Atheists’ Questions, Part 1

“I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.”

C. S. Lewis

Kirk’s Comment

Read this atheist group’s questionnaire. It is really insightful and wonderful material to have ready for your next encounter with an atheist.

Questions & Objections

“Man is the master of his own destiny!”

If man is in total control of his future, then he should at least be in control of his own body. Instead, he is subject to involuntary yawning, sneezing, breathing, swallowing, sleeping, salivating, dreaming, blinking, and thinking. He can’t even control hair and nail growth. He automatically does these things, irrespective of his will. God has set his body in motion and there is little he can do about it. He also has minimal control over his daily bodily functions. His kidneys, bladder, intestines, heart, liver, lungs, etc., work independently of his will. It is ludicrous to say that man controls his future when he has trouble predicting the stock market, political outcomes, earthquakes, and even the weather, let alone having control over these things.
The following questions are taken from the web site of a Hollywood atheist organization. As they have stated, this information is useful for those who “haven’t thought much about religion since childhood and want to test their faith with adult questions . . . These questions are worthwhile only to those who think reason is the most valid tool in forming opinions.”

I have given answers to their difficulties. Perhaps you can share these answers with others who have questions about Christianity.

1) How would you define God, and why are you so convinced that there is one?
God is the Creator, Upholder, and the Sustainer of the universe. He revealed Himself to Moses as the one and only true God.

2) If everything needs a creator, then who or what created God?
No person or thing created God. He created “time,” and because we dwell in the dimension of time, reason demands that all things have a beginning and an end. God, however, dwells outside of the dimension of time. He moves through time as we flip through the pages of a history book; this can be proved by simple study of the prophecies of Matthew 24, Luke 21, and 2 Timothy 3. He dwells in “eternity,” having no beginning or end. This is a dimension in which all humanity will dwell when God withdraws time.

3) How can something that cannot be described be said to exist?
The color blue cannot be accurately described to a man who was born blind. Just because it cannot be described doesn’t mean that it doesn’t exist. There is plant life on the bottom of the deepest oceans that has never been seen by man, let alone described by him. Despite this, it still exists. Does the (unseen) far side of a planet fail to exist merely because man cannot describe it?

4) Since countless religions in the world today claim to be the one true religion, why do you think yours is truer than theirs?
No religion is “truer” than another. “Religion” is man’s futile effort to try
to find peace with God. The Christian doesn’t strive to have peace with his Creator. It was given to him in the person of the Savior. The uniqueness of Jesus of Nazareth is His statement, “The Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins.” No religion of man can do that. Christianity is not a manmade “religion,” but a personal relationship with the one true God.

5) Can more than one of these religions be right?
In one sweeping statement, Jesus discards all other religions as a means of finding forgiveness of sins. Jesus, who claimed to be God, said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6). The Bible says about Jesus, “There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5) and, “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). See also Answer #4.

6) If you feel in your heart that your religion is the right one, how do you answer those of other faiths who claim the same thing?
Christians don’t base their faith on feelings; their feelings are irrelevant to truth. If I am flying from Los Angeles to New York, my feelings about whether I am going in the right direction have nothing to do with that fact. We can know with our intellect that Christianity is true, regardless of our feelings. The Bible’s thousands of fulfilled prophecies, historical accuracy, and many infallible proofs attest to its reliability.

7) How do you settle the debate and find out which of these religions, if any, is the right one?
Jesus promises that He and the Father will reveal themselves to all who love and obey Him. This is the ultimate challenge to any skeptic. If you repent and place your faith in Jesus Christ, He will give you eternal life and you can know that your eternity is secure.

8) Why does God allow all these false religions to exist?
Because God wants mankind to worship and love Him, He gave Adam and Eve the free will to choose whether to obey or disobey Him. People
have chosen to reject God’s way and instead seek to establish their own righteousness through works-based religions.

God allows these false religions and atheism to exist for the same reason He allows sinful humans to exist. The Bible tells us that God is not willing that any should perish (regardless of whether they are religious or profess atheism), but that they all come to repentance.

9) Is the bloody history of Christianity consistent with what is supposed to be a religion of love, or does it simply illustrate the consequences of abandoning reason for faith?

The Bible commands Christians to love their enemies and do good to those who spitefully use them. The terrorists in the World Trade Center tragedy carried out their agenda in the name of Allah (their god). This is nothing new. The Crusaders and others who have committed atrocities in the name of Christianity were also evil men who were carrying out their depraved agendas. A thinking person can distinguish between those who use the Christian faith for their own political or “religious” ends and those who are true followers of Jesus. In other words, just because someone claims to be a Christian doesn’t mean that he is. He could be what is commonly known as a hypocrite, or an impostor.

10) If everything is the product of a “grand design” by an omniscient, benevolent designer, why is the history of life a record of horrible suffering, blundering waste, and miserable failures? Why does this God go through billions of years of such carnage without yet arriving at His goal?

God’s original creation was “good,” but because of mankind’s sin we now live in a “fallen” creation. Before sin entered the world there was no suffering, disease, decay, or death. The Bible’s explanation of suffering actually substantiates the truth of Scripture.

11) Why did God intervene so many times in human affairs during antiquity (according to the Bible) and yet not do anything during the Holocaust of the Second World War?

No human can claim to know whether or not God intervened in the affairs of humanity at any time between 1939 and 1945. However, the Old
Testament makes it very clear that there were times when God didn’t intervene in the affairs of His people. He purposefully allowed their enemies to overpower them so that they would turn back to Him.

12) Why should one’s inner convictions about the existence of God indicate that He/She/They/It exists outside of that person’s mind?
The Bible says that God has placed eternity in the hearts of men and given all people everywhere an awareness of Him so that they are without excuse. He created us to know Him. Throughout history and throughout the world, all cultures acknowledge the existence of God.

Besides, why should one’s inner convictions about the non-existence of God indicate that He doesn’t exist outside of that person’s mind? Our personal convictions and beliefs do not affect reality. God simply is.

13) Can a God who would abandon His children when they needed Him the most still be considered “all good”?
One of humanity’s great errors is to misunderstand the meaning of “good.” A “good” judge will pronounce a stiff sentence on a vicious murderer. A “loving” judge who dismisses a case against a vicious killer because he loves him is not a good judge. Justice and goodness are inseparable. Many times God chastened Israel (gave them their just dessert) because of His goodness. He wanted them to turn back to Him for their own good.

14) If the God of the Bible is “all good,” why does He Himself say that He created evil (Isaiah 45:7)?
The word translated “evil” in that verse (“I make peace, and create evil”) means “calamity” or “suffering”—God uses both good and bad events in our lives to bring us into a right relationship with Him. However, because God is sovereign over all events, He did allow evil to come into being.

God gave mankind a choice to have a loving relationship with Him. The original sin was when Adam and Eve chose to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Once man knew both good and evil, he had to choose between the two. Because God wants people to worship Him freely out of love and enjoy His incredible blessings, He tells each one of us: “See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil…, 
therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live” (Deuteronomy 30:15,19).

15) If something is not rational, should it be believed anyway?
At one time, the concept of a thousand-ton aircraft flying through the air seemed irrational and absurd. But after man studied the laws of physics, it was discovered to be quite rational and believable. If one studies God’s Word and understands His Law, Christianity is seen to be infinitely rational and believable. Atheism, on the other hand, rejects logic and evidence and is the epitome of irrationalism. It should be abandoned by any rational person as being foolishness.

16) Is there a better way than reason to acquire knowledge and truth?
No. That’s why the Bible says, “‘Come now, and let us reason together,’ says the LORD.” That’s why when the apostle Paul spoke “the words of truth and reason,” King Agrippa said, “You almost persuade me to become a Christian.” That’s why Paul “reasoned” with Felix (the governor) about “righteousness, self-control, and judgment to come.” And that’s why Felix “was afraid.”

17) If you would answer #16 with “faith,” then why are there so many contradictory faiths in the world?
There are many faiths because all nations recognize that there is a Creator. However, in their ignorance they worship the moon, the sun, or an idol. No one has ever found an atheistic tribe, because people are not that ignorant. God has given light to every man.

18) Is comfort more important to you than intellectual integrity?
No, it’s not. That’s why I am a Christian.
1. Why is Christianity the one true religion? (See #4.)

2. According to the Bible, can more than one religion be true? (See #5.)

3. How can we know that Christianity is true? (See #6 & #7.)

4. Why does God allow other religions to exist? (See #8.)

5. How do you account for Christianity’s bloody history? (See #9.)

6. Isn’t Christianity irrational? (See #15 & #16.)
**FEATHERS FOR ARROWS**

A child finds that he has an insatiable appetite for chocolate. At the same time he notices that his face has broken out with ugly sores. Every time he looks in the mirror he sees a sight that makes him depressed. However, instead of giving up his beloved chocolate, he consoles himself by stuffing more into his mouth. Yet, the source of his pleasure is actually the cause of his suffering.

The whole face of the earth reveals the ugly sores of suffering. Everywhere we look we see unspeakable pain. But instead of believing God’s explanation and asking Him to forgive us and change our appetite, we run deeper into sin’s sweet embrace. There we find solace in its temporal pleasures, thus intensifying our pain, both in this life and in the life to come.

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**Memory Verse**

“The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commands all men everywhere to repent: because he has appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness...”

*Acts 17:30,31*

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**Last Words**

**David Livingstone** (1813–1873), a Scottish missionary who spent over thirty years in Africa, mostly in unexplored country, was the one who discovered the Victoria Falls. Shortly before he died, he said to his servants:

“Build me a hut to die in. I’m going home.”

He died as he knelt at his bedside. His heart was removed and buried in the Africa he gave his life for, and his body was preserved in salt and carried by affectionate natives to the coast over one thousand miles away and ultimately buried with honors in Westminster Abbey.