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**Christian Bible Studies, March, 2000**

# Ten Objections to Christianity and How to Respond

Answering the spiritual seekers in your world.

by **Frank Harber**

March 1, 2000

Recently someone approached me with the following problem: "Nobody can talk me out of being a Christian, but I can't talk : help me?"

Perhaps she thought she was the only one struggling with this, but I've been asked this question hundreds of times. You see, I set out to prove Christianity was untrue. But during my investigation, I discovered overwhelming evidence that demonstrates And because of a dedicated Christian who was prepared to answer my questions, my heart was reached.

Are you prepared to answer the spiritual seekers in your world? Are you wondering if Christianity's really true? Here's a look pose toward Christianity—and how to respond.

## 1. Christians are hypocrites.

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

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

Although Christians can represent Jesus either poorly or well, the real question isn't whether there are hypocrites Jesus is a hypocrite. If someone can prove that Jesus was a hypocrite, then the whole structure of Christianity falls God's Word, presents Jesus as nothing less than perfect. Jesus' disciples testified that Jesus was without sin ([1 J](#) Even Jesus himself challenged others to prove that he'd ever sinned ([John 8:46](#)).

## 2. What about the atrocities Christians have committed?

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

The issue of atrocities is simply an extension of the question of hypocrites. So-called believers who didn't practice perpetrated evil. In reality, these people were Christian in name only.

Focusing on their atrocities is a smoke screen to avoid the real issue. Christianity has far more positive achievement influences. It's been instrumental in the formation of countless hospitals, schools, colleges, orphanages, relief agencies. No other religion in history can compare.

### 3. **Christianity is a crutch.**

Karl Marx, author of *The Communist Manifesto*, said, "Religion is the opiate of the masses." Critics such as Marx is an invention designed for people incapable of coping with life's pressures. Some critics respond that they don't comfort, as though that fact falsifies Christianity. Such individuals often claim to be "stronger" because they're bra without a "crutch." To imply non-religious people don't need a crutch is misleading. Dependence on drugs, alcohol power, other people, and material possessions demonstrates some people's need for a crutch. Atheism—the belief can become a crutch for those addicted to a lifestyle contrary to God's standards of morality.

Rather than being weak, Christians are strong—not because they depend on themselves, but because they depend

Everyone needs assistance. The question is, what will you lean on? Christianity provides what atheism or other religions fulfillment, peace, and forgiveness.

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

Jesus claimed he was the only way to God ([John 14:6](#)). Such a claim is either totally true or totally false. Some people Christians, yet ignore Jesus' claim to be the only Savior. Critics argue this view is exclusory.

But if Christianity is true, then we must accept Jesus' own teachings. If one believes Jesus' assertions to be true,

### 5. **Being a good person is all that really matters.**

Some argue that even if a person's religion is false, what really matters is that she's sincere about being a good person on the mistaken belief that God is pleased by "religion."

Sincerity doesn't determine truth, however. One can be sincerely convinced of the truth—and be sincerely wrong. Men such as Hitler were very sincere in their beliefs. God judges people based on truth, not opinions—and that truth

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

Such a question implies that God lacks compassion because he's imposed his plan of salvation on us. Often such

that they're more compassionate than God!

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

## 7. The Bible is filled with errors.

Because the Bible is God's Word and God cannot lie ([Isaiah 55:10-11](#); [John 17:17](#); [Titus 1:2](#); [Hebrews 4:12](#)), it's impossible for there to be any error. God's Word is described as "the word of truth" ([2 Corinthians 6:7](#); [Colossians 1:5](#); [2 Timothy 2:15](#); [James 1:18](#)); it's the teaching of the Bible itself.

What most people claim as errors in the Bible aren't errors but difficulties. People think they've stumbled upon an error when they haven't taken the time to find out all the facts, or made an in-depth study of the passage. Many Bible questions have been answered as new discoveries have been made in fields such as language, history, archeology, and other sciences.

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

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

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

- God didn't create evil. Sin entered the world through Adam's disobedience ([Genesis 3](#)).
- Evil is necessary for a free world. Freedom, or free will, gives humans the opportunity to make wrong choices.
- God hesitates to stop evil for an important reason. Just as parents often allow their children to make their own choices and face the consequences, God acts in a parental fashion with his creation.
- God has the solution for evil. Jesus accomplished the ultimate defeat of evil on the cross. But just as with natural bodies, evil has yet to be removed from the world.

## 9. Why is there suffering?

Many hold that pain is evidence against God's concern for humankind. However, pain can be used for good and is not inherently bad. Pain is an essential mechanism for survival. Without pain, the body is stripped of vital protection. Pain is a warning of even greater danger.

Suffering is a signal. It also can be a spiritual signal that reminds us of the fragile balance of life and our mortality. Christian apologist C.S. Lewis writes, "God whispers to us in our pleasure, speaks to us in our conscience, but shouts to us in our pain."

his megaphone to rouse a deaf world."

Some suffering actually helps to bring greater good. This is best seen in Jesus' own suffering. Jesus traveled through loneliness, and death—a road that led to the cross. Jesus isn't just a Savior, he's our *suffering* Savior. The cross is innocent suffering.

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

If God gave us what we deserve, we'd be in trouble. It would be foolish to ask God for justice; what we need is mercy. If grace are so taken for granted that suffering and pain shock us.

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

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

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

For God to force people to go to heaven against their wishes wouldn't be heaven—it would be hell. Atheist author C.S. Lewis said that the gates of hell are locked from the inside by the free choice of men and women.

*First appeared in On Mission (September/October 1999). Used by permission of the North American Mission Board, Alpharetta, Georgia. The author is an evangelist-in-residence and professor of evangelism at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, and is the author of [Believing](#) (New Leaf Press).*

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