapolis, MN), 1980
Cults, World Religions and the Occult, by Kenneth Boa (ChariotVictor: Colorado Springs, C), 1990
Understanding Non-Christian Religions, by Josh McDowell (Here's Life Publishers: San Bernadino, CA), 1982
The Compact Guide to World Religions, by Dean C. Halverson (Bethany House: Minneapolis, MN), 1996
World Religions Made Easy, by Mark Water (Hendrickson: Peabody, MA), 2000
Buddhism, Taoism, & Other Far Eastern Religions, by J. Isamu Yamamoto (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1998
Hinduism, TM & Hare Krishna, by J. Isamu Yamamoto (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1998
Christian Science & Unity School, by Todd Ehrenborg (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1995
Mormonism, by Kurt Van Gorden (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1995
The 10 Most Important Things You Can Say to a Catholic, by Ron Rhodes (Harvest House: Eugene, OR), 2002
Answering Mormons' Questions, by Bill McKeever (Bethany House: Minneapolis, MN), 1991
Jehovah's Witnesses, by Robert M. Bowman, Jr. (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1995
The Complete Book of Bible Answers, pp. 318-356, by Ron Rhodes (Harvest House: Eugene, OR), 1997
When Skeptics Ask, pp. 39-58, by Normal L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1990
Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 783-787, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999
Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 8-9, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000
www.probe.org

34. We cannot know who's right and who's wrong in religious matters. How do you know? Prove it.

Response(s):

---You better know your beliefs are right, before you die, as your eternal destiny depends on it!
---If you find things/elements of a given religion which are untrue, you can rightfully assert that, at least on those matters, that religion is not right vs. wrong.
---Judgment day will determine who was right and who was wrong, and I'll take the word of a man who

- was God Himself and eternally existed, lived a perfect life—never sinned, performed miracles, fulfilled prophecy from thousands of years previous, claimed to be God, has influenced billions of people for good, and resurrected from the dead before I take any lesser authority on the subject of right and wrong.
- We can know the truth, as God has revealed it in the Person of His Son, who evidenced both His being from God, truthfulness, and, in fact, being the sinless God incarnate/in person, physically. I could easily say that that statement is wrong, in which case...
- Is Jihad—Koran-sanctioned killing of innocents, because your belief system considers them “infidels” RIGHT? Is worshipping someone who could never get you to heaven, and not hell, such as Buddha or Mohammed or Sung Yung Moon RIGHT?

CHURCH/CHRISTIANITY

+*35. If Christianity is true, why are there so many hypocrites in the Church? What about all the hypocrites in the church (Ex.: T.V. Evangelists)? Your behavior is contradicting your claim to be a Christian. There are too many hypocrites in the Church.

Response(s):

- And I apologize and am not proud of that, but please see beyond me to the one who is morally perfect, as I’m not the one for you to base your decision as to your eternal destiny, but what Christ lovingly did on the cross for U--I can’t save you, but I’ll sure try to act more like Christ and am thankful God forgives my sins and has forgiven all my sins (re-forgiveness? No?). The issue is you and Christ (people do a lot of stupid things for many different causes, but that is not party of the Gospel and has nothing to do with what you are going to do about God and with Christ)—stay on the point/subject.
- Forgiven, not perfect (error reprobable and ashamed of, but issue is Christ and you)
- Some, if not all hypocrites go to hell. That is to say, hypocrites who are such because they have never personally received Jesus will go to hell, and those who know Him, but act hypocritical in their behavior as Christians will be under divine discipline, at least in this life. God never condones hypocrisy, and it is a good thing that you see what a bad sin hypocrisy is. Don’t be guilty of that sin yourself, in knowing how to go to heaven, and not doing what you now know you must do. Finally, there is a distinction between Christians’ weaknesses (or, areas in which they have not yet been matured), and hypocrisy.
- Hypocrisy is saying one thing and doing another. Few if any Christians say they are perfect, so their imperfection, by itself, does not make them hypocrites. Hypocrites are those who display an outer righteousness, to impress and please men, which is not genuine on the inside. Christians who so behave, are sinning, and God will deal with them. However, people who do not yet even know Him, should they not choose to receive Christ, will not avoid hypocrites by such rejection, but will, in fact, do the opposite, in ensuring that they spend eternity with the very people who offend them—the true hypocrites! (**Rev. 22:14-15**).
- Because even Christians still have a sin nature resident within them. Some, sadly, give into it more than they submit to their faithful Creator, and, rest assured, their deeds will be dealt with/punished. You would make a big mistake and I apologetically ask on all of our behalf, as we are all imperfect, that you not attribute to our Leader the failings we alone are responsible for.
- The whole world is full of hypocrites, and the church always has room for one more! There are no perfect people.
- Because it’s not easy to live righteously in this world, and is probably easier to go to church on Sunday for an hour or two, dress well and act “nice,” than to live a holy life 14/7.

Answer(s):

- The whole world is full of hypocrites, and the church always has room for one more! There are no perfect people.
- The fact that some people’s deeds don’t live up to their words should not keep anyone from coming to Christ. (Mt. 23:1-4, Gal. 2:11-15). [i.e., He is the Person you deal with?].
- The greatest hypocrisy of all is pretending that God does not exist, and that we are not lost in sin. (Ps. 14:1, Jn. 8:31-41).
- There are always Christians whose lives are godly examples—you can be part of the solution, instead of part of the problem. (Heb. 13:7-8, I Tim. 4:12, I Cor. 11:1, Phil. 4:8-9).

Source: Adapted from Bible Training Centre for Pastors: Missions, Evangelism, Discipleship, pp. 131-132, by Dennis J. Mock, Sept. 1991, Atlanta GA

“Make this decision in the light of your own life and not the lives of others, ‘So every one of us shall give ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF to God.’ (Romans 14:2). If you really dislike hypocrites you should accept Christ and

live for Him; otherwise you will spend eternity with them. Hypocrites are lost.” Go Tell: The Soul Winner’s Encyclopedia, by Freddie Gage, p. 46 (Freddie Gage Evang. Assn., Euless, TX), 1980

Unfortunately, that is sometimes true. But the validity of Christ’s offer does not stand or fall on the reputation of Christians. **God is not asking you to trust Christians; they cannot take you to heaven. God is asking you to trust Christ.** And, rest assured, He is not a hypocrite, because a hypocrite would not die on the cross to pay for your sin (Rom. 5:8).

Source: Adapted from N.E.T.S., p. 108, by Larry Moyer (EvanTell: Dallas, TX), 1992

For Further Study:

I’m Glad You Asked, pp. 195-207, by Kenneth Boa and Larry Moyer (Chariot/Victor Publishing: Colorado Springs, CO), 1982

Defending Your Faith, pp. 209-215, by Dan Story (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, MI), 1997

Answering the Tough Ones, pp. 96-99, by David A. Dewitt (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

A Ready Defense, pp. 414-415, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993

Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 42-43, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000

The Open Bible, p. 1342 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

36. A professing Christian wronged me. I knew some Christians once, and they wronged me.

Response(s):

---I’m very sorry that that happened to you, and you can rest assured that Jesus was not the one leading him to do that to you. You are not the first lost soul to be sinned against by a claiming believer. Our problem, as believers, as is your problem is that we do sin...the difference is that all our sins are covered/forgiven, and that God gives us the power (and motivation) to lessen that quantity daily as we develop our closeness to Him. There is nothing that can justify their deeds against you. At the same time, there is no justification for spiting a non-Christ-like believer, and trying to get back at him by rejecting the God He personally knows, thus going to hell to not live with Him in heaven. That’s much worse logic than merely cutting off your nose to spite your face!

---Not all professors are possessors, and not all possessors always exhibit the God who possesses them.

---That was sinful, and I apologize on behalf of him or her, but will you let their error keep you from inheriting eternal life?

---Christ is the Gospel/good news—not His imperfect followers.

For Further Reference:

See also #25 hypocrites question reference books!!!

The Open Bible, p. 1342 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

37. Christian “superstars” are (only) after money. The Church is always asking for money.

Response(s):

---If you are defining “superstars” as the T.V. and famous preacher sin America, sadly, I must agree with you, and admit that they often are in it too much for the money. God’s ministers do not have a love of money, and are not ministering for “filthy lucre.” This is not to say that true ministers of the Gospel cannot be tempted, but it is to say that false teachers of the devil follow in the error of Balaam, and I can assure you that too many of those you may have in mind have little to no idea what the terms frugality, moderation, humble means (not a permanently required status) or a simple and quiet life mean (though God’s Word certainly teaches these ideals. But, as I have said before, don’t let the sinful errors of other men impact where you will spend eternity. You cannot know with certainty where others will end up, but you can settle your own eternal destiny this day, by praying to personally receive Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of all your sins.

---Some are. Most may be. A few may not be. Whatever the truth/case, their abuse of the truth does not imply/mean that the truth is wrongful, but their twisting of it! Satan “always” counterfeits, and takes elements of truth, to present his lies. God will judge the charlatans. You simply address yourself to concern over the fact that He will also judge—eternally so—all those who never received His Son.

---Money-loving, money seeking and hungry ministers are NOT in God’s will, and are unqualified to lead as pastors or ministers. (I Tim. 3:3; Tit. 1:7). You see, even your God-created conscience has found agreement with the eternal truths of God’s word, and you haven’t even necessarily read that part of it yet!

---Many are, and that’s sin/sinful. Please try to overlook their sins, and view the Lord who they may or may not know and be trying to serve, because He will never fail you, leave or forsake you, loves you, and has never sinned.

For Further Study:

38. Christians are bigoted, racist, sexist and homophobic.

Response(s):

- Assertions are easy to make confidently and authoritatively. They are much harder to substantiate, or prove. Admittedly, some Christians (and some non-Christians) exhibit these bad traits, but these characteristics are certainly not intrinsic to one being a believer in Jesus Christ. It is possible, and in some cases, it is a fact, that some of those who support participating in these sins do not want anyone to say that they are engaged in sin, and as a defense mechanism, they generally accuse and name-call those exposing their deeds for what they are, mischaracterizing them as evil-motived and evildoers, simply because those people—who often are Christians—point out these facts and speak the same as what God has said about this behavior, in His Word. This is an emotional argument, inconsistent with fact, and, though the believer is to love the lost person—homosexual or not—and would be sinning himself to not love them it is nevertheless that homosexuality is both a sin, and contrary to nature—a deed abhorrent to God, which mankind should never participate in.
- Some may be. The majority are not. Don't make the logical fallacy of redefining terms and mischaracterization by confusing bigotry with accepting Christ's exclusive claims as the only way to heaven, racism as Christians believing that unsaved people of any race. Creed or religion (Jews and Muslims included) means they are against these needy victims of satan's lies, that God having told us that men are to lead the Church means we are against women being all that God wants them to be, or that Christians standing with God in His abhorrence with the sin of homosexuality and lesbianism means that Christians either hate or fear homosexuals, because God is not the author of confusion. Sometimes these intellectual mistakes are made by accident, but some leaders in our culture, especially the more liberal ones, purposely try to distort and blur these distinctions. Think for yourself, know the truth, and don't be led down the blind path of buying into their politically-charged, agenda-based rhetoric.

For Further Study:

Issues That Make Christians Squirm!, by Grantley Morris, net.simplenet.com/

39. Religion has sparked wars and exploitation. What about the Christian Inquisitions and Salem Witch Trials?

Response(s):

- Technically, "religion" has done no deeds—people perhaps following religious beliefs, have, and those sorts of deeds are not only sinful, but do not correspond to any legitimate religion's teachings, so "religion" cannot be said to have instructed them to act so evil-ly, if the religion was valid (as consistent with the Bible).
- Those were terrible and sinful historic events. One man's sin does not negate the truthfulness of the message he preaches to you and imperfectly tries to live out. That just confirms the fact that believers are not perfect—not that the Gospel is. Not perfect though saved
- Consider, as well, that true religion has done many, many good things in society, so one must conclude, if they are honest, that the concept of "religion" has been used to justify both good and evil. The real issue is whether you have a personal relationship with the living God through the Lord Jesus Christ, and then to make sure you never let His name be used for such evil, sinful practices, both in your own life and in the life of His Church and its members you have influence over.
- Many different "religions" have been based for disputes between human beings. Apart from sinfully straying "carnal" Christians, or imitation ("professing") Christians ("tares"), no true and godly saint of God would ever resort to violence or war to win the spiritual battle for men's souls, especially since that could never produce the God-originated miracle and heart change of salvation, and they would know that with just a cursory study of the Bible.
- "Religion" is not the same thing (necessarily) as a personal "relationship" with God. [explain].

For Further Study:

The Case for Faith, pp. 195-221, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000

The Case for Christ, pp. 195-222, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1998

40. Many non-Christians are more moral than many claiming Christians. Won't God accept non-Christians who are very religious and totally sincere?

Response(s):

- Sadly, in some cases this is a fact. Those so claiming and so acting should not live like that and need

reproof, and likely will soon be under the judgment of God, if they are indeed true believers. However, even if they are children of God and are caught in gross sin, the fact that they possess the great gift of grace of eternal life is ultimately what separates the sheep from the goats, and though lost peoples' "good" deeds" may cause less torment than otherwise (doubtful), they will, nevertheless go to hell, eternally, because they chose never to receive the free gift of forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

--At least sometime in the recent past, there were adult Americans who sincerely believed that all television pictures of men walking on the moon were staged, Hollywood mock-ups. Back in history a further bit, some people sincerely believed in a flat earth. These peoples' "sincere, heart-felt" belief gained them nothing, just as any sincere faith and belief you presently have has never been placed in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ for your eternal salvation.

--The moral-acting non-Christians may be generally "blessed" and rewarded in this life, and the sinfully-acting Christian will be dealt with/disciplined by God, in this life (as well as lost rewards in the next), but, in the long-run, for the lost moralist who never receives Jesus Christ, it is ultimately all in vain, as he ends up in hell. This is not to say he should stop living morally, but that he should receive Christ.

For Further Study:

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 133-134, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

***41. Is Christianity rational? Is truth knowable, logical (or illogical, and totally emotional)? Is Christianity sensible, or mere wishful thinking? What's the relationship between reason/facts and faith?**

Response(s):

--Rational, nothing IRRATIONAL, but some things (especially given the nature of a miraculous God beyond His creation) which are beyond our full understanding (accommodation, anthropomorphic language, My thoughts are higher than yours, The hidden things of God are His (at least until we get to heaven, if you do, ETC.).

--In many, many ways, God's revelation/truth is fully consistent with the rules of logic, common sense and general experience and common conscience values He has instilled in men. However, His opinion, as expressed in His Word determines ultimate truth, so we truly understand our experience(s) and thoughts best, only as we get His perspective. With that in mind—experience and logic subservient to God (who created all things), there are some things our finite human minds would hardly or never comprehend or understand/deduce apart from direct revelation. All information contained in God's word requires us to trust Him about it, but certain issues in the Scriptures are more difficult for us to intellectually grasp or accept. It is not that these subjects or portions are illogical, but that God is communicating with His fallen creatures, who, as smart as they may be and as high their I.Q., still suffer from the effects of sin and a spiritual blindness among those unsaved people. For this reason, it is always safe to trust the Lord's superior knowledge and wisdom in matters which you do not yet fully understand. (Ex.: the Trinity, love your enemy, give thanks for all things, joy in trials, abstinence pre-marriage, etc.).

--Let me ask you a question...Is it rational to live your whole life NEVER preparing for what will come in the life hereafter? We plan our investments, retirement, career, weddings, but live most of our lives completely preparing for eternity—save possibly purchasing a burial place for our ashes/body. [Straw take-off].

For Further Study:

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 139-142, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 741-745, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

When Skeptics Ask, pp. 255-272, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1990

***42. Isn't Christianity just a psychological crutch for weak people? That stuff is only for societal losers and down-and-out'ers. Don't only weaklings need Christianity?**

Response(s):

--Even if lost people can, humanly-speaking—live "successful" lives of diligence and hard-work, never asking for or leaning on God for anything, can you honestly say that they were better off, not having relied on anyone but their own selves when, because they would not rely on God for their eternal salvation, they are thrown into a burning hell to live there forever, due to that stubborn and prideful resistance to god's gracious salvation offer? You can be "macho man" in this life—maybe for its entire duration—but you are not stronger than God, and you will be without hope and helpless to resist being thrown into hell, and your will power will ultimately fail you, in the saddest and most life-wasteful of

ways, if you continue in unbelief in Jesus Christ.

- The so-called “strong” man who can handle his indebtedness and sinfulness before God on his own, with that prideful self-reliance, WILL truly take it like a man, with no help from God, in paying for his sins, without help, in hell. Better to humble oneself and realize the facts/truth that we cannot overcome either our sinfulness or our needed punishment. As to using Christ to get one through emotional problems and difficult times, again, the pridefully self-reliant person who spurns God’s offered help/assistance (better, power), may have the willpower strength to endure them all, but he is lonely in that pursuit, gets no rewards for such so-called bravery, and is thereby, in fact, sinning, to spurn God and think that you do not need God. Whether for the next life or also for this life, man was created to be in relationship with God, and to not be in such condition is unfulfilling, empty, and ultimately sinful and judgment-worthy. Be careful confusing “boot-strap-ism” in comparison to other people helping you, as opposed to God’s spiritual power, which we All need.
- That’s surprising—some of the strongest people I know are Christians (Christ, Paul ex.). Paul even said, to be weak in the Lord is to have the strongest position of power in life (:).
- The Gospel is offered to all who are broken enough to reach out for help, and some people’s pride keep them from reaching out to be saved from hell. Therefore, it is true that some Christians, I must admit, ARE the down-and-outers of society, but that is in no way indicative of what is required for someone to become a Christian.

For Further Study:

I’m Glad You Asked, pp. 75-87, by Kenneth Boa and Larry Moyer (Chariot/Victor Publishing: Colorado Springs, CO), 1982

Defending Your Faith, pp. 217-228, by Dan Story (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, MI), 1997

Answering the Tough Ones, pp. 69-72, by David A. Dewitt (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

A Ready Defense, pp. 418-420, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 125-126, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

Reason to Believe, pp. 73-75, by R.C. Sproul (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 1978

Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 40-41, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000

43. Christianity is out-of-date. The Gospel is old-fashioned.

Response(s):

- Culture and society has fads and trends which ebb and flow. What’s “in,” or “hot” today may be “out” or “un-cool” tomorrow. The fact that many in America think that Christianity is old-fashioned and not in touch with modernity, morally-speaking (Ex.: live-ins, abortion, homosexuality, love of money, etc.) proves, in fact, just the opposite that Christianity is not up-to-date, as the Bible itself predicted 2,000 years ago that which you now assess to be the latest and greatest—that is, that most people’s love (i.e., of God) would grow cold, and that men would hold to a form of righteousness, but deny its power. To show you how permanently ahead of you God’s Word has been all these years, it not only predicted its own unpopularity, but it speaks with certainty to the fat of your own eternal future...that, if you choose not to receive Jesus Christ, known or unbeknownst to you now and in the near future, you WILL go to hell. God knows where you will end up, and has already written about where it will be (if you trust or reject Christ), so your being “cutting edge,” and slandering Christianity as being old-fashioned does not really match up with the facts.
- 2,000 years Old, unchanging, no need for improvement/evolution, living and active (Person), tried and true. test of time, good wine ill. Some things are old fashioned in life, and some things are timeless. Cultural aspects of Bible may seem “old-fashioned,” but not it’s spiritual, eternal truths. Some things with a pedigree/lineage/aged wine get
- Wearing sandals or bare feet, carousing lamps, and other cultural elements described in the Bible but NOT prescribed for its readers may and in fact are old-fashioned. However, the theological and moral instruction of the “Good Book” are as relevant today as they will be if man ever inhabits Mars! Cultural morays and personal moral standards likely will continue declining, and man may deem such decay “progress,” but such misnomer in no way makes the eternal moral principles and absolutes old-fashioned. It simply shows man that in his legitimate progress (educationally, technologically, etc.), he has misunderstood the difference between moral progress and moral decline. Old-fashioned is not in and of itself a bad thing, as for example believing that men and women were created for each other, and to express their sexual needs in the institute of marriage. Even in our society, at times culture does make moral gains/strides, and, though often not acknowledging the Bible’s contents, by their behavior do agree with and conform more to it’s teachings that they would like to admit (though denying the power of that form of godliness)—Ex.: slavery banned, women accepted as equals, tolerance of people

with differing views, being in shape, nationalism (World Trade center bombing) and “family values” in seeing that work is not the end-all of life. Still, in many other ways, society continues it’s moral decline.

---“Out-of-date” is terminology speaking of trends, fads or fashions—things which end in 20 years or less. What kind of religion would you have and how truthful could it be if it got re-invented every 10 years or so—that’s no solid foundation.

For Further Study:

Issues That Make Christians Squirm!, by Grantley Morris, net.simplenet.com/

44. Christianity is on the decline. If Christianity is so great, why are there so few Christians? If Christianity is so wonderful, why are there so few Christians?

Response(s):

---**See also:** Answer to Question #35, above.

---This is exactly what God said would happen. There is nothing unexpected, or confusing about the low numbers (**Mt. 7:13-14**). Most people love their sins more than the Lord, and have been so duped by satan that they are all but certainly heading to hell—unless there is the intervention of God’s salvation. It is contrary to man’s nature to like or be interested in and want to be involved with spirituality (unless and until they get saved), and most people are primarily concerned only with the matters of this life, with little care for the grave and beyond. What IS popular, in this fallen world, is sex-filled mediums (television, movies, internet), money-lusting activities, drunken activities, and many other sinful practices which God said would be the predominantly popular activities. No, man’s departure from true religion did not catch God off guard. The only person caught off guard might be the one who thought things would be any different.

---The answer is precisely because men are sinners. Christianity is fulfilling and “wonderful,” yet men do not want to cease from their lifestyle of sin. It is absolutely no wonder that so many sinful men do not choose to become related to God—that’s their nature. God said both that few would there be, and that sin would increase in the end times. The miracle is that he has saved any. The devil blinds the mind from seeing Christianity as wonderful, as one has to experience it to truly understand. Finally, and a sad commentary, I personally believe that more people would become Christians if they saw more Christians living the life they are called to, and if the Church would do more evangelizing!

---It is totally consistent with the nature of fallen man that he would reject the truth, and avoid a “religion” which asks of moral improvement, in deference to a lifestyle of ignoring God and living as we please, with unbridled pleasures and living for the here-and-now/moment. In fact, only by God’s grace is there the miracle that any people are saved.

---Satanism is on the rise—does that fact have any bearing on the value, morality/credibility or soundness of any religious movement?

For Further Study:

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 135-138, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

Issues That Make Christians Squirm!, by Grantley Morris, net.simplenet.com/

Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 44-45, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000

PERSONAL

45. Isn’t death the end of it all, with no afterlife? Why doesn’t God just snuff out and annihilate everyone? We all just decay when we die.

Response(s):

---Our bodies decay—not our souls (so says the Bible). You run a greater risk if you are wrong in your belief than I do in trusting God and His word, telling us that we ourselves live forever—either in heaven’s bliss, or eternally tormented in hell. In fact/actually, when you read God’s word, you will see there is no risk and the decision to believe God is no calculation of probabilities. It is divine and absolute certainty, given by God’s Spirit through the word. 2. Can you prove we merely decay? No, and can we scientifically we don’t just decay? PROB

---That may be an expression of either your hope of expectation, but I must inform you that it is not going to be your future reality. God is loving and patient, and does not enjoy or want to destroy His creatures, but He will, in time, as He is also faithful to judge and punish sin. It is only by grace that He has patiently withheld man’s ultimate judgment, so that, perhaps, a few more might get saved, such as yourself.

---The Man who has experienced death, and come back to tell us about it, and who knows all things says that heaven and hell await every person, and that death is NOT the end of it all.

---That would be nice, wouldn't it. I can understand how one would want that to be true, but you sure better be certain that you are right, because being on the wrong side of that risk taken will be eternally deadly.

---You may hope so, but...

Answer(s):

- After physical death, all men will exist forever, either in God's presence, or eternally separated from Him, in Hell. (Mt. 25:46, Jude 7, 21, Dan. 12:2).

Source: Adapted from Bible Training Centre for Pastors: Missions, Evangelism, Discipleship, p. 129, by Dennis J. Mock, Sept. 1991, Atlanta GA

For Further Study:

The Case for Faith, pp. 183-185, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000

Reason to Believe, pp. 145-149, by R.C. Sproul (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 1978

Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 22-24, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

46. I hate God. I'm mad at God.

Response(s):

---Tell me about that experience (care; usually is mad at the devil and blaming God).

---Let's assume that God actually did to you what you claim. Knowing that He is a loving God, and does what is best for us, are you going to be bitter to the point of volunteering for an eternal hell to stand your ground on this issue you feel God has wronged you in?

---I am absolutely sorry that you must have had some bad experience(s) which you have attributed to evil behavior on the part of God.

- a) Will you describe the "god" you are mad/angry at? (I may hate that type "god" too).
- b) Can you tell me what those may have been? If I had had those things occur to me, I might be temporarily angry at people too (until I was able to forgive them). I can assure you that God was NOT the source of evil events which may have caused your bitterness/anger
- c) It is possible that your concept of God does not fully jive with what the Bible teaches, that you have been mis-taught concerning God's character and nature, which is causing a false transfer of blame for something more likely originated in just the opposite source—the devil.

For Further Study:

Issues That Make Christians Squirm!, by Grantley Morris, net.simplenet.com/

47. I'm answerable to no one. I am my own boss.

Response(s):

---That is your opinion, and likely a predominant attitude you live your life according to. However, I must inform you, that even despite your feeling that way/having that opinion, all men are accountable to God for the way they lived their lives. Some may choose not to face that fact, at least in this life, but the Bible says that ALL men WILL have to deal with God in the next life, on judgment day, even if they choose to ignore Him in this life (in which case that meeting will not be pleasant).

---That may be true in all your human affairs, but the Bible reveals that every knee WILL bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is God. You can do it now, in repentant reliance upon Him for your personal salvation, or you can remain obstinate, and he will MAKE you do so in the life hereafter, just before He sentences you to an eternal hell. When do you want to do it?

---Have you been hurt sometime in your past by an abuse of authority or people not respecting you as a person?

---Tell that to your employer today... Tell that to the cop who pulls you over driving 95 m.p.h. [etc.].

For Further Study:

Issues That Make Christians Squirm!, by Grantley Morris, net.simplenet.com/

The Open Bible, p. 1343 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

48. I don't need religion. I don't need God.

Response(s):

---You can get to heaven alone (maybe through life?, but not eternity).

---I agree with you that you do not need religion—you need a personal relationship with God, through the Lord Jesus Christ. I cannot agree with you not needing God, because if you never avail yourself of His resources of forgiveness of the sins even that you have already committed, you will need Him in a desperate time, in hell, and no help will be forthcoming. The man that lives as though he never needs

God, will forever need God, and get no relief.
---You're right, you don't IF you plan to spend forever in the burning fire of Hell.

Answer(s): See Answer to Question #34, above

For Further Study:

Issues That Make Christians Squirm!, by Grantley Morris, net.simplenet.com/

49. What's in it for me? Why should I become a Christian?

Response(s):

- Because you are facing an eternity in hell without Jesus, in your current condition.
- Because you are spiritually hopeless, helpless, etc. [**former identity paper**]
- Because God has commanded that you believe. (**I Jn. 3:23**).
- Because God desires you to be saved, and went to all the trouble and pain of sending His Son to die—and would have done so just for you to benefit from it.
- Why shouldn't you? (tell of sin's temporal pleasures, judgment and offense to God and harm to self).
- How about, just for starters, peace, security, wisdom, guidance, eternal significance, morals, blessing, answered prayers, love, and heaven to boot, just for starters! What do you have without God?
- What's in it for you to reject God? Despair, futility, purposelessness, fear of death, loneliness, emptiness, spiritual oppression and ultimately, hell forever.
- I've spoken to you about eternity in Heaven, as a freely-offered gift, and you haven't yet seen what's in it for you? Where did I mess up in my presentation?

For Further Study:

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 127-128, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

50. I'm not convinced. I'm not sure—I still have doubts, so I can't be a Christian. I want to be saved, but I cannot believe. Can Christianity help me—I'm a doubter?

Response(s):

- Can you tell me any specific points I have covered with which you are not fully sure or convinced?
- The Bible says that faith comes from God—it is not something we work/conjure up—so I would be happy to address the issues you may have, by, with your permission, identifying them and giving you a fuller addressing of those issues from more Bible verses than we have at this point covered.
- Many people started out un-convinced, yet, as they sought the Lord, prayed for Him to help their unbelief, and studied His record, God granted them to believe, and, in fact, some have even set out to disprove the Bible, only to be overwhelmed with God and His reality and turn to Christ in the process
- I would encourage you to retain an open mind and continue to search out what the Bible says about your way—and only hope--to get to heaven and miss out on hell.
- That's O.K.? For the time being?
- In the Bible, there were always two different types of doubt—that of Jesus' father and that of Jesus' mother. Should you sincerely lack the conviction, but be on your way toward believing that the things of God's word are true, our praying and your continuing study of the Bible should help. If, on the other hand, there is a willful denial of what is true, either because one does not want to believe it, or stubbornly refuses to do so, that is another moral matter entirely. I will try to assist you to build up your faith, if you are willing.
- What particular part of the message I have conveyed to you were you not convinced about, because, perhaps there is an understanding, or more information or evidence I can proffer to help you with that problem/decision.

For Further Study:

The Case for Faith, pp. 223-245, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000

Issues That Make Christians Squirm!, by Grantley Morris, net.simplenet.com/

Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 64-65, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000

The Open Bible, p. 1348 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

Modern Unbelief: It's Principles and Characteristics, by C.S. Ellicott

Why I am a Christian: Leading Thinkers Explain Why They Believe, by Norman L. Geisler

Dealing with Doubt, by Gary R. Habermas

The Gift of Doubt: From Crisis to Authentic Faith, by Gary E. Parker

Help Me Believe: Direct Answers to Real Questions, by Cliffe Knechtle

Why Christian?: For Those on the Edge of Faith, by Douglas John Hall

The Case for Christ, pp. 223-246, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1998

51. I don't believe that. Frankly, I am skeptical about the whole matter.

Response(s):

- Well, are you open-minded to further information, study and to investigating important evidence which can help persuade you as to which side you ought to take/come down on? If one is opposed to the facts, he virtually cannot be helped. If, however, one sincerely seeks to know the truth, he has a great chance of finding it, because it has already been revealed to us in the form of the word of God.
- Do you want to believe it, but think you can't, or are you completely disinterested or turned off to the whole subject?
- Well, if you'll maintain an open mind, I think I can help you with that. What particular aspect of what I've told you causes you to be tripped up/stumble?
- Healthy skepticism is valuable, in some contexts, but when it comes to your eternal destiny—whether in heaven or in hell, forever—it is important enough for you to investigate long enough to allay your doubts and follow the evidence, wherever that path may lead.
- I've read of skeptics who, on their deathbeds, finally abandoned their pride, and feared the God who controls their future, and got saved. It's much wiser to get through that game earlier than later in one's life, as we never know when our last days on this earth will hit. **Quotes of Dr. Tan**

For Further Study:

The Open Bible, pp. 1343 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

52. I have no feeling.

Response(s):

- Feelings come and go. Facts remain constant. Choose to believe the eternally solid and stable facts of God's word, whether you feel so/like it or not; and, if and when the feelings are there, even then do not rely on them as feelings are just that—feelings. Nothing else. But God's word is a lot more and much more than a sensory impression! I may not feel like being married (or even that I am), but that does not change the fact that I am (and that I had better behave according to that fact, even when I do not feel like it).
- You could feel an emotion and use that to confirm your decision, and it could have been the result of indigestion, or worse—satanic deception. If ANY feeling does not line up with the word of God, you should reject it, not depend on it, and decide what you know to be right, whether you feel anything or not.
- Do you believe/Are you one of those who believes that every decision requires you to feel something before you'll make it? Have you ever made a decision that you KNEW was the right one, but your feelings were either numb/neutral, or even contrary?
- Fine. Do you have any understanding of what I have just been telling you?

Answer(s):

“God begins with facts. Next God asks for faith, ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.’ (Acts 16:31). Finally, after FACTS and FAITH in Christ and experiencing forgiveness of sin, THEN you will have FEELING—a feeling of joy, peace, love and gratitude! The world isn't run by feeling; but by necessity. Doctors don't deal with disease because they feel like doing so, but because of necessity. You must consider the necessity of receiving Christ.” Go Tell: The Soul Winner's Encyclopedia, by Freddie Gage, p. 46 (Freddie Gage Evang. Assn., Euless, TX), 1980

For Further Study:

The Open Bible, pp. 1341-1342 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

53. I'll think about it.

Response(s):

- Feel free to think through and examine with an open mind the evidence God has provided for you (principally the Gospels), but I must caution you to not wait too long, as none of us have even the promise of another tomorrow, and if the day we meet our Creator (or Christ returns) occurs before we come to a conclusion, hell will be inescapable.
- I appreciate the fact that you say you will “think” about it. Too many people let the devil delude and deceive them into having a closed mind, or into deciding based on how they “feel.” If you conduct an honest, intellectual search of the biblical record, I am convinced that you will come to the same conclusion that millions of Christians have come to, as God extends His grace for you to see who the real/true Christ is (and how that can change your life and eternity). I'll be praying for you, and that you come to that conclusion “sooner rather than later.”
- I would urge you, that, as the Bible says, “today is the day of salvation.” However, if you WILL truly

think about and NOT forget the contents of the Gospel, I will be praying that God would reveal Himself through your thinking and reading of His word, so that you might soon choose to trust His Son for salvation, as, a decision to delay is, for the time being, a decision not to accept Jesus Christ, and we never know how much time we have to decide or before it's too late.

--I must soberly caution you that the decision to delay IS a decision NOT to accept Jesus Christ—at least not at this time, and we never know how many other chances God will give us to make that decision.

For Further Study:

Issues That Make Christians Squirm!, by Grantley Morris, net.simplenet.com/

GOD

54. The Trinity belief arose in the 1300s.

Response(s):

--The reality of the Trinity has eternally existed. The concept of the Trinity in man's mind may not have been formally adopted as an official doctrine of the Church until a given date (325 AD), but that does NOT mean that the concept was not there all along, in the Scriptures, and even more clearly, perhaps, in the New Testament canon. To insinuate that the idea arose by some imaginative idea of men much later than the apostles simply does not correspond to the facts or reality. Our understanding of what God has said can take years to articulate, work out in detail and to agree on, but that time is NOT the date at which the concept first arose in the experience or reality of either God, His Word or mankind. Don't let a particular date of official indoctrination, one way or the other, have any effect on the fact that you need to receive Jesus Christ, or you will spend eternity away from the presence of that Triune Godhead.

--The codification and formal expression of the belief and it's implications may have taken time to develop and finalize, but that says nothing of the origins of the belief itself, or the reality behind it!

--Clarification and establishment of that truth as a formal doctrine of the Church occurred in 325 AD, but that is NOT the same as the belief arising that late!

For Further Study:

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 71-73, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

Defending Your Faith, pp. 99-108, by Dan Story (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications), 1997

Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 730-737, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids), 1999

The Trinity (Rose Publishing: Torrance, CA), 1999

+55. God loves all men, so He wouldn't destroy them (i.e., in Hell). If God is so good, why does He send people to Hell? I believe God is too good to damn anyone.

Response(s):

--Loving does not mean lack of discipline, or punishment, and it does not mean, as is often assumed in America, "being nice." Though God is never mean or cruel, His righteous anger at sin, patiently restrained throughout latter day history will one day be unleashed, and no soul will rightfully be able to accuse Him of any wrongdoing. Also, it would prove helpful to develop a fuller and deeper biblical understanding of the seriousness and awesome implications of just one sin (take Adam's, for example). It would be un-good and un-loving to let people's sins run rampant and ultimately unabated, and God would no longer be righteous or just, but licentious and unjust, which He is not.

--The Calvinist may differ with your statement that He loves all men, but I do not. John 3:16 clearly affirms that, and corroborates and affirms that your belief is right on that part of your evaluation. However, the fact that he loves you does not save you, and many God-loved souls will be in hell because they never took Him up on His gracious offer of eternal life.

--What father do you know who truly loves his child, and does not punish wrongful behavior, but lets it go unabated, and gives his children free reign to do whatever they please (ex>: run out in the street, put their hand on an open flame, etc.)? That establishes the fact that punishment is not the result of hate. The next question would be why sin has to be punished, and why eternity is required to pay off deeds committed in a finite world. First, God has said so, and He establishes the rules, and it is His nature not only to be loving but to exercise judgment and justice. Evil doing will not go unabated, ultimately. Also, in mercy, He has done so much to make all men's salvation possible, so their not choosing to take Him up on it is NOT His fault. Finally, in our finite and limited, sin-tainted ways of thinking, we often fail to realize that the Bible says that just one sin makes a person guilty of all sins. If but one sin merits that standing, think about how many times over we have merited an even greater

guilt. However, its even more than that—the eternal relationship between God and man was broken by Adam’s (one) sin. One sin made eternal life no longer a reality for man, one act of kindness (of Christ on the cross) can reconcile the two and solve the problem (though our trusting Him), and, yes, one sin, therefore caused all men to deserve hell as the natural consequence of their separation from God, if they don’t accept His provision in Christ. We fail to realize the total impact of just one sin—Adam’s, and our own one sinful act of rejecting Jesus Christ. However, we needn’t be ignorant, and I’m here to tell you that by the one simple act of trusting Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, God has promised that you will not have to face that punishment you heretofore believed to be unjust or undeserved. Will you do that today? I can assure you that if you choose to reject Christ, any excuses about your thinking that hell is unfair will be falling on deaf ears, as you are falling, or better, being thrown into that place you thought it was unfair for you to go. There are no second chances after the grave.

---Spurned love yields one no eternal heavenly future.

---a) That’s not what the Bible says. b) you discipline your children (retort: but we don’t destroy them).

c) We humans often fail to fully comprehend the seriousness of but one sin. One sin caused our relationship breach with God! d) He gives plenty of and adequate warning(s) to rejecting men, so that, in the end, you knowingly choose to go to hell (by rejecting Jesus Christ). His justice would demand it though it might break His heart if not personally angered at particular party; God had mandated that hell will be one’s destiny, and that command won’t change despite His totally loving you. He’s already done all He can or has to do to prove His love, it is your lack of responding that causes Him to have to do what I hope He does not have to do to you at life’s end...don’t blame God argument

Answer(s):

- God does not send anyone to Hell—men choose to go there by rejecting God by refusing to believe in Jesus Christ. God desires than none should perish. (II Th. 1:5-10, 2:10-12, Rev. 9:17-21, Jn. 3:16-21, II Pet. 3:8-9, Eze. 18:3-4).

Source: Adapted from Bible Training Centre for Pastors: Missions, Evangelism, Discipleship, pp. 128-129, by Dennis J. Mock, Sept. 1991, Atlanta GA

Two things are important to realize. One, the loving God does not send anyone to hell. **When a person goes to hell, it is not because God has rejected him, but because he has rejected God.** Scripture tells us, “He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name” (Jn. 1:11-12).

A second thing which must be understood is that **not only is God loving, but He has to do what is right.** That means that sin has to be punished. Our punishment is separation from God, in hell, forever. But, once more, we have incurred our own punishment through sinning. He has not put undue punishment on us.

Source: Adapted from N.E.T.S., p. 109, by Larry Moyer (EvanTell: Dallas, TX), 1992

For Further Study:

The Case for Faith, pp. 169-194, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000

The Open Bible, p. 1344 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

56. Why didn’t God create only those He knew would follow Him?

Response(s):

---God has not chosen to tell us so we will never know for sure. What we do know is that He did not make moral robots, but gave man (relatively) free will, and that He can receive glory even through a man’s rebellious use of that will.

---A better question might be, why don’t men more readily choose to accept God’s free gift of eternal life, so as to do what you are asking why God did not force on them?

---Have you ever made the choice to follow Christ in salvation, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, to fulfill that which you state by your question you know God to be desiring of you, and all men?

---He could have, but He didn’t, and we must deal with the effects of His reality—not speculation which has no relevance (or application) to our lives.

---Wouldn’t the world be boring? God chose His ways, and apparently He would receive less glory that way, and, after all, what would life be for us with no moral challenge—only the mechanical working out of the only choices we could make?

---[How boring would that be—robots.]

For Further Study:

The Case for Faith, pp. 186-188, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000

57. God is going to save “the elect.” If I’m one of the elect than God will save me; if I am not, then it really doesn’t matter what I do. Relatedly, Christ died for all men, so He has already paid

for my sins, so why do I need to do anything?

Response(s):

- Nowhere in the Bible does it teach anyone to rely on that for their personal assurance of salvation. Quite contrarily, repeatedly the Scripture tells us we must trust Jesus Christ as our personal Savior. It is faith in Christ, not hoping that you are on some secret list, or hoping that God will save you apart from your having trusted Jesus Christ, that is the instrumentality by which man gets saved. Nothing more, and certainly nothing shy of that will do.
- That is an often believed error, which misunderstands biblical election (See my paper on Compatibalism). The fact that Christ paid for your sins, does not at all mean that God has personally reckoned that payment as yours, or credited the payment to your moral account before Him, unless and until the time you, by grace, pray to receive it for yourself, personally.

Answer(s):

- Only God knows who are the elect, and, while His choice is based on mercy and not merit, it is also based on foreknowledge of who we are and how we will respond. (Rom. 9:10-18, Eph. 1:4, I Pet. 1:1-2).
- Humanly speaking, according to scripture, no one will be saved who does not exercise saving faith in God. (Jn. 1:11-13, Rom. 10:9-13, Phil. 3:9).
- Election is God's responsibility; responding by faith to His call is ours. (Gal. 3:6-9).

Source: Adapted from Bible Training Centre for Pastors: Missions, Evangelism, Discipleship, pp. 130-131, by Dennis J. Mock, Sept. 1991, Atlanta GA

For Further Study:

58. Hell is a state of mind—not a place. If it's a place, why can't a spacecraft find it? If it's invisible, how could anyone say there was a fire, as fire is seen?

Response(s):

- That is a serious confusion of figurative vs. literal speech, and the two are not the same, in this instance. You are meaning to say that experiences in life can be bad—can be “hell”—which is, implicitly agreeing that hell is a bad place, but, at the same time, is a confusion of a state of mind with a spiritual place/location. Because it is spiritual, and invisible to mortal eyes, it could never be found by a spacecraft, or seen with the naked eye, but, rest assured, if you have never received Christ—unfortunately—you will both see and personally experience it for yourself (but then it will be too late to change your mind as to understanding that it was not merely a state of mind).
- How do you know that? You would be the first person who has concrete proof of that, as God's word—the eternal truth of God—completely disagrees with your opinion/assessment.
- Both heaven and hell are in another dimension—the spiritual realm—and just as human bodies must undergo a change to enter heaven (and hell?), no spacecraft man can ever make can be retrofitted to enter the invisible yet real spiritual realm. It is a fire which is seen only in that spiritual realm, but, just like you don't now see electricity (only it's effects), if you continue to reject the gift of salvation in Jesus Christ, unfortunately you will have to learn the hard and impossible-to-reverse way that hell's fire is truly real. One man went there, and begged for just a drop of water, and was denied. (:).
- Don't confuse the colloquial expression and definitional sense of the term “Hell” with the spiritual reality of a fiery place of torment and eternal punishment!
- That's like saying Texas is a state of mind. Granted, Texans do have pride in their state, and there is a Texan attitude, but that in no way negates the reality of our state in the Union.

For Further Study:

Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 310-315, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

The Case for Christ, pp. 169-194, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1998

59. How can God send children to hell?

Response(s):

- I'll have to disagree with your premise, rather than trying to address a question not based in fact.
- Who ever said that He does? Children who are mature enough and mentally developed enough to understand the Gospel message, and choose to reject it, should they die “prematurely,” will go to hell. But that is the case for men of any age. Though all men are sinners, even infants, I believe the Scripture to clearly teach that young ones who have not yet attained to the mental maturity enough to consciously understand and respond to the Gospel will not be sent to hell, not because they chose Christ, but because they did not yet have the opportunity, through developed ability, to respond either way. Certainly there are no morally perfect, or “innocent” babies, but the attitude of

trust/reliance/dependence and child-likeness is innately within them, and I do not believe the Bible teaches that they are held accountable for their sinfulness, until such time as they can understand such a concept (though, even so, their response would have to be the work of the Holy Spirit).

--God has the right to do that, and even babies are sinners, worthy of death, but I believe you have heard a certain teaching that goes around in certain circles that leads you to that conclusion which I believe to be contrary to Scripture (and God's nature). That having been said, please do realize that no child (save Jesus) is 100% innocent of sin(s), and even one sin merits a deserved fate in hell—biblically.

--How can you—not being a child—let yourself be sent to hell, by choosing to reject God's offer of eternal life?

For Further Study:

Safe in the Arms of Jesus, by Robert Lightner

The Case for Faith, pp. 178-179, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000

60. Why does everyone suffer the same in hell?

Response(s):

--I'll have to disagree with your premise, rather than trying to address a question not based in fact.

--Being in hell, which is a place of eternal punishment, condemnation, damnation, judgment and torment—a place of literal flames, yet amidst utter darkness, where men would beg for a drop of water and where the worm is not extinguished, indicating that there is no annihilation there—is certainly a somber, serious and drastic end to any life that ends up there, and it's fierce and wrathful impact cannot be minimized. However, I am not certain that there are not more severe-by-degrees punishments awaiting there, to differentiate between Gandhi and Hitler. I am not sure about it, and would like to make further study, but if we are truly rewarded, “according to our works/deeds,” this conclusion at least seems plausible. Whatever the case ends up being, make sure you are not one of the unfortunate (not “unlucky,” as it will be the destination you chose—by rejecting Jesus Christ) souls who spend forever there!

--I am not at all sure that the Bible teaches that that is the case. You are making assumptions. Certainly, and confinement and sentencing to hell is atrocious, and there can be no let up in the pain anyone will eternally undergo. However, it is my studied opinion, especially in light of His dealing with us “according to our deeds” that there certainly could be degrees of punishment (if indeed a fiery dark absence from God's presence were not enough in itself).

--Where did you learn/hear that the Bible teaches that? The punishment of going to hell, without having received Christ in this life IS equal, and there's no denying that that punishment is severe. However, the Bible also talks about an accounting and judging of our deeds, which certainly could imply that, just as there are degrees of rewards in heaven, there could be degrees of suffering in hell—though even the slightest penalty, being in hell, would be unbearable!

For Further Study:

The Case for Faith, pp. 179-180, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000

61. Why are people punished infinitely for finite sins, or crimes?

Response(s):

---**See:** Answer to Question #45, above.

--In many states, we give the death penalty for only one—though a very heinous and serious one—sin, and our sins have caused a death to our relationship and fellowship with God. Adam's one act of disobedience made all men accountable and judgment-worthy of hell—one sin. Also, it is not the number of sins, so much as the effect even one sin has and does to our relationship with God. A much better question to ask is why would anyone in their right mind choose hell—an eternal punishment for their “finite” sins—when the free gift of eternal life was offered them and available to all?

--A quick thought to add thereto is that our thoughts are not those of God's, and at best our view of our own sinfulness is but a token of the reality which it is to God—the One offended (**Isa. 55:6-9**), and one does not have to suffer that horrible fate, unless he so chooses, by failing to receive Jesus Christ as one's personal Savior! Don't blame God for your poor decisions, just as you cannot take credit for His great decision to save all who will believe.

--That was God's determination, and only He could rightfully make it. He did not trick man into choosing to disobey, knowing full well the severe and eternal consequences. Don't blame or accuse God for being faithful to what He promised the father of the human race before he chose to go the other way. Plus, as has been said before, one sin is much more heinous to God than to most if not all of us. Fortunately, there is grace, or none of us would make it/survive. That is not to teach being scared of

God, but a healthy reverential “fear” is always in order.

---Only one sin, committed by Adam, resulted in all of mankind losing the eternal life and relationship with God they were created to have. Sin is more serious than we humans give it credit for, in God’s perspective. And Adam’s sin was of the nature of one act of disobedience in eating forbidden fruit. How much worse are some of the things you and I have already committed if we were perfectly honest and up-front about our secret failings.

For Further Study:

The Case for Faith, pp. 181-182, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000

62. Can’t God force everybody to go to heaven?

Response(s):

---Ability and capability are not always the same as the choice one makes. Certainly, God is capable of doing anything but evil. However, since He has not chosen to force all people to hell, or even any, for that matter, you have got to get in step with the program He has established, because if you don’t, you are guaranteed to miss out on heaven, and to have chosen the path that leads to ultimate destruction. Rather than worry about speculative questions about alternatives previously available to God, it would be far more beneficial to concern yourself with what God has said you must do, in order to live with Him forever.

---He can do a lot of things He does not often if ever choose to do (self-limiting vs. lack of capacity). We have to deal with how He behaves and has revealed Himself—not in a slew of what if, speculative hypotheticals which will rarely to never be practical in our lives before God.

---Presumably He could have, just like He could, presumably, have forced man not to sin. But He has obviously not chosen so to do, so getting more into the practical and less into the unrealistic hypothetical will benefit us both more, in our service of God.

---God can do anything, but what matters is what He has revealed that He WILL and DOES do, and He has promised to save all who will trust His Son for eternal life.

For Further Study:

The Case for Faith, pp. 182-183, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000

63. How can hell exist alongside heaven? How can I reconcile the doctrine of hell with the Christian’s God of salvation?

Response(s):

---Do you mean the fact that they are completely opposite in nature/character? Are you assuming that God created hell (which He likely did)? Do rest assured that there is a physical gap between them (), and it is of necessity that those who do not enter the kingdom of heaven go to the exact opposite fate, as Christ made that division between those who would receive His free gift of life, and those who would spurn and reject His sacrificial death on their behalf.

---Because that’s what the Bible teaches, and if God has not told us why, in that source, it is not ours to discover. We can speculate, but we had better respond to what we know for sure, and leave questions which cannot be answered, in this life, at least, to those we may ask Him in the next life IF we belong to Him.

---Is it that hard to conceive of opposites existing in life? Many things have exact opposites. So also with heaven and hell.

---[Perhaps your concept of the nature of God is flawed, or out of since with the God of the Bible(?).]

For Further Study:

The Case for Faith, pp. 185-186, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000

The Open Bible, p. 1344 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

64. Is God an environmentalist? Christians support environmental vandalism.

Response(s):

---Biblically, God does care that we humans maintain His creation in responsible ways (), but as far as fanatical, almost worship of the earth as our “mother” or a god, no way. We are to worship the Creator, not the creature (Rom. 1:21-23). Finally, we need to keep perspective in this matter, as spiritual things are clearly more important than the physical. In fact, this blue orb we temporarily reside on will, itself, ultimately be burned up and replaced. God has commanded man to work to earn a living, so He is not opposed to the activities which allow man to achieve that end, but He is opposed to materialism, the love of money, workaholicism, and/or irresponsible resource management which would pillage over, destructively pollute or otherwise unduly or unnecessarily and prematurely bring death or harm to this

planet He created, out of nothing, by the word of His mouth. God is not an “environmental whacko,” and certainly true “vandalism” or crimes against His creation are wrong.

--God created it all, and does expect mankind to adequately both rule over it and preserve it. However, He has also commanded to make his living by the sweat of his brow in working upon it, and God is not unreasonable in what it takes so to do. In perspective, the earth will ultimately be destroyed, so an extreme attitude toward the earth (tree hugging, don't kill any insects, “mother” earth, etc.) are not consistent with God's revealed, accurate view of the value of His earth, and our responsibility toward it.

For Further Study:

Defending Your Faith, pp. 197-207, by Dan Story (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, MI), 1997
Issues That Make Christians Squirm!, by Grantley Morris, net.simplenet.com/

CHRIST

65. Who was Jesus (cf.: Time magazine articles). What evidence did Jesus give to support His claims?

Response(s):

--Jesus was the sinless Son of God, fully God and fully man, the second person of the Godhead, who was eternally pre-existent, born of the virgin Mary, lived a sinless life of perfect morals, the highest teachings and many miracles, who was betrayed by Judas Iscariot, delivered up to Pilate, handed over for the Jews to the Roman authorities, was spat on, mocked, beaten, crowned with thorns, falsely accused and suffered, stripped, carried His cross (part way), was hanged on it, died, was speared in the side (with legs left unbroken) was buried (in a rich man's borrowed tomb), raised from the dead (three days later), saw more than 500 people after His resurrection (on more than 15 occasions?) in a post-resurrection body (glorified?), and He has physically ascended into heaven, where He is presently seated at the right hand of God (i.e., highest place of authority and prominence), where, as Lord, He reigns and intercedes for believers, and will soon be physically returning to our earth to literally reign on earth (in Jerusalem) for 1000 years, after which time He will submit all things to His Father so that He might be all in all.

Answer(s): See also: Answer to Question #7, above.

For Further Study:

Ready With an Answer, pp. 23-66, by John Ankerberg (Harvest House: Eugene, OR), 1997
The Case for Christ, pp. 264-267, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1998

66. Was Christ really convinced He was the Son of God?

Response(s):

--He made humble claims as such, and lived in the confidence that that fact was so/established. It is not so much that He was convinced, as if someone or He had to be encouraged to believe it—He was God, and knew it, well before even His miraculous virgin birth. Also, He was not God's Son in the same sense that believers are. He was uniquely the “Son of God,” which, in Scripture, is a title regarding His full deity, though fully a man, as well.

--First, please realize that the definition being applied to that phrase means that Christ would be “convinced,” or know, that He was in fact/indeed God. I would not call it so much “convinced,” as if He had been talked into believing it, but He knew that He was (and had been from eternity past). The evidence of His humble attitude, yet true understanding of His divine Personhood is as follows:

--Would you hold it against a person for being humble, and use that virtue against them as not as aggressively asserting things true about themselves as others may have?

For Further Study:

The Case for Christ, pp. 131-143, 261, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1998
Evidence That Demands a Verdict, pp. 103-109, by Josh McDowell (Here's Life Publishers, Inc.: San Bernadeno, CA), 1979
A Ready Defense, pp. 214-245, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993
The Case for Faith, pp. 265-266, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000

67. Was Christ crazy (or deluded) when He claimed to be the Son of God?

Response(s):

--(Evil) men asserted that He was (), but those men were the ones who were either wrong, or “crazy.” A “crazy” person is one who believes something so preposterously in error, that every rational thinking, common sensible person knows the thought he believes is clearly a fantasy, or worse, an errant

delusion. Clearly those who knew Him best did not consider Him to have fell into that category—in fact, many of them gave their lives as martyrs, in their full conviction as to His deity, and He who knew best and who never lied one time in His life, knew who He was, and showed all the credible evidence of a clear-thinking person, with no signs indicating insanity. The interesting point is, that each individual person has to decide within their own heart what they think of Him, and if one does not come to realize Him for who He truly is, and receive that God-man for their own personal salvation, psychoanalyzing His mental state the rest of one’s life will never personally benefit the investigator, because Christ was not only God, He is the soon and coming judge of all mankind.

- A deluded person would show signs of being naive, ignorant, show evidence of stupidity or of being easily swayed by others, even if the others are not telling that person the truth. Do these Bible references show any evidence of this being the case with Jesus.
- Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary defines “crazy” as mad, insane. A “crazy” person would evince/ evidence signs of not just abnormal behavior, but that which is extreme, opposed to human nature, radically absurd, etc. Do you see any Biblical evidence of Christ saying or doing anything “crazy?”

For Further Study:

The Case for Christ, pp. 144-154, 261-262, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1998
Christianity: Hoax or History, pp. 5-12, by Josh McDowell (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers Wheaton, Ill.) 1989
Defending Your Faith, pp. 75-86, by Dan Story (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, MI), 1997
A Ready Defense, pp. 214-245, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993
Evidence That Demands a Verdict, pp. 103-109, by Josh McDowell (Here’s Life Publishers, Inc.: San Bernadeno, CA), 1979
The Case for Faith, p. 266, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000
Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 26-27, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000
www.probe.org

68. Did Christ—and Christ alone—match the identity of the Messiah?

Response(s):

- In a word—yes. You would need to know some things about what the Old testament said about the Jews’ expected messiah, but when you do that research you will see that Christ fulfilled all the prophecies associated with that expected character.
- Yes. More so than any man could, has or ever will, as He claimed to be, attested to be and was the Messiah of God. Proof (verses OT v. NT). Cf.: Isa. 53.
- Do you have any other candidates you think even come close to filling those credentials?
- Are you aware of what the Jew’s Old Testament signs and credentials for their Messiah are and were? If you want to know the answer to your own question to me, it will help if you are aware of more specifics concerning that topic, so that when I give you the answer(s), you can test their validity.

Answer(s):

“Jesus had various credentials to support His claims to being Messiah, God’s son. One credential often overlooked, one of the most profound, is the fulfillment of prophecy in His life. Over and over again Jesus appealed to the prophecies of the Old Testament to substantiate His claims as the Messiah.” (**See:** Lk. 24:27, 44, Jn. 5:46, 8:56; See also: Gal. 4:4).

“The apostles, the New Testament writers, etc, constantly appealed to fulfilled prophecy to substantiate the claims of Jesus as the Son of God, the Savior, the messiah...” (Ex.: Ac. 3:18, 17:2-3, I Cor. 15:3-4).

1. “In the Old Testament there are sixty major messianic prophecies and approximately 270 ramifications that were fulfilled in one person, Jesus Christ.

29 Old Testament Prophecies Christ Fulfilled within 24 Hours [Statistical odds of it happening?:]

Jesus Christ fulfilled a total of 335 Old Testament Messianic prophecies, 29 of which occurred between His betrayal and death. These include:

<u>Prophecy</u>	<u>Old Testament</u>	<u>New Testament</u>
1. Betrayed by a friend	Ps. 41:9	Mt. 10:14
2. Sold out for 30 pieces of silver	Zech. 11:12	Mt. 26:15
3. Blood money thrown into God’s house	Zech. 11:13	Mt. 27:5
4. Price paid for a potter’s filed	Zech. 11:13	Mt. 27:7
5. Forsaken by His disciples	Zech. 13:7	Mk. 14:50
6. Accused by false witnesses	Ps. 35:11	Mt. 26:59-61
7. Silent before His accusers	Isa. 53:7	Mt. 27:12-19
8. Wounded and bruised	Isa. 53:5	Mt. 27:26

9. Hit and spat upon	Isa. 50:6	Mt. 26:67
10. Mocked	Ps. 22:7-8	Mt. 27:31
11. Fell under the weight of the cross	Ps. 109:24-25	Jn. 19:17, Lk. 23:26
12. Hands and feet were pierced	Ps. 22:16	Lk. 23:33
13. Crucified among thieves	Isa. 53:12	Mt. 27:38
14. Interceded for His persecutors	Isa. 53:12	Lk. 23:34
15. Rejected by His own (people)	Isa. 53:3	Jn. 7:5, 48
16. Hated without cause	Ps. 69:4	Jn. 15:25
17. Friends watched from afar	Ps. 38:11	Lk. 23:49
18. People shook heads at Him	Ps. 109:25	Mt. 27:39
19. Was stared upon	Ps. 22:17	Lk. 23:35
20. Garments rent and lots cast	Ps. 22:18	Jn. 19:23-24
21. Suffered thirst	Ps. 69:21	Jn. 19:28
22. Gall and vinegar offered Him	Ps. 69:21	Mt. 27:34
23. Cry of forsakenness	Ps. 22:1	Mt. 27:46
24. Entrusted Himself to God	Ps. 31:5	Lk. 23:46
25. Bones were not broken	Ps. 34:20	Jn. 19:33
26. Heart broken open	Ps. 22:14	Jn. 19:34
27. Side was pierced	Zech. 12:10	Jn. 19:34
28. Darkness over the land	Am. 8:9	Mt. 27:45
29. Buried in a rich man's tomb	Isa. 53:9	Mt. 27:57-60

Israel's Messiah was also prophesied in Gen. 49:10, which was fulfilled when Israel's scepter was removed before the temple's destruction in 70 A.D. Indeed, Israel's Messiah has already come.

Source: Adapted from chart by Carol Hoehn (unknown publication)

<u>Prophecy</u>	<u>Old Testament</u>	<u>New Testament/Fulfillment</u>
Born of the seed of a woman	Gen. 3:15	Gal. 4:4
Born of a virgin	Isa. 7:14	Mt. 1:18, 24-25, Lk. 1:26-35
Son of God	Ps. 7:2, I Chron. 17:11-14, II Sam. 7:12-16 22:70, Ac. 13:30-33, Jn. 1:34, 49	Mt. 3:17, 16:16, Mk. 9:7, Lk. 9:35,
Seed of Abraham	Gen. 22:18, 12:2-3	Mt. 1:1, Gal. 3:16
Son of Isaac	Gen. 21:12	Lk. 3:23-24, Mt. 1:2
Son of Jacob	Num. 24:17, Gen. 35:10-12	Lk. 3:23, 34, Mt. 1:2, Lk. 1:33
Of the tribe of Judah	Gen. 49:10, Mic. 5:2	Lk. 3:23, 33, Mt. 1:2, Heb. 7:14
From the family line of Jesse	Isa. 11:1, 10	Lk. 3:23, 32, Mt. 1:6
Of the house of David	Jer 23:5, II Sam. 7:12-16, Ps. 132:11	Lk. 3:23, 31, Mt. 1:1, 9:27, 15:22, 20:30-31, 21:9, 15, 22:41-46, Mk. 9:10, 10:47-48, Lk. 18:38-39, Ac. 13:22-23, Rev. 22:16
Born in Bethlehem	Mic. 5:2	Mt. 2:1, Jn. 7:42, Mt. 2:4-8, Lk. 2:4-7
Presented with gifts	Ps. 72:10	Mt. 2:1, 11
Herod slays the innocents	Jer. 31:15	Mt. 2:16
Pre-existence	Mic. 5:2, Isa. 9:6-7, 41:4, 44:6, 48:12, Ps. 102:25, Pv. 8:22-23	Col. 1:17, Jn. 1:1-2, 8:58, 17:5, 24, Rev. 1:17, 2:8, 22:13
He shall be called Lord	Ps. 110:1, Jer. 23:6	Lk. 2:11, Mt. 22:43-45
He shall be Immanuel (God with us)	Isa. 7:14	Mt. 1:23, Lk. 7:16
He shall be a prophet	Deut. 18:18	Mt. 21:11, Lk. 7:16, Jn. 4:19, 6:14, 7:40
Priesthood of Jesus	Ps. 110:4	Heb. 3:1, 5:5-6
Jesus as Judge	Isa. 33:22	Jn. 5:30, II Tim. 4:1
King Jesus	Ps. 2:6, Zech. 9:9, Jer. 23:5	Mt. 27:37, 21:5, Jn. 18:33-38
Specially anointed with the Holy Spirit	Isa. 11:2, Ps. 45:7, Isa. 42:1 61:1-2	Mt. 3:16-17, 12:17-21, Mk. 1:10-11, Lk. 4:15-21, 43, Jn. 1:32
Zealous for God	Ps. 69:9	Jn. 2:15-17
Preceded by a messenger (John the Baptist)	Isa. 40:3, Mal. 3:1	Mt. 3:1-3, 11:10, Jn. 1:23, Lk. 1:17
Ministry to begin in Galilee	Isa. 9:1	Mt. 4:12-13, 17
Miraculous ministry	Isa. 35:5-6a, 32:3-4	Mt. 9:35, 32-33, 11:4-6, Mk. 7:33-35, Jn. 5:5-9, 9:6-11, 11:43-44, 47
Taught in parables	Ps. 78:2	Mt. 13:34

Entered the temple	Mal. 3:1	Mt. 21:12
Entered Jerusalem on a donkey	Zech. 9:9	Lk. 19:35-37a, Mt. 21:6-11
Would be a stone of stumbling to the Jews	Ps. 118:22, Isa. 8:14, 28:16	I Pet. 2:7, Rom. 9:32-33
Light to the Gentiles	Isa. 60:3, 49:6	Ac. 13:47-48a, 26:23, 28:28
Resurrected	Ps. 16:10, 30:3, 41:10, 118:17, Hos. 6:2	Ac. 2:31, 13:33, Lk. 24:46, Mk. 16:6, Mt. 28:6
Ascended	Ps. 68:18a	Ac. 1:9
Seated at the right hand of God	Ps. 110:1	Heb. 1:3, Mk. 16:19, Ac. 2:34-35
Betrayed by a friend	Ps. 41:9, 55:12-14	Mt. 10:4, 26:49-50, Jn. 13:21
Sold out for 30 pieces of silver	Zech. 11:12	Mt. 26:15, 27:3
Blood money thrown into God's house	Zech. 13:11b	Mt. 27:5a
Price given for a potter's field	Zech. 11:13b	Mt. 27:7
Forsaken by His disciples	Zech. 13:7	Mk. 14:50, Mt. 26:31, Mk. 14:27
Accused by false witnesses	Ps. 35:11	Mt. 26:59-60
Silent before His accusers	Isa. 53:7	Mt. 27:12
Wounded and bruised	Isa. 53:5, Zech. 13:6	Mt. 27:26
Hit and spat upon	Isa. 50:6, Mic. 5:1	Mt. 26:67, Lk. 22:63
Mocked	Ps. 22:7-8	Mt. 27:31
Fell carrying the cross	Ps. 109:24-25	Jn. 19:17, Lk. 23:26, Mt. 27:31-32
Hands and feet pierced	Ps. 22:16, Zech. 12:10	Lk. 23:33, Jn. 20:25
Crucified with thieves	Isa. 53:12	Mt. 27:38, Mk. 15:27-28
Made intercession for His persecutors	Isa. 53:12	Lk. 23:34
Rejected by His own people	Isa. 53:3, Ps. 69:8, 118:22	Jn. 7:5, 48, Jn. 1:11, Mt. 21:42-43
Hated without cause	Ps. 69:4, Isa. 49:7	Jn. 15:25
Friends stood afar	Ps. 38:11	Lk. 23:49, Mk. 15:40, Mt. 27:53, 56
People shook their heads	Ps. 109:25, 22:7	Mt. 27:39
Stared upon	Ps. 22:17	Lk. 23:35
Garments split and lots cast	Ps. 22:18	Jn. 19:23-24
Suffered thirst	Ps. 69:21, 22:15	Jn. 19:28
Offered gall and vinegar	Ps. 69:21	Mt. 27:34, Jn. 19:28-29
Cry of forsakenness	Ps. 22:1a	Mt. 27:46
Entrusted Himself to God	Ps. 31:5	Lk. 23:46
Bones were not broken	Ps. 34:20	Jn. 19:33
Heart was broken	Ps. 22:14	Jn. 19:34
Side pierced	Zech. 12:10	Jn. 19:34
Darkness fell over the land	Amos 8:9	Mt. 27:45
Buried in a rich man's tomb	Isa. 53:9	Mt. 27:57-60

Old Testament Predictions Which were Literally Fulfilled in Christ:

<u>Prophecy</u>	<u>Old Testament</u>	<u>New Testament/Fulfillment</u>
1.	Ps. 41:9	Mt. 10:14
2.	Zech. 11:12	Mt. 26:15
3.	Zech. 11:13	Mt. 27:5

For Further Study:

Evidence That Demands a Verdict, pp. 141-177, by Josh McDowell (Here's Life Publishers, Inc.: San Bernadeno, CA), 1979

A Ready Defense, pp. 209-214, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993

The Case for Christ, pp. 171-187, 262, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1998

The Case for Faith, pp. 266-267, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000

69. Why is Jesus better than other religious leaders and teachers? Did Jesus really claim to be any more than just a first century rabbi?

Response(s):

---Why is best better than good or alright?

---Why is the Creator superior to the/His creatures?

---Yes. None of them were ever perfect. Yes, though His perfect humility made it often a little more veiled than an all-out, direct claim. (etc.)

- It is not my intention to slander any other religious figure in history. I respect men's attempts to be moral and holy, and who lead others so to live. However, the fact is that all men are sinners—save one—the God-man, Jesus Christ. That reason alone would answer your question satisfactorily. However, there are even other reasons. He's the only one who died for you, procured your opportunity to get saved, and whose teaching will get you to heaven, rather than deceiving you into ending up in hell. His love and ethics were superior, as were His teachings, deeds, miracles—in a word, both His life and His death and resurrection are superior, as He is superior, as he is God. Etc.
- Is God greater than any and all His creation and creatures, including mankind? Then Jesus must be greater than His created beings—religious leaders or plain sinner lay persons.
- No other religious leader was ever sinless, performed the amount of quality of miracles He did, nor taught such high morals with such loving credibility as the lifestyle He consistently lived.
- To maintain Christ's humility—an ethical virtue—He often accepted men's appellations and titles, whether they be less than divine, and even when He was considered (or accused of) as deity. That is not the same as denying and correcting people's opinions as to One's divinity (which an honest/moral person, such as Christ, would have done, to keep the record straight).
- Do you know of any other religious leader who lived a perfect moral life, claimed to be eternal God, and rose from the grave to prove His power over death? Neither do I (and you'll never find one, no matter how hard you search). Also, His miracles, ethical teachings and the way He continues to change lives attest to His being who He claimed to be, and who you asked whether he is—divine God.

70. Was Christ seen after His death on the cross?

Response(s):

- Yes, the Bible says so. **[any extra-biblical sources corroborate this?]**
- Biblical listing of post-resurrection appearances:
- People who could have disproved this: Romans at the tomb, Jews who would lose credibility if the “deceiver” had raised up, as He claimed to them He would, etc.
- If He was not seen, let's go to His grave, dig Him up and see His frame now. **[if a myth, couldn't]**

Answer(s): See also: Answer to Question #8 , above.

For Further Study:

The Case for Christ, pp. 225-243, 263, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1998
Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 32-35, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000

71. Christ was only a good man. Was Jesus more than a carpenter?

Response(s):

- The only problem I have with your belief is the word “only.” Christ certainly was a “good man,” but that term misses the breadth of His Personhood so far as to almost be an insult to Him. He was fully a man, and 100% good, but because he was also God, to treat Him as if He was just a morally high aspiring human being is to negate the fact that He alone could have achieved that degree of sinless perfection pure and simply because He was “also” God!
- Would a “good man” lie to people about His identity and about how they can get to heaven through Him?
- a) Every and all so-called “good men” have some sin in their lives—Christ had none. Claimed Lord: Liar, lunatic, joking, or deluded/deceived?
- Have you ever even heard or conceived of what men call a “good man” being in any way in the same category and field of moral attainment as Jesus Christ? Even Gandhi and Mother Theresa don't come close to being comparable to the moral standard—perfection—Jesus exhibited. That success rate by itself should tell you that here was a human being like no other (because He was also God incarnate).

For Further Study:

Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 28-29, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000
True for You, but Not for Me, pp. 107-109, by Paul Copan (Bethany House: Minneapolis, MN), 1998
When Skeptics Ask, pp. 128-140, by Normal L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1990

72. Christ was only a moral teacher. I think that Jesus Christ is only one of the great men in history.

Response(s):

- See:** Answer to Question #62, above.
- This statement differs from question #62, above, only in regard to Christ also being a teacher, besides also being a good, or moral man. With this we agree, that Jesus did teach great morals, but even the

nature of His teachings show the honest observer that He was much more than a mere “moral teacher.” No one has ever spoken as did he, because the words He spoke were the very words of and from god, as Christ was sent from god, and was, in fact, God.

- What about His claims—both implicit and humbly self-constrained yet more explicit, to being God?
- That’s amazing that you could imagine that a sinless Person, who taught the greatest moral code, healed many, claimed to be one with god and from heaven, and RESURRECTED FROM THE DEAD is merely a “good” human. How “good” could he be if He lied to us about His divinity, and said that eternal salvation is found ONLY in Him?
- Have you ever seriously considered both the miracles and deity claims of Christ? As Josh McDowell has suggested, such a person would have to be either a liar, lunatic or Lord.

For Further Study:

Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 24-25, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000
The Open Bible, p. 1345 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

73. Jesus sinned (i.e., turning over the temple tables, or reproving the Pharisees). Christ died for a crime and sin He committed.

Response(s):

- That assertion simply shows me that your understanding of ethics, righteous indignation/godly anger are based not on the word of God, but on what some people feel to be right. In fact, it is just the opposite of the truth to assert that, when reproof is needed, you love someone when you withhold it from them. The world teaches always be “nice,” sweet, “cool, calm and collected.” You parents either did discipline you, or let me out of this room because you may be a horrible criminal. Punishment, discipline and rebuking serve godly purposes, when done in love, and I sure trust that your earthly parents understood that. God, my heavenly Father, certainly does.
- Can you list specifically for me, from the Bible, the actions you allege Jesus undertook which constitute sin?
- Righteous indignation and verbal reproof are not sin. God and His Word—not we men-- determine what constitutes sinful behavior, and the biblical record clearly attests to the fact that Jesus Christ was not only perfect, but He was sinless, which means that He never committed one sin.
- Even in American civil law (which is not unique or originated in America) truth is always a defense to slander, and Christ’s harsh words to the hypocritical Pharisees, though harsh, were true, and were motivated out of righteous indignation—not sinful anger; there is a biblical difference in these two emotions. And as the head and God of the Jews’ temple, He of all men had the right and authority to clean up its abuses. In fact, he is the one who will judge the world, and if He had sinned, He would have been disqualified as the perfect sacrificial Lamb, and would have lost credentials to execute the judgment He will surely and shortly render.
- Where? When? What evidence/proof do you have to substantiate your allegation/assertion/claim? Anyone can make a statement, but it takes verification to give it credibility (and to be worth the time spent answering it).

Answer(s): (Mt. 3:7, 21:12, Mt. 23:23-33)

74. Jesus was culturally biased for whites. Christianity is cultural. You believe it because you were raised that way (i.e., upbringing).

Response(s):

- Christ loved and died for all men—even those who accuse Him of the sin of partiality. How can one claim Jesus was biased, when He treated all men as equals? If you are saying that American Christian expression favors whites, in some cases there may be claiming believers who are prejudiced against black people, but Christ never condoned such behavior, and as far as I know and the last time I checked, every Protestant church was fully accessible and available for any and all men to be welcomed visitors and church members. Perhaps I do not understand your issue, as I am unaware of any benefits of Christianity which are not equally available to members of all races.
- How so, when He began and primarily conducted His ministry in the Middle East, and was Himself a Jew. There are mentions of black people associated with Jesus, as well as foreigners to Israel, and the fact that, historically, many Arabs have not received the Lord Jesus Christ does not mean that He is not available to them, or that they have been discriminated against by God.
- Are we going to admit that we believe that because Jesus was a Jew, He showed favoritism to Jews? Because of the incarnation, His body had to be born with a human and cultural identity, and God chose it to be that of His chosen people. That has nothing to do with how He lovingly treated all people.

---Much anti-Semitism is harbored in the hearts of Anglo Saxons. To accuse whites to have been favored by the Jew's Messiah would be to fully equate Gentile white people with Jewish people.]

For Further Study:

True for You, but Not for Me, pp. 82-85, by Paul Copan (Bethany House: Minneapolis, MN), 1998

MAN, SIN AND EVIL

75. What is the origin of evil?

Response(s):

---Apparently, from the biblical record, sin originated with the devil, when he chose to use his will contrary to/against God's will for his life, as recorded in Isa. 14:12-15.

Answer(s):

"The original appearance of evil in the creation of God came through the choice of satan. --Boa

Evil Was Not Created and is not Permanent.

"The Scriptures make it plain that God did not create the world in the state in which it is now—evil came as a result of the selfishness of man. The Bible says that God is a God of love and he desired to create a person and eventually a race that would love Him. But genuine love cannot exist unless freely given through free choice and will, and thus man was given the choice to accept God's love or to reject it. This choice made the possibility of evil become very real. ...The world was not designed with evil in mind; God does not desire evil nor does He ever condone it—He hates evil."

Source: A Ready Defense, pp. 412-413, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993

---The devil's choice to rebel against God, when he was thrown out of heaven before Gen. 1:1, because free will allowed the possibility of its' beginning with a wrongful choice (:).

---Either God made it (NO), with no intention or desire that man ever personally experience it (Ex.: tree of the knowledge of good and evil--TRUE), or we don't know (NO), or it existed on its own (NO, as would be eternal and independent and therefore not controllable by God).

For Further Study:

I'm Glad You Asked, pp. 141-148, by Kenneth Boa and Larry Moyer (Chariot/Victor Publishing: Colorado Springs, CO), 1982

Reason to Believe, p. 119, by R.C. Sproul (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 1978

The Roots of Evil, by Norman L. Geisler

76. What is sin?

Response(s):

---Doing evil. Straying/transgressing/breaking God's moral law. Missing the mark. Moral imperfection. Evil in thought, deed, intention, attitude, motive, tone of voice or desire. Sin is the exact opposite of moral good, righteousness and holiness, and the exact opposite of God and His character (and is supposed to not be the habitual practice/lifestyle of the believer).

---May I ask you if you seriously do not have an idea what the word "sin" means? If you don't, it means anything less than morally perfection. That is, moral imperfection/having ever done anything wrong, bad, evil, contrary to God's perfect nature, etc.

---What do you think sin is? (if they have no idea, go to the immediate bullet point above).

For Further Study:

The Open Bible, p. 1344 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

77. There is no evidence of sin in the world (or the evidence disproves God).

Response(s):

---Joke: A punch in the face in response to this uninformed, naive or otherwise dumb statement might prove him wrong, but would be sin for the doer.

---Will you truly, sincerely look me in the eye and assert that nonsense after two World Wars, Adolf Hitler and the World Trade Center bombings? Try again! Perhaps you want to think sin is not a problem this world has, or that you have before God, but you would only be deluding yourself and being deceived by satan.

78. Sin in the world is not why men die, but their bodies obey the law of entropy (i.e., wear out).

Response(s):

---Where did that law of entropy come from? Doesn't evolution teach that things evolve and progress, vs. regress to destruction? Why do we find things deteriorating if evolution is true and sin is not the

answer for our physical demise?

---Do you sincerely believe that scientists could, someday, reverse the aging process, whereby we would never physically die, though we be sinners? That is an overly-high view of science and the ability of mankind.

79. Everyone Sins every once in awhile. I'm only human.

Response(s):

- That's true, and many people sin much more than only once in awhile. The distinction/difference is that Christians' sins have already been forgiven, and sins of others, if left un-forgiven, through receiving eternal forgiveness in Christ, will be eternally paid for by the person committing them.
- The "I'm only human" excuse, though we are just that, can be abused to excuse our bad behavior and not cause us to strive to be morally better. It's sort of like the "that's natural" excuse for such things as sex outside of marriage, etc. That sort of "logic" is easily refutable by consistently applying it where it obviously will not fit. For example, going to the bathroom is "natural," but I wouldn't do it in public. It's "natural"(as you are born this way) to be without clothes, but I don't recommend it in public. Likewise, you are only human, but there is both the evil and good potentiality within man—not before God, but sociologically-morally speaking—and to not make attempts toward the positive, by hiding behind the easier way of sin (since it comes naturally) is an abuse of what a human is and is to be. You're only human, but humans have been given some degree of self-discipline capability, and though we can never be perfect, don't plead on our mercy for sympathy when you repeatedly "blow it" as a routine practice, hiding behind that flimsy excuse, because Christ within can and does give one the power to live a godly life. The problem is, perhaps, that Christ is not in your life, or at least not living His life fully through you(?).
- Christians are given the power for sin to no longer be their task-/slave-master—a power a lost man does not yet possess. Therefore, it is expected that Christian's amount of sinning will diminish, as they follow Christ, and the sins they do commit affect their fellowship with god—not their relationship with Him. However, all sins of the lost man are against a relationship which does not personally exist, as man is naturally separated from God. The ultimate sin which "seals the deal" of one's destiny in hell is to reject God's free offer of salvation in Jesus Christ. **[wages lead to death, for lost and saved?]**

For Further Study:

Reason to Believe, pp. 121-122, by R.C. Sproul (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 1978

80. I am a sinner, but so are you, Christian—what's the difference? How do you say I'm worse off than you?

Response(s):

- For one, ALL my sins are forgiven, and I know God personally, and for eternity. All your sins remain to be judged and punished, you do not personally know God, and that lack of relationship will continue eternally, if you never accept His sacrifice to pay for your sins. The sins Christians commit affect the equality of their ongoing relationship—"fellowship sins"—but do NOT affect the reality of their eternal relationship and connectedness to God ("relational sins").
- You are clearly worse off because I am going to heaven when I die, and, at present, your destiny will be hell. What's the difference? Only that I have Jesus Christ living/abiding in my heart, and you have yet to let Him in yours.
- Technically and only because I have been saved by God, the way God views us—which is the only perspective which matters—my status before Him (due only to the work of Jesus Christ in saving my soul) is one known as a "saint." Biblically, all people who have not yet received Christ are termed "sinners." That does NOT mean that Christians never sin, or, for that matter, that lost/unsaved people never do anything good, and are all like Hitler. What it does mean and does put the focus on is that God's grace has changed the Christian, and given him an eternal gift, and all other people still need that gift, if they are to have any hope of avoiding all men's deserved punishment in an eternal hell.

81. You are still going to sin after you get saved.

Response(s):

- See also:** Answer to Question #67, above.
- Yes, but the difference, besides an expected lessening of the quantity of sins, post-conversion, is that believers' sins have been forgiven, whereas lost persons' sins, left un-forgiven, sentence them to an eternal separation from the presence of God, in hell.
- Yes, but you won't go to hell because of them (though they do have negative consequences).

---Yes, and maybe no. Sin as a lifestyle, not necessarily, as God gives the desire to live for Him. Occasionally (and for some, maybe many, a lot), Christians do make moral mistakes, or even willfully rebel, or sin, against God. This is evil, and cannot be denied or condoned. Even still, those sins, bad as they are, will not be punished in hell, like those of lost people will be.

82. God will weigh my good deeds against my bad deeds, and I'll be fine.

Response(s):

- How do you know that (for sure)?
- If missing hell is so important to your life, do you keep a detailed record of what good and bad deeds you commit, to make sure you are ahead of the game?
- Unfortunately, such a belief is not congruous with what God has said, and anyone who relies on himself to save himself through his deeds will not only be severely disappointed, he will be eternally damned without Jesus Christ in his life.

Answer(s):

- No one can be good enough on his own to please God. Good works will never overcome the sin problem. (Isa. 64:6, Eph. 2:8-9, Rom. 4:4-6).
- If good works could save then salvation would depend on man, not God. The standard would be “relative or comparative righteousness” between men—not the absolute righteousness of God. Only God can provide the required righteousness, through Christ. (Mt. 5:20, 48, Phil. 3:4-9, II Cor. 5:21).
- Scripture does not teach salvation by good works or personal merit, but by God’s grace through faith, motivated by God’s love. (Rom. 3:19-26, Jn. 3:16, I Jn. 4:9-12).
- Salvation is the free gift of God, who is indebted to no man. It cannot be bought or earned. If salvation was the result of works, God would be obligated to save. (Rom. 3:23, Eph. 1:6-7).
- Can you substantiate that claim from God’s Word? By what authority do you base that conclusion regarding so important a matter as your eternal fate? [**cf.: MacArthur’s verses of rewarded according to their deeds**].
- You are 100% relying on that belief to be true, so you had better know that it is accurate, and not a lie you have been deluded into being. Where did you learn that God “grades on the curve,” and where did you read or what authority tells you that God weighs our deeds, because the truth is that that is an errant belief. I fear for you continuing to live by its errant assumption.

Source: Adapted from Bible Training Centre for Pastors: Missions, Evangelism, Discipleship, p. 126, by Dennis J. Mock, Sept. 1991, Atlanta GA

For Further Study:

83. The sins I have committed are not serious--I never killed or raped anyone. I know I'm not perfect, but I'm not all that bad, either—what's the big deal about sin?

Response(s):

- Do you agree that murder, armed robbery, rape and incest are serious crimes and sins? Do you know, from Scripture, that in God’s eyes (the only viewpoint that matters) even if the only sin you have ever committed is a “white lie” (a non-biblical term, and likely unbiblical concept), before God—the Judge of all—you are thereby guilty as if you had committed all sins, including rape, murder, etc. That’s how serious just one sin is to God. For example, just one sin by your ancient ancestor, Adam, caused all sin, illness, and every other curse in our world, especially the fact that all people who die without having received Jesus Christ for their personal salvation will spend eternity in hell based on that choice of rejecting Him.
- In your own mind you are not all that bad. You need to see what God thinks of you, as He (and perfection) is the standard, and the one who ultimately determines what is true. Let’s look at some verses which state, not only what you are like in your innermost, spiritual person, but all who have ever been born as humans...

Answer(s):

Sin is not measured in relationship to other people but to God Himself. Sin is anything which is contrary to the character of the Holy God.

Sin is:

- Missing the mark.
- Transgressing God’s law.
- Disobedience
- Iniquity
- Rebellion

- Lawlessness
- Being your own “god”
- Living independently of God. (Ps. 51:1-11, Gen. 3:1-7).
- Whatever is not from faith
- Any and all evil

Only when you realize that you are lost can you be saved (Rom. 3:9-18, 23).

Sin is devastating:

- It severs our relationship to God, and separates us from God
- It carries the penalty of death (both physical and spiritual). (Isa. 59:1-2, Rom. 6:23, Eph. 2:1-3, 11-12, II Th. 1:5-10).

Source: Adapted from Bible Training Centre for Pastors: Missions, Evangelism, Discipleship, p. 125, by Dennis J. Mock, Sept. 1991, Atlanta GA

84. I am as good as others.

Response(s):

---Before God, you are the same as others—a sinner. Even before mankind, there are likely people “better” and worse than you (Mother Theresa ex.). What matters, and alone matters is God’s opinion of you, and He considers you a beloved sinner in need of salvation. Your own “goodness” will get you nowhere in the life to come, and as to any meritorious value to be considered as to whether you will enter heaven, the Bible calls any goodness you may possess to be “filthy rags”—that is worthless toward and credit toward whether you will enter—you will NOT, without Jesus Christ having saved your soul. This is not to discourage you from behaving morally, but to show you the eternal limitations to relying on those deeds to keep you from hell.

---That statement may be true...I’m not here to debate it. The problem is, if every person were as good as you, they would still all go to hell without Christ, because ALL people are sinners, and unforgiven sinners get what they deserve.

---I am not sure how you (or someone else) will define “good,” and it has nothing to do with God’s definition, but I would still say that it is likely that there are experiential gradations of how humanly “good” given people are. For instance, are you saying you would think you were co-equal with Mother Theresa, or perhaps Gandhi? Even if you were, it wouldn’t help you (much) in the long run, because unless you are morally PERFECT, you end up in hell, without Jesus Christ in your heart.

For Further Study:

The Open Bible, p. 1341 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

85. My sins are small, so why worry?

Response(s):

---Ask yourself, am I absolutely sure that the God of this universe—not me in my own opinion—believes my sins are “small,” because if I’m wrong about what He (vs. I) thinks, it could be an eternally fatal miscalculation. You need to “worry” because hell is real, and is a serious and negative destiny, and any sins you have committed, no matter how small the number, left unforgiven by salvation in Jesus Christ are as bad as if you had done all evil things all your life, because only one sin merits hell for anyone, and I’m quite sure you would agree you have already qualified for having done one. Don’t risk such a serious matter by not checking with the Judge to see what He says about what it takes to clear your account with Him of any sins you have committed, and pay attention to His opinion of you and your sins—not your own opinion, based likely on no particular authority for it’s reasoning.

---I truly would advise you to worry, even if your sins only total ONE, your entire lifetime, because the Bible says that if anyone is guilty of having committed one break of the law of God, he is guilty before God as if he had broken all of God’s law. The reason is, once again, because God’s standard for entry into heaven is simply perfection—nothing less. He does not grade on the curve, or lessen His standard. That’s why you have a problem, even if you truly have been living like a saint.

---How do you define a “small” sin? Would it bother you to know that your definition varies from what is true—what God has said about sins, big and small?

---Even a statement such as that indicates an overblown opinion of one’s own righteousness, which should qualify as the sin of pride. Or, perhaps you have never taken the time to compare your behavior with God’s standard, the Bible. Take for a starter, the 10 commandments. Then move from there to the thousands of other ethical commandments, and you will quickly see how you really appear to god, and should turn immediately to a merciful God who gladly forgives your sins through His gracious Son, Jesus Christ.

For Further Study:

The Open Bible, p. 1344 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

86. I have never sinned (i.e., the rich young ruler excuse or attitude). I am not a sinner. Why am I blamed for something I didn't do?

Response(s):

- Are you pretty proud of that record? <YES> Well, I hate to inform you that pride is a sin, too.
- You are going to honestly tell me that you have never sped in your car, lied, stolen, angrily yelled, cussed, has sex before you were married, lusted (Ex.: Playboy, X-rated movies), been late to a commitment, been impatient or lazy, insulted someone, retained bitterness rather than forgiving someone who had wronged you...Need I go on?
- In so saying, you just lied (accidentally or purposely), which is a sin. Pride could also be at play, which is a sin. You have lied, cheated, stolen, said evil things, and a host of other examples I could name—you just don't often think in those terms. Learn what God says sin is, and I'm sure you'll move away from your position of claimed innocence. Try the 10 Commandments—just for a start. Have you ever skipped school, been late to work, sped in your car, etc.?

---[Really, then you must be Jesus]

Answer(s):

"I remind them of Romans 3:23... Occasionally I'll have the person read Romans 3:9-19... A friend of mine uses this question in confronting those who feel they are good enough and don't need salvation, 'Wouldn't you like to know for sure that your ultimate home will be in heaven?'"

Source: How To Win Others to Christ, pp. 131-132, by Jerry Wiles (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1992

For Further Study:

Reason to Believe, pp. 96-98, by R.C. Sproul (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 1978

The Open Bible, p. 1341, (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

BIBLE/GOSPEL, SCIENCE AND MIRACLES

87. Is truth absolute or relative? What happens when absolutes conflict?

Response(s):

- The truth of the Bible, as a whole, is absolute. The moral absolutes are applied by faith, as believers are not under the law, so less-than-perfection does not make believers personally guilty for having sinned (if they obeyed the commands they had been given by God the Spirit), but even as we apply absolutes, prayer- and Spirit-based wisdom will weigh the many factors in making a decision.
- Many, if not most, truth(s) are absolute. Some absolutes are properly applied relative to other absolutes. What is absolutely true is that life is not composed of all relatives, where anything goes, morally. The Bible teaches what ethics vs. sins are, and to the extent it teaches a range of ethical choices, there is freedom, as led specifically by God and your maturity level. Though a bit hard to understand or explain, until you have read more and been led of God more, a simple summary is that absolutism in content, applied under grace, mercy, patience and accommodation (without compromise) to the growth level you have attained is what life is all about—morally speaking.

For Further Study:

True for You, but Not for Me, pp. 23-25, 41-45, 52-55, by Paul Copan (Bethany House: Minneapolis, MN), 1998

When Skeptics Ask, pp. 273-290, by Normal L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1990

88. I can write something and claim it as inspired, as well.

Response(s):

- That's true, but you are neither God, nor inspired by God, as determined by factors which verify the credibility of your errant claim. **[what are those standards?].**
- A humanly-contrived story can be evaluated and analyzed, and fairly quickly be seen to have errors, contradictions, or claims which do not square with the truth. The Bible has none of those problems—you can try it for yourself.
- Can you do that over a period of centuries, through several independent authors, in three separate languages and maintain a fully consistent teaching on all the major subjects the Bible addresses?
- Yes you could, but proving your claim could be very difficult, and your assertion could be easily refuted.
- We (humans) speak of an emotional "inspiration" we feel when strongly moved, say by a dramatic presentation (like an inspiring movie). Let me assure you, when it comes to the written word of God, we are speaking of the superintendence of God's Holy spirit over human writers—not just a bunch of

guys writing from a temporary and unintelligible emotional experience. We need to keep the two definitions of “inspired” distinguished in our understanding of this issue.

---May I suggest a book to you about a well-known attorney of his day who set out to prove the Bible to be incorrect, using all his lawyerly skills, and ended up a Christian?

(add to this)

For Further Study:

A Ready Defense, pp. 176-178, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993

89. Do Christians engage in circular reasoning (i.e., I believe the Bible is God’s Word because it says it is, or I believe God exists because He does, and I believe it)? What does it mean that the Bible was “inspired?”

Response(s): (add to)

---[Maybe some have in the past, from your experience. But they do not innately do so. That is, our belief that the Bible is God’s Word or that God exists do not exist as beliefs in our heart solely because we feel