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Why I Am Still a Christian (Part 2)



Individual Topics - Steve Gregg

In this piece, Steve Gregg outlines five reasons why he remains a Christian despite criticisms of the faith. He argues that Christianity's holistic worldview adequately answers fundamental questions about the nature of reality, possesses evidence of design in the universe, and offers a more satisfying and meaningful way of life than other worldviews. Additionally, he cites personal experience as reinforcing his conviction in the faith. Overall, Gregg's reasons for remaining a Christian are rooted in a belief that Christianity provides satisfactory answers to existential questions and offers a fulfilling way of life.

Transcript

All right, we're going to finish out what I started earlier this morning, and that is giving the five basic headings under which my reasons fall for being still a Christian. We'll talk about why I'm still a Christian when so many people I know who were Christians along with me decades ago, some of them are not Christians. And so I'm, you know, if someone asks why you're still a Christian, frankly, the most natural response is, well, why aren't you still? You know, why were you? If you were, if you were really a Christian and had good reason to be Christians, then those reasons apparently still exist.

I know of nothing that has been discovered, anything that's been argued that's a new argument against it. I don't know of anything that would make a Christianity that was valid 40 years ago or 50 years ago less valid today, except that it's more politically incorrect. But political correctness obviously is kind of a lame and irrational narcissism on the part of certain people who want to have people say things the way they want them said and don't want to give people that reason to think or so.

And some people, they get bullied by it. They just say, okay, you don't want me to be a Christian. I guess I won't speak up.

I won't speak as a Christian. I guess I'll give up my faith. No one really says it quite that blatantly, but that's really what it amounts to in many cases, because my friends don't let me be a Christian anymore.

I guess I won't be. But there are other reasons people give. But I have, I want to make sure that everyone knows the reasons that I have, which I consider to be excellent reasons for being a Christian in the first place and for still being a Christian a thousand years from now if I happen to be still alive, because nothing's going to change along these lines.

These are permanently valid points. And in our last session, I was saying that one reason I'm a Christian is because I take a fair-minded approach to the sources. The information available, especially in the Gospels, can be viewed like any other historical document, either with prejudice against, with prejudice for, or simply with no prejudice at all.

Just take a fair-minded approach. Take them for what they claim to be. See if they have credibility as such.

See if there's any reason not to agree. And if there's no reason not to agree, why disagree? The judgment of law, as Simon Greenlee said, is the judgment of charity. A man is considered to be innocent unless he's proven guilty.

These people are saying, they're telling the truth, I count them innocent unless someone can find them guilty. And they, no one has ever done that, ever, in their day or in any day since, 2,000 years later. Now, there are four other reasons that I would say I'm still a Christian.

The second one is because Christianity possesses what I call a holistic worldview adequacy. In other words, it's a worldview that is holistically adequate. And by holistically adequate, I mean it explains everything.

That's what you need in a worldview. Now, most people, I think, know what the word worldview means. Perhaps not everyone does.

But the worldview is the whole set of assumptions and beliefs and opinions that you hold somewhat by default. And you see everything through those assumptions. People don't generally look at their worldview.

Some people do. But all people look through their worldview. The worldview is the lens, like the colored lenses of your sunglasses.

They are, you know, you see things that color because that's what you're looking through. Now, a worldview basically is a system of all of the answers to those fundamental questions about reality. Where did things come from? Where do things ultimately go? What happens after you die? What is right and what is wrong? How do we know what's right and wrong? These are fundamental questions that everybody answers one way or another if they think at all.

And I honestly know that many people don't think much at all. But that doesn't mean

they don't have a worldview. It means they have a worldview they've never examined.

You know, there's different worldviews. And there's primarily three that you encounter worldwide. There would be subgroups.

One of these would be the Christian's worldview, or we can say the Judeo-Christian worldview, because the Jews in the Old Testament have very much the same information in their worldview. Another would be the Hindu or the Eastern, or what's called the monistic worldview. That's a different worldview.

Now, one difference is that between the Judeo-Christian worldview and the monistic Hindu worldview, the Christian worldview holds that there is an intelligent divine being behind all things. The monistic view would believe that there's kind of a mind behind all things, but not a personal deity, not a being that has really opinions or can love or things like that. I mean, a real person can love.

God can love. God can be angry. God has opinions about things.

He agrees with things and disagrees with things because he's got a mind, but he's got personality. In the Hindu worldview, the ultimate reality is not that. It's more like the universe as a whole is shot through with the life principle, which, you know, there are things that you can do that are agreeable with it or disagreeable, but it's not a personal mind that thinks about things or has opinions about things.

This is a difference that exists between myself and a Buddhist friend who calls me on the air all the time. He's been calling me for over a decade, and he keeps thinking, he's hardly getting it. He keeps saying, well, Jesus and Buddha taught just about the same thing.

Well, if you're talking about ethics, maybe. Maybe there was a lot of similarity between what Buddha and Jesus taught, but Jesus taught from a different worldview. Jesus taught that the fundamental reality in the universe is God, his father, who loves people and interacts with people and has a relation with people.

Buddha didn't believe there was a God. Buddhism doesn't require belief in a God. His was, of course, the monistic Hindu type worldview.

Many Hindus believe there are many gods, thousands of gods, but there's no primary God. And so that's very different than the West. We sometimes call it the Judeo-Christian worldview, the Western worldview, just because of the quadrant of the world where it's influenced the most.

And we might call the Hindu or the monistic worldview the Eastern worldview. But then, of course, in the West, especially and primarily, there's also another worldview that's arisen in recent times. It's always existed, I'm sure, somewhere, but it was never a

prominent worldview until the last century or two, and that would be the materialist or naturalist worldview.

Now, materialist and naturalist are not exactly interchangeable terms, but they're so close that they kind of imply each other. Materialist means there's nothing other than the material world. There's no spirit world, in other words.

There's only the matter. Naturalist means there's nothing other than natural law. Now, since natural law acts on material things, a materialist is usually a naturalist.

They basically say everything that exists boils down to only material things acted on by natural law. And therefore, there's no supernatural, because then you've got, you're not a naturalist if you believe in the supernatural. And there's no spiritual, because you wouldn't be a materialist if you believe in spiritual.

So there's, basically, there's no God. There's no supernatural activity. There's no demons or angels or even human spirits don't exist.

In fact, if you're strictly a materialist, even mind does not exist as a separate entity from the brain. Everything you think is not really you thinking. It's your brain and it's the synapses of the neurons of your brain are generating thoughts and consciousness and things like that.

But it's just a natural thing, just like having a stomach ache or a headache is a natural thing. It's a physically caused thing, which means that even the thoughts and opinions you have and the emotions you feel, they're all just the result of material processes. They don't have any validity beyond themselves.

It's just the way your brain is telling you to think. Of course, one thing you'd wonder is, if that's true, then what guarantee is there that my brain is telling me to think correctly? And if somebody else's brain is telling me to think the opposite of me, is there any transcendent truth between them? Or their neurons are thinking this way, my neurons are thinking that way. Who can be sure that what my neurons are doing through the natural processes and what you're doing, either of them have any validity at all? How do we know if they correspond with anything that's reality? Well, that's one of the problems, of course, with naturalistic and materialistic worldview, but it's very common.

Of course, that's what the atheists have. Atheists have to be materialists and naturalists because they don't believe in the spiritual world and in God. Now, those are the worldviews out there, and I'm saying that the worldviews each have their own way of explaining how things began.

For example, evolution is the creation narrative of the naturalistic, materialistic, religious worldview. I said religious worldview. They would deny it's religious, but frankly, there's a hair's breadth of difference between a worldview and a religion.

I mean, a religion usually is a worldview with certain rituals added to it. Since I don't do rituals, my religion would be the same as my worldview. An atheist simply has an alternative worldview slash religious opinion, and so would the Hindus.

Now, I'm mainly reacting here to the atheists and materialists because we... Well, there's reasons for that. I'll say things about the others as well. Christianity, whose worldview is drawn from revelation, at least alleged revelation, comes from the Bible, from God, holds to certain concepts that are not common in the other worldviews.

These concepts combined into a combination of thoughts, they're woven together like strands of the fabric of a worldview, and so is other worldviews. And everything I see, I have to see through my worldview. And if I don't want to, I'm going to have to change my worldview because your worldview dictates conclusions about the essential matters of life and your opinions about them.

Now, I believe that the Christian worldview or Christianity itself possesses a holistic worldview adequacy. You don't want to have a worldview that answers some questions in a tentative, plausible way, but then other questions are just way foreign to it. Other questions simply can't be answered from it.

You have to get really wild and speculative to make any sense of them from your worldview. And I believe the atheistic worldview or the naturalistic worldview is such a worldview, it doesn't answer everything well. It answers some things reasonably well, and it answers them differently than the Christian worldview does in many cases.

But the difference is that neither the Hindu nor the atheist's worldviews really answers all the questions encountered in reality adequately. They're not holistically adequate. They may be satisfying to people who don't think too far, too systematically, or too thoroughly.

And I suppose most people in the world would fit that category. They don't think very thoroughly or very systematically. But frankly, the less you think, the less likely it is you'll be in touch with reality, because reality is accessed through thinking.

And I'm a thinker, so I think through these things. And I say Christianity can answer every objection, can answer every thought without stretching, without resorting to crazy answers. And the other worldviews always have certain points at which they don't do that well.

Let me give you several things, categories, where the Christian worldview is very adequate, has very adequate answers that are consistent with its whole worldview, but where atheism doesn't have very good answers. Naturalism does not answer well. One of them is the question of first causes.

Everyone has to have an idea about what the first cause was, unless they have an

eternal regression going back, you know, when someone says, who made God? Well, you know, let's just say factor X made God. We don't know who it is, but let's just call it factor X. Well, who made factor X? Well, factor Y made factor X. Well, who made factor Y? Well, factor Z made factor X. Who made that? Well, factor A did. And so you can just keep going in circles and infinitely regress in time.

Everything had to have something that caused it. Until, unless you just decide like Aristotle did, that there's a, behind it all, there's an unmoved mover, that there had to be something that moves everything, but in itself has not been moved. It is the original.

It's the first cause of all other effects. Now, there are, of course, laws of science that recognize cause and effect. It's a very specific law of nature that for every effect, there must be an adequate cause, and everything you see is the effect of some cause.

I am the effect, among other things, of my parents getting together, and they are the effects of their parents getting together, and they are the, they were the effects of their parents. Everything has a cause behind it. Everything, at least that is caused, has an effect, and everything we observe is an effect of some cause.

But what is the first cause? What is it that caused everything, but itself was not caused by anything? It's just, it's original. It's just a brute fact of existence. The naturalistic view is that that would be matter and energy.

And, of course, from time to time, people who don't think very well say, well, how can you believe in God because you don't know who, who made God? Well, I don't think God was made by anyone. I think in my theology, he's a brute fact. He's, he's the first cause.

No one made him. But if that sounds silly to you, well, then what do you have? You've got matter and energy has always been there. Now, the very concept that anything has always been there is, it makes our minds, you know, blow up.

We cannot imagine something that never started. It was always there. But imagination aside, there had to be something, unless you have an infinite regress of cause and effect, which doesn't make any more logical sense either.

So the, the Christian worldview says God is the first cause. The atheistic materialist worldview holds that matter and energy are the first cause. And that matter and energy caused, for example, the Big Bang and, and the things that were set in motion there caused everything else that eventually happened.

So we're all the, the result of some movement of matter and energy and, and as opposed to a mind, a personal being that made things for a reason. So that's the thing there. If we take the laws of cause and effect, what cause would be adequate for the effects around us? Well, there's a lot of things around us that's hard to know how matter and energy could be an adequate first cause for them.

For example, there's orderliness in, in the universe. Now, not everything's as orderly as we think it could be. The Bible indication because of the fall, some things are going to be going to be disorderly, but that's part of the Christian worldview too.

But where does the orderliness come from? Where did life come from? Now, it's easy to say, well, there are certain chemicals that make up a cell and those chemicals somehow came together. Maybe they were in a primordial warm pond and lightning struck and fused some of these elements together that make a cell. People used to say that before they knew anything about cells.

It wasn't until the mid 20th century that information about cells became widely known. That's why Anthony Flew, the famous atheist, finally had to give up his atheism because they learned something. In Darwin's day, the cell is just a blob of jelly with a little dark spot in the middle.

That's all they knew about it. Now they know that cells are as complex as a industrial city. They're made up of hundreds of different kinds of proteins, each of which is like a robotic machine that's made up of hundreds of amino acids that are arranged in just a certain way so that they can function literally as machines inside the cell.

And there's pathways. There's like conveyor belts for these machines traveling inside the cell and some of them build other proteins. Some of them are collected and processed nutrients.

Some of them expel waste. I mean, it's like a city with all these factories, all these machines, it's automated. And the degree to which it is complex has just blown the minds of naturalists who didn't know this before.

And some of them simply couldn't hang on to it anymore. Like I said, there's a book by an atheist, he's still an atheist, called *Mind and Cosmos*, where he talks about that kind of complexity. He says, yeah, the Darwinian theory is not adequate.

It's almost certainly false, he said. And there's good reason for it. That's reasonable.

It's reasonable to say that the Darwinian explanation of the origin of life just doesn't, it just doesn't fly. And even Richard Dawkins, one of the most vociferous atheists out there, when interviewed, and anyone can see this on the movie *Expelled*, in the interview with Richard Dawkins at the end, you know, he's asked, well, where did the first living thing come from? Dawkins said, well, nobody has any idea about that. And then when he was pressed on, he said, well, there is a possibility that evolution created some intelligent mind in another planet or another galaxy, and they came and seeded life on this planet.

And so the interviewer said, so you're not opposed to intelligent design, as long as it isn't God. It had to be extraterrestrials who did it. They're intelligent too.

Yeah. You see, you can't really believe, if you're an honest and intelligent person, that that kind of organization came about just from no intention. Because factories and machines work in ways that they're designed to work, and that people design them for a purpose.

And therefore, the worldview of the Christian in the Bible actually has, provides purpose for existence. There's somebody who had an idea in mind and a person who made us. The existence of life and purpose simply don't, there's no good explanation for them.

In fact, most naturalists say there really isn't purpose. Purpose is an illusion we have. We just think we have purpose.

I like a quote from Sir John Templeton who said, would it not be strange if a universe without purpose accidentally created humans who are so obsessed with purpose? I think I said this to you guys last night, you know, if evolution is true, then we have to say that it has created creatures that have cravings. But for all we know, every craving that animals have can easily be found in the natural world. They crave sex, they crave food, they crave sleep, and those things exist.

But humans have other cravings, like for meaning, for purpose. Why would those cravings, which seem to be universal in the human race, evolve in a universe that had no purpose? I mean, just philosophically, it doesn't make an awful lot of sense. And frankly, if they did evolve, then according to natural selection, only the things that make a creature more fit or more viable are selected for continuance, so that belief in purpose and meaning seems to make our race better suited for survival than whatever human-like things would have evolved that didn't have this sense of purpose.

I mean, it must be an advantage, but how could it be an advantage? How could it be an advantage to believe in purpose if there isn't any? You know, frankly, purpose is easily explained by the Christian worldview. It is not explained at all in the view that there's nothing but material things. There's no mind behind it, there's sort of no purpose behind it.

It's just all random, or it's at least all meaningless in the final analysis. It only has whatever meaning we may impute to it, that I may impute one meaning, you may impute a different meaning, a third person, another meaning, so there's no absolute meaning or purpose for existence under the naturalistic worldview. The very existence of anything is better explained by gods making things purposely than by evolution.

Many atheistic philosophers have said the biggest question, and several of them have stated it, is why is there something instead of nothing? Nothing exists by necessity. Everything could, the universe could do without any of the planets. If there are no planets, no suns, no living creatures, well, there's nothing that would necessitate that they'd be there.

They're not necessary to existence. So why do they exist instead of not exist? Why is there something instead of nothing? Well, if we say, well, because there's a god who wanted there to be something, that answers the question reasonably well. It's just like, you know, why do I have children? Why do my children exist instead of not exist? Because I wanted children, frankly.

That's why. There was somebody who wanted them to exist, and therefore they do. The information in the DNA molecule is the thing that's really puzzling to many modern scientists.

Because the DNA molecule is in every living cell, even in the simplest amoeba or simplest life form, has to have this complex molecule called DNA, which is a code that instructs the parts of the cell to build proteins. And different kinds of proteins. It's a very complex code, much more complex than most any computer code.

I'm not sure if there is a computer code as complex or not. Let me just kind of read some things from non-Christian scientists who have spoken on this, on the subject of information. Carl Sagan, who is clearly a materialist, you know, Carl Sagan was famous for his TV show Cosmos, which he began by saying, the cosmos, meaning the universe, is all that is, all that ever was, or all that ever will be.

You know, there's no God, there's only the cosmos. He said this, the information content of a simple cell has been established at around 10^{12} to the 10^{13} power bits, comparable to about 100 million pages of the Encyclopedia Britannica. Now frankly, I'd have a hard time believing that one page of the Encyclopedia Britannica came about without any intelligent design.

You have to realize what we're talking about. We're talking about every letter on the page being set in such, spaced in such a way, and combined with other letters, so as to make sense. Not just to be there, but to be there in such a way that a sentence conveys information.

That is to say, if you put three letters in a row, and they are Y-O-U, it makes sense. If it's O-U-Y, it doesn't make sense. One carries information, the other does not.

And so, if Carl Sagan, an atheist, said the information content of a simple cell, which is where you've got to start, if evolution is going to take over from there, that information content has been established at around 10^{12} to the 10^{13} power. That's about 100 billion bits, which he said is about like 100 million pages of the Encyclopedia Britannica. And that's not even finding one good page and reproducing it 100 million times.

That's 100 billion, I say 100 million different kinds of pages, all of them coherent. All of them convey information and true information. Now, you don't have even a single page produced without a mind.

You certainly don't find 100 million pages coherently. So, I mean, how atheists can know this, which they do. I mean, modern atheists know this.

People like Anthony Flew decided to stop being an but others, you know, they won't give up the faith because they have an irrational faith, basically. You have a rational belief, you're saying, okay, I get it. You find 100 million copies of the pages of the Encyclopedia Britannica, you read a few of them, every one of them makes perfectly good sense.

You say, somebody wrote this, you know. It's like, on the seashore, on the wet sand, you'll find random scratches and stuff just from, you know, debris, driftwood being dragged. But if you find the words carved in the sand, having a great time, wish you were here.

You know, someone was there, not because it's so complicated, but because it has information in it. The lines of those letters are not particularly complicated, but they're deliberately chosen to convey information. And so, information is a real stumbling block, the origin of information for anyone who doesn't believe in the design of a creator.

Michael Denton, who is an Australian microbiologist and agnostic, he said, in considering the origin of the translational system of the genetic code, meaning DNA, evolutionary theory seems to have reached a sort of nemesis, for the problem is to all intents and purposes insoluble in terms of modern biochemical knowledge. That the profundity of the problem of the origin of translational systems has stretched the evolutionary framework to the breaking point is conceded by Monod, who he quotes saying, the major problem is the origin of the genetic code and of its translational mechanism. Indeed, it is not so much a problem as a veritable enigma.

There's simply no way within the naturalistic worldview to account for the existence of information at all. And Nobel Prize winner, Francis Crick, he said this, an honest man armed with all the knowledge available to us now could only state that in some sense the origin of life appears at the moment to be almost a miracle. Now, he's an atheist, he can't say it is a miracle, because atheists don't believe in miracles.

It's part of their naturalistic worldview, nothing miraculous happens, it's all science. But he says, according to the present state of our knowledge, we don't say the origin of life seems almost a miracle. In other words, we don't have any, we're not near to being able to put together knowledge of processes or laws that could possibly make it happen.

So I think, let's see what an atheist will say, well, we're learning all the time, we'll eventually understand it. Well, fine, I'll wait for that information to come along. When that information comes along, bring it along.

And I'll say, okay, maybe that is a good expression. Until now, we'd have to say the state of the evidence is against you. If you're an atheist, the evidence of atheism is against

you.

And the more the information comes in, the more the evidence is more against you. So Christianity has much more of a holistic worldview adequacy. Now, more than just information, information is communicative.

What's interesting is that there are conscious creatures who have minds that can communicate with each other. Now, remember, we're talking about this being caused by nothing but dirt, nothing but matter and energy. Now, maybe, I mean, it's never been seen to happen, but maybe somewhere billions of years ago, a whole bunch of atoms came together in a unique way and created something that was able to replicate itself and therefore technically a living thing.

But how does this stuff become conscious? I mean, do you think about consciousness and mind? I mean, we're talking about a rock here. Rocks don't know anything about themselves or anything else. How do you get from being a rock to being a fish that knows that it's hungry or knows that it wants to reproduce or knows that there's a danger over here and has to go somewhere else? That's being conscious life.

That's intelligence. Now, of course, going from there to human intelligence is just enormous. But from non-life, that gap from non-life to life and consciousness is a bigger gap and harder for evolutionists to explain than the gap from an amoeba to a human being.

Just crossing the barrier from non-life to life is impossible, and most scientists are willing to suggest, you know, it kind of looks like that is the case and we may not get any better at explaining it. Let me read you some more evolutionists and atheists' writings about this. This is Darwinist philosopher Michael Ruse, who is an outspoken atheist.

He also is one. When Dawkins came out with his God Delusion, Michael Ruse, a fellow atheist, said, reading Dawkins makes me embarrassed to be an atheist, because Michael Ruse is intelligent and reasonable, and Dawkins simply was not in that book. Here's what Michael Ruse says, why should a bunch of atoms have thinking ability? Why should I, even as I write now, be able to reflect on what I'm doing? And why should you, even as you read now, be able to ponder my points, agreeing or disagreeing? No one, certainly not the Darwinist as such, seems to have an answer for this, says a well-known atheist philosopher.

Another named John Searle, professor of mind at UC Berkeley on a television program, said this, we don't have an adequate theory of how the brain causes conscious states, and we don't have an adequate theory of how consciousness fits into the universe. Now see, the brain, if it's just an organ, say like the heart or the lung or the kidney, well, none of those create consciousness. Your heart isn't aware or your kidneys are aware.

How did the brain, as a piece of meat, become conscious of itself, be able to think and think rationally and figure things out and so forth? I mean, this intelligence, consciousness, there's just no explanation for it coming out of something that wasn't. Now see, the laws of cause and effect say that every effect must have an adequate cause. Is matter and energy an adequate cause for phenomena like life, consciousness, mind? Well, we don't know that that's an adequate cause.

It certainly seems counterintuitive to think so. But would an intelligent living God be capable of producing living and intelligent beings? Well, it makes a little more sense to me that that would be so. If we're looking for ultimate causes for the first cause, if it's either going to be a living, intelligent, purposeful being on the one hand, or just mindless matter and energy on the other, I might vote it's going to be for the one that makes sense, because I prefer to make sense than nonsense.

That's just me. Some people don't mind making nonsense. I mentioned Thomas Nagel.

He's the one who wrote the book *Mind and Cosmos* and is an atheist. He said, if evolutionary biology is a physical theory, as it is generally taken to be, then it cannot account for the appearance of consciousness and other phenomena that are not physically reducible. So these are atheists talking.

These are atheists who are not, I guess, involved in the debate with creationists, so they're willing to talk among themselves and make sense and say, you know what, we don't have any answers for this. Their worldview cannot provide sensible answers, and they're saying so themselves. Let me give you just a couple other quotes.

This is from Charles Darwin. Charles Darwin, in a letter to William Graham, July 3, 1881, he said, with me, the horrid doubt always arises whether the convictions of man's mind, which has been developed from the mind of lower animals, are of any value or at all trustworthy. In other words, why should I believe that the processes of my mind are going to connect me with anything that's objectively true? If they're just random bumping of cells against each other called neurons and, you know, electrical charges between them, what is there about that process that would generate logical reasoning? That's what Darwin's saying.

He said, my problem is, I have this, he says, horrid doubt that I can really trust my thoughts at all. Now, by the way, not being able to trust your thoughts means your theory's not standing on much. It's based on thoughts that you can't even be sure have any validity whatsoever.

Those are his words, Darwin's words. Now, C.S. Lewis, who, of course, was a former atheist, a being of a Christian, he said this, in order to think, we must claim for our own reasoning a validity which is not credible if our own thought is merely a function of our brain, and our brains a byproduct of irrational physical processes. He says, if we think we

must claim a validity for our thoughts that cannot be claimed if thoughts are only randomly produced by cells that have no consciousness themselves.

Just the combination of them creates conscious thought. Now, honestly, the problem is huge for the person who's a naturalist. They can live with it if they're committed to their faith, but it's an irrational faith.

They are actually committed to a faith in something that they admit is, for the most part, seemingly impossible. Certainly not provable. In fact, not even, at this point, imaginable.

They can't even imagine possible theories of how this could happen. They can talk like they do, but in the final analysis, they say it's an enigma. Now, I'm not arguing from ignorance.

Some people say, well, you're just arguing for ignorance, and ignorance diminishes as we learn more things, so we'll know this stuff someday. Well, no, I'm not really arguing for ignorance. I'm arguing from knowledge.

We know something. Information comes from a mind. There's no way that we don't know that.

So, we're not arguing for what we don't know. We're arguing for what we do know. It's the evolutionist arguing for what he doesn't know, and pretending that it doesn't matter that he doesn't know, that it matters a great deal.

So, Christianity has a holistic worldview adequacy that evolution does not. By the way, this is also true about ideas of morality. You know, in Bertrand Russell's essay, *Why I'm Not a Christian*, he made this statement.

He said, if I were God, I think I could do a little better than him. He said, couldn't God come up with something better than Nazism or the KKK? Well, as a matter of fact, God has come up with many things better than Nazism and the KKK. In fact, almost everything that exists is better than Nazism and the KKK, and God has produced a great deal of wonderful things.

The real question is, who created Nazism and the KKK? It wasn't God. But what he is saying is this. He's saying Christians claim that morality rests on the existence of God, but I'm saying, if that's true, God isn't very moral because there's an awful lot of evil in the world that he created.

But again, the Christian worldview has no difficulty with that. The Christian worldview includes the presence of evil and an explanation of where it came from. Actually, the atheists can't argue for the existence of evil from their system.

For one thing, they can't argue that anything is really evil. They can say things are evil,

but it's not consistent with their theory. They can say, well, Dawkins and Hitchens and others say, you don't have to be a believer in God to be a good person.

Well, it depends. How do you know what's good if you don't believe God? You don't know if you're a good person or not until you know what's ultimately good. And if there's no God, there is nothing that can be said to be sure ultimately good.

The point is not that an atheist cannot do good things. The fact is, the atheist has no way of knowing if a thing is good or not. He knows if he feels good about it, and if other people view it as good, but that doesn't mean anything.

And among the Nazis, they felt good about killing Jews, and they believed each other were right about that. They shared that view. Consensus of opinions about something being morally right or wrong don't prove anything, because we over here have a different consensus.

Either there's no absolute morality, or there is something that comes from something beyond our opinions about stuff, because everyone has different opinions. The truth is, atheism doesn't provide any real basis for believing that some things are ultimately right and wrong. Now, they say, but we know there's right and wrong.

We know it's wrong to rape babies. We know it's wrong to kidnap girls and sell them into prostitution. We know it's wrong to, you know, commit genocide against the Jews and so forth.

We know that's wrong. Well, how do we know that? Well, anyone would know that, they say. But what they don't realize is, the only reason they know that, because they're borrowing Christian ideas and morality.

See, one reason that I have to be a Christian is because to be anything other than a Christian, I have to steal, dishonestly steal propositions from the Christian worldview. The Christian worldview says that some things are wrong because there's a creator who has declared them wrong, and they are his, you know, he's the one who declares all reality, and he says this is wrong. You may not think it's wrong, but if he thinks it is, it is.

There is an ultimate will that is violated by wrongdoing. It's the will of the creator. That's at least our worldview.

If you don't have a creator, there's really nothing that is violated ultimately by wrongdoing, and therefore, there's no ultimately wrongdoing at all. Now, evolutionists try to ground this, and atheists try to ground this, but frankly, thinking people who are really not prejudiced against the truth and are willing to see things and can think straight realize this actually is true. That if, and by the way, some atheists admit it.

Most don't want to say it out loud because it makes their view look very strange and

counterintuitive, and everyone knows there are things wrong, and yet he's got to say, but they're not really wrong. We're just deluded into thinking they're wrong. That's a social construct that tells us they're wrong, but everyone knows no matter what social construct you live under, it's still wrong to murder babies, okay, if it's strictly a social construct.

I mean, but if there's a God, then that determines what can and cannot be done legitimately, and so that's, you know, that's a problem for the atheists. They can't really explain their own moral convictions from their worldview. They have to borrow from the Christian worldview because even when they say, well, God was wrong to wipe out the Canaanites, which they often do.

It's interesting they would say that when they say they don't believe in God. How can a God who doesn't exist do anything wrong, but they nonetheless say it was wrong and evil for God. He's a monster to kill the Canaanites.

Well, how do you know that? How do you know what's wrong? How do you know that genocide is wrong? Maybe it's not wrong. Maybe the Jews thought it was good, and Hitler thought it was good, and you just don't think it's good. What makes you right and them wrong? Who stands above all of us and says that's wrong? It's only if you have a God that you can even criticize God on a moral basis, say some things he did aren't the right things.

How do you know that if you don't, how do you determine what's the right thing? Are you the judge of everybody? I thought you didn't believe in judging, and yet you do. If there's no God to be the ultimate judge of right and wrong, then you've got to be the ultimate judge of right and wrong, or else there's no right and wrong. But that is a burden awfully hard to carry.

Nietzsche, for example, an atheist, he actually was very forthright about this. He said, yeah, there's no morality ultimately. Morality is an illusion.

There's no right and wrong, and he became insane and spent his life as an insane asylum, because you really can't live in a world that doesn't have any kind of moral standards. Justice, for example. You say, God isn't just if he does this or that.

Well, where do you get the concept of justice? Chimpanzees don't have a concept of justice. Turtles don't have a concept of justice. Justice is an abstract thing.

Does it exist? Of course it exists. Everybody knows things are unjust and other things are just. We know it, at least when we're the victim of injustice.

We're very aware of it. We know that shouldn't happen, but if there's no God who is the definition of justice to whom our actions are supposed to conform, then there's nothing really, there's no justice except as a social construct that people came up with, which

nobody is obligated to affirm or follow. You can make people by your armies and your police force, you can make them behave a certain moral standard, but you can't make them believe it or think it's right or even make your enforcement of it right.

So there's too much that the worldview of the non-Christian cannot explain well. I'll just mention one other thing before we move on, and that is another thing that they don't explain well is demonic phenomena. Now, I realize that the nationalists will say, well, what you call demonic phenomena is just psychiatric, you know, disorders.

We have scientific names for them now. Well, giving a scientific name doesn't mean you've explained it. You can name anything you want to, a behavior or whatever, but when you've got other personalities that have invaded a person at a specific point in time, like when they went to a seance or when they used the Ouija board or things like that, this is very common in places.

Demon possession is very widespread throughout the world. This is not just a Christian idea. Virtually all religions and everywhere except in the scientific West, everyone knows they encounter demon possession, and they know it's not psychiatric.

You can't cast a psychiatric disorder out of a person by telling it to go away. You certainly can't cast it into a herd of swine and have them go berserk. You can't have a psychiatric disorder speaking several voices out at the same time out of a person's larynx and speaking languages that person never learned.

I don't care how crazy I get, you'll never find me speaking Swahili, a language I never learned. You'll never find me speaking, you know, ancient Babylonian, but demon-possessed people sometimes are known to do it. Languages that are dead languages.

It takes a scholar even to recognize what language it is they're using. These are phenomena which have to be explained. Now, I think the scientist who's an atheist would simply say, I don't have to explain it, I just doubt it.

I don't think those things really happen. Sometimes they try to give scientific explanations, but they seem like such stretches because they don't fit the data, and especially when you find demon-possessed people sometimes are known to, you know, be levitated, not at will. You know, I mean, magicians can fake levitate, things like that, but these are people who don't want to levitate, and they, you know, they levitate up in the air, or they, as I say, they have clairvoyant knowledge of things happening in another room.

Many times people who are demon-possessed began to expose to the person, the priest or something, that was trying to help them, expose the secret sins of that priest that he had done, which nobody knew about. I mean, it's like demon possession, you can only explain it in a way of psychiatric and acknowledge its, you know, and not acknowledge

its existence if you've never really studied it, if you've never looked at the data. I personally have.

That's been an interest of mine for many, many years. I've had a little bit of experience with dealing with demon-possessed people, but I've got, you know, mountains of data about documented cases, including videotape and so forth. It is a phenomenon easily explained by Christianity because Christianity talks about it, not explained at all by naturalism, which doesn't believe there's any supernatural.

So I like the idea that a worldview I've chosen actually explains everything adequately, and I would not be as comfortable with a worldview that couldn't explain much of anything adequately. It just made assertions, many of which simply make no sense, even in terms of the worldview itself. It's not holistically adequate any other than the Christian worldview, in my opinion.

Okay, third thing, I'm a Christian because of my assessment of probabilities. Now, that's just a matter of saying what is the chance that this is so, as opposed to some alternative being so. What are the probabilities? What are the probabilities that God exists, for one thing? Well, we've talked about that.

I'm not going to go into the data. The fact that there's intelligence in the universe as an effect suggests there has to be an intelligent cause, because an unintelligent cause is not an adequate cause for intelligence as an effect. Likewise, life, consciousness, and things like that.

There's plenty of evidence that there's a God. I'm not trying to prove there's a God, but if someone says, why do you believe in God? I've got my reasons. Much better for yours for not believing.

Any belief that there's no God has to stand on exactly what evidence. If someone says there is no God, I say, okay, that's your opinion, but you have no evidence whatsoever. Well, we've proven evolution, but if evolution is true, that doesn't prove there's no God.

What if God used evolution? Well, you know, religion has caused more violence and injustice in the world than anything else. Well, that's not exactly true, but even if it was true, what's that got to do with the existence of God? You know, in other words, there's no logical thought. The person who insists there's no God has not thought logically.

All they're saying, they're speaking emotionally. It feels to me there's no God. It seems too surreal that there'd be a God.

I don't want there to be a God. Those are the kinds of emotions that cause people to not believe in God. There's no evidence that would cause someone to not believe in God.

The probability is that God exists based on the evidence as we've discussed. What about

the probability that the Bible is a genuine revelation from God? Because that goes further, because if someone says, okay, maybe I can grant that there might be a God of some kind, but that doesn't mean it's the God of the Bible. That doesn't mean it's the God that you worship.

Maybe it's the God of the Muslims. Maybe it's the God of, you know, Zoroastrian or whatever. Well, okay, that's a fair question.

However, my view is this. If there is an intelligent God, I think the evidence is all for that, what are the chances, there's probabilities here, what are the chances that such a God created relational intelligent creatures and had no interest in relating or communicating with them? Well, it's a possibility that he wouldn't, but there's a very great possibility, seems to me, a probability that if he made creatures who are relational and intelligent, that he did so because he wanted to be relational with them, that he wanted to be in touch with them. Okay, that's not provable, but it's certainly not improbable.

Now, if that is true, then one of the probabilities that God wanted to connect with people but didn't, well, that doesn't seem very probable. God could do whatever he wants to. And if he did want to, he either appeared in flesh or revealed himself through divine revelations.

Well, I believe in our world view, God did both. He appeared in flesh, in Christ, he revealed things through prophets and so forth. Now, the idea that God would do these things seems to me very probable based on the assumption of the kind of God that I think the evidence would suggest.

Now, no one has to go with me on this. Nobody has to assess the probabilities the way I do, but I'm telling why I'm still a Christian, because I assess probabilities a certain way. I think these things are innately probable.

Now, how would I know that any revelation God gave isn't really found in the Vedas or in the Bhagavad Gita or the Quran or the Book of Mormon? Well, there's reasons for that too. Of all the revelations given, the most consistent that is based actually on historical fact is what we call the Old and the New Testament. It's the only of the holy books, they're the only book that actually are based on historical claims that can be verified by archaeology, by comparison with other historical records, and the Bible comes out very, very well when those comparisons are made.

Over half the Bible is historical. It's not mostly moral teaching, it's not mostly theological teaching, it's mostly just history from Genesis through Chronicles, actually through, yeah, through 2 Chronicles and Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther. Those are all history.

That's more than half the Old Testament. The New Testament's way over half history. The four Gospels make up more than half the New Testament.

Then you've got Acts. I don't know, probably four-fifths or maybe two-thirds of the historical record. And these records, you can't confirm everything because not everything is documented elsewhere, but everything that is checked out archaeologically and with other history and so forth proves to be agreeable to Scripture.

Nothing that the Bible has ever claimed happened has been proven not to happen. And many archaeologists have observed this, even some that weren't evangelical Christians or believers in the inspiration of Scripture. William Albright, one of the great archaeologists in the Holy Land, he said that many archaeologists have had their faith in Scripture increased by doing excavation in the Middle East and finding things that confirmed Scripture.

Nelson Gleick, a Jewish archaeologist in Jerusalem, said that not one archaeological find that has ever been made has controverted any biblical reference. Now, when the Bible has so much historical information and archaeologists dug up so much to find no contradiction between the two, it doesn't prove the Bible's true, but it certainly means it passes a very important test for being credible. But more than that, the Bible contains an awful lot of prophecy, predictive prophecy.

And in fact, that is its claim to fame. In Isaiah, God kind of mocked the gods of the heathen because they could not tell the future like he could. And he does.

Many books of the Bible have very explicit prophecies that are not, there's no question that they're written before the events. Ezekiel writing about the fall of Tyre, which was about two or three centuries after his time. The fall of Babylon being described in Jeremiah at least 70 years before the time and so forth.

And prophets who never lived to see these things prophesied in detail what would happen. Of course, the prophecies about the Messiah are important to note because there were at least scores, some say hundreds, of messianic prophecies that Jesus fulfilled. Now, what is the probability that a book that's not a revelation from God would contain these accurate prophecies that have been fulfilled historically? I'd say the probabilities are better for the Bible being inspired on that basis and reliable than the probabilities of it not.

And again, I'm not saying this proves, but it certainly demonstrates probability of being correct. Now, more than that, what are the probabilities of Jesus being who he claimed to be? Well, that prophecy thing is another factor. If you've got dozens of prophecies speaking about specific things about the coming Messiah and then they happen, all of them to the same man, I'd say there's good probability that A, the prophets were inspired and B, Jesus is the one they were talking about.

I'd say it'd be very hard to find any good case against it. I believe, I mean, just all things being as they are, the probabilities are very much in favor of Jesus being the Messiah.

Now, sometimes people say, well, Jesus wasn't the Messiah, but he knew the prophecy, so he, of course, worked it out.

He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. Anyone could do that. Zechariah said that in heaven.

Anyone could do that. Who wants to? He died on a cross. Well, a guy could arrange for that with the Romans being, you know, crucifixion happy and, you know, crucifying anyone who crossed them.

You know, there's, Jesus could have worked those things out. Really? What man do you know who's ever been able to determine what town he'd be born in? Did you have anything to say about what town you're going to be born in or what century you're going to be born in? There are prophecies about the timing of the coming of the Messiah, the 70 weeks of Daniel. Prophecy about him being born in Bethlehem.

Prophecy about his lineage, he'd be from David's lineage. Did you have any choice in the matter of what lineage you were from? There are things that are prophesied that would be done to him, not by him, like betrayed for 30 pieces of silver or crucified for that matter. There's any number of things that Jesus, frankly, if he was a mere man trying to look like the Messiah, couldn't necessarily work it out.

I mean, no one could. But more than that, Jesus made no attempt to look like the Messiah. The Jews, the way they understood the prophecy, thought the Messiah was going to be an entirely different kind of person.

They thought he was going to be a warrior. Jesus could have come as a warrior. Other people who did who were false messiahs, they came and got crushed by the Romans, but there are a lot of false messiahs who came according to the Jewish expectations for how they understood the prophets.

Jesus ignored the fact that what he was doing didn't sound like what the prophets said the Messiah would do. There's a point in John 6, 15, where it says the people tried to take him by force and make him king. That is to fulfill the messianic prophecies the way that everyone thought they should fulfill.

Well, that says Jesus dispersed the crowd and went away to pray. He wouldn't do it. He would not conform to it.

Jesus never publicly announced himself to be the Messiah. He told the woman of the well privately and his disciples privately and Caiaphas on trial. Apart from this, Jesus never used the word Messiah to describe himself at all.

In other words, Jesus was not some guy trying to convince people he was the Messiah by some kind of ruse. He, in fact, was the Messiah and tried not to mention it. He made no

attempt to do the things that people would have recognized as the Messiah.

He even told his disciples when he said, you're the Christ, don't tell anyone about this until I'm risen from the dead. Jesus did not act like a man who was a false messiah because a false messiah would do what people thought the messiah was to do. The fulfillment of prophecies was almost accidental, but so many were fulfilled.

And at the very time period, the prophet said that the probabilities of anyone else ever being a messiah are nil. The probability that Jesus was not himself the messiah prophesied seems rather nil also. I mean, when it comes to the laws of probabilities, I think when we look at all the major questions, the probability is on the side of the Christian faith, not any alternative to the Christian faith.

Fourth point, quickly, there's the risk-benefit analysis. Risk-benefit analysis. Obviously, whenever you're going to make sort of business decision or any kind of important decision, you think, okay, what's going to cost? What are the benefits? There's a famous wager called Pascal's Wager.

Pascal was a French mathematician and scientist, one of the best of his age, and he was a Christian. And in one of his books called Pensies, he basically laid out this idea that, you know, being a Christian is basically risk-free, because if you're right as a Christian, you win, as it were, the lottery. He doesn't use that term.

But if you're wrong, you lose nothing. If you die deluded and believe in your Christ, but there's no Christ, no God, you've lost nothing. You've lost nothing more than any hedonist lost.

You've lost your life, whatever loses that. So there's no actual risk, he says, in believing in Christianity, but there is a risk in not believing, because if you believe there's no God, then if you're right, you've gained nothing. And you won't even have the satisfaction of knowing you're right, because you won't exist.

But if you're wrong, you could be in a lot of trouble, right? So there's no risk in believing, and there is risk in not believing. And this is a very simplistic way. Philosophers would restate Pascal's way very differently, but that's basically the reasoning, it seems to me, behind it.

Now, I mean, I've had people react to that. An atheist I was interviewing once, I said, well, it doesn't make any sense, because it's suggesting that you should believe something because it's safe to believe it. You can't believe something because you have to believe because you're convinced of it.

Well, I agree, frankly, you never, you should never choose to believe something, because even though you doubt that it's true, it's just safer. We have excellent reasons to believe that it's true, I pointed it out. But one, and this is not really one of the reasons for

believing.

Well, it is a reason for believing. It's not a proof of anything. It doesn't prove anything saying I'm believing the safest thing.

It's another reason to believe, though, if you have better reasons to believe. I have much better reasons to believe, which is a realistic and fair-minded approach to the sources, appreciate the holistic worldview adequacy, the probabilities test, all of these things weigh heavily in favor of belief. We certainly have better, on these bases, better reason to believe in Christianity than we have much to believe in almost anything else we believe on any subject.

But having come there, we say, and on the off chance that our beliefs are mistaken, we lose nothing by believing it. Now, the Atheist said, no, you lost out a lot because you could have a lot more fun if you weren't a Christian. You could have partied hard.

You wouldn't have to be doing all this religious stuff. You don't have to pray and read your Bible and be religious and restrict your life and so forth. Well, I'm not really worried about that because I enjoy the way I live as a Christian and I would not enjoy living the other way.

I don't know why, but I just, I'd have no enjoyment in the partying life. But mainly because I'm a thinking person, I think this is empty. This doesn't mean anything.

This is useless. But it's very, very satisfying following Jesus Christ. I've never had the slightest regret, although I've had tremendous trials, some of them brought on by the fact that I'm a Christian.

But trials, every life has trials, Christian and non-Christian. You're not going to get away from trials by not being a Christian. You will have trials if you're a Christian and if you're not.

But in trials, I have found that being a Christian is the one thing that sustained me in such a way that I think if I didn't have God right now, I don't know how people go through this without God. Because God helps. God is real and God gives strength in trials, which a person going through the same trials without God would be, I don't know how they survive.

They do sometimes, but they don't come out untainted usually, unjaded usually. So anyway, I don't feel like I'm, it doesn't cost me anything to be a Christian except everything, but all that it cost me is something I couldn't keep anyway. Everybody's going to die.

And even if you hang on to it as long as you can, as hard as you can, your money, your life, there's no guarantees you'll keep it. Remember what you said, don't lay up

treasures on earth where thieves can break in through steel and moth and rust can corrupt it. That's what happens so often.

Try as hard as you want to live a selfish life and so forth. The world won't always cooperate, but don't live a selfish life, live for God. And God cooperates with you.

It doesn't mean you have a trouble-free life. The Bible doesn't promise that. He does promise a trouble-free eternity, but this life is not going to be any easier as a Christian than as a non-Christian.

It's just going to be different because you've got company with God. And so, I mean, that's, to me, the cost-benefit analysis is all on the side of being a Christian. And by the way, frankly, I can't imagine anyone who could reasonably argue that I'd be a better person if I was more selfish, which is, in other words, not being a Christian.

Being a Christian means selflessness, it means humility, it means serving others. Would the world be a better place or would I be a better person without Christian convictions? I might be a good person if I was an atheist, but only if I was borrowing from Christian ideas. And I'm not going to be a good person if the atheists today who have any morality have it because they were raised in a society that wasn't atheist, okay? So, and no one can prove that wrong, honestly.

Okay, so it makes more sense. Now, the final point is by personal experiment. I've experimented with Christianity and the experiments come up affirmative.

Now, I want to say that a lot of people who have ceased to be Christians would say, yeah, I tried that too and it didn't work for me. I tried God, it didn't work for me. I was seeking God, but he never showed up for me.

Now, I have to say this, that doesn't prove Christianity is not true because the Bible doesn't indicate that God is supposed to show up for you. Nothing is about you. Christianity is about God.

If it didn't work for you, well, it's not, the world isn't supposed to work for you. God doesn't work for you. He's the master, you're the servant.

You see, if you're trying to manipulate this religious thing as most people try to do to make it work for me, I'm not happy, I want it to make me happy. I'm not fulfilled, I want it to make me fulfilled. My relationships are bad, I want it to fix those.

I'm sick, I want it to heal me. I want to get better, I want my life to be more rewarded, so I'm going to try Christianity. Oh, it didn't happen.

I tried Christianity and it didn't get better, it didn't work for me. Well, you're making a mistake. It never promised to work for you.

The Bible says anyone who will live godly Christians will suffer persecution. That's not working for you very good. The Bible never promises you won't get sick, that you won't be hated by all men.

In fact, it promises you that. It promises that you'll weep, that you'll hunger and thirst. It promises that you'll be persecuted for righteousness.

These are promises of Christianity. Christianity is not for you, it's for God. And the person who says, I tried Christianity and it didn't work for me, I already know why it didn't.

You thought it was supposed to. You know, when I got filled with the Spirit, I had expected because people told me, that maybe I'd speak in tongues. I didn't, but I got filled with the Spirit anyway.

God didn't have to give me tongues for me to know that his word was true. He made a promise, I took him in his promise. And he didn't need to give me any evidence.

I had plenty of evidence that the Bible's true, that God is true, but I don't need it. I don't need subjective evidence. I don't need a feeling.

I don't need a vibe to tell me that it's true. And a lot of times people say, well, you know, because they're very non-judgmental, they say, I'm glad Christianity works for you. Well, I don't care if it works for me.

It was never one of my requirements that Christianity should work for me. You don't become a Christian until you deny yourself, which means I am unimportant. What works for me is not even on the table as far as I'm concerned.

The question is, how do I please my creator? What can I do to make him happy? The question is, am I working for him? Does God think it's working out, me being his servant? That's the question. But you see, people by nature are so self-centered that they even manipulate God or try to. They come to religion as a means of getting something for themselves.

And if it doesn't seem to do it, I guess that wasn't real. Well, no, it didn't work out because it was real. You had an imaginary idea about what God is supposed to do.

And you might've even got it from certain Christians who are fooling themselves. Many people have said, oh, if you have enough faith in God, you won't ever get sick. You'll always prosper.

Things won't happen to you bad. But there are people who preach that, but they're lying. They don't have the Bible on their side.

Jesus never said those things. And yet if someone is told that and say, well, I'm going to try that. I'm going to start confessing.

I'm well, I'm well, I'm well. Oops, I still am sick. I guess it didn't work.

Yeah, that didn't work because it wasn't true. I have experimented with Christianity and the experiment is true. I won't say that it works for me because I probably had more trials than I would expect if something was working for me.

But in a sense, it's still proven to be true to me. Remember, Christianity is not set of beliefs, merely it's a relationship with God. And I have relational evidence, not the least of which is prayers that are answered.

Now, I know not all prayers are answered, but the Bible indicates there's got to be conditions for prayers to be answered. Among other things, they have to be according to the will of God. My prayers might not always be so much according to the will of God.

So God has no obligation to answer prayers that are not according to his will. But I've had many prayers answered and in ways that you could never prove. And in my case, as you who know me are aware, for 50 years, I've lived entirely in dependence on God.

That is, I've never had a visible means of support, at least when I've been in full-time ministry. When I'm not in full-time ministry, I've held jobs, but that hasn't been for over 35 years. And my income comes timely.

It comes on time. That means it comes in the right amount. And it comes without any human being on earth knowing what my current needs are.

I can go weeks without receiving anything. And then there can be a windfall out of nowhere from someone I don't even know. It happens.

It's happened for 50 years. This is how I've lived. And I did this for the very purpose of proving God faithful, because there is a promise that is not misunderstood, which says, seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you.

It's a promise. You put God first, not yourself, not anything else. Put God first, he'll take care of everything.

And that I've counted on being true. And if it wasn't true, I'd be starved to death now. So would my children who were raised in my home when I was living this way.

And, you know, God has been so real to me. If, you know, if you would bring to me strong incentives like torture to make me renounce Christ, I know what would be in my mind. I think, well, I'd sure like to not be tortured.

But frankly, I can't deny what I know. I can't betray somebody who's been so good to me, who's proved himself hundreds and hundreds of times in my lifetime to be genuine and faithful. I just, I don't know how to deny that.

I have had lived a life with God. I know him other than by hearsay. And I'm not making any boasts about that.

I was on that atheist show, I mentioned the infield guy, and I made reference to this fact. He says, what, do you think you're special to God? Why are you so special to God? Don't you know there's children starving in other countries who aren't Christians, and you think that God, you must be awfully special that God won't let you starve. And he does these special works to provide for you and so forth.

Why doesn't he provide for them? I said, well, I don't really say this to suggest I'm special. I'm talking about God. God has proved himself faithful.

This has nothing to do with me, except that I'm just doing what he said to do, namely trusting him. I don't know about cases where God didn't provide for people. Were they trusting him? Was it his will that they live or that they die? I don't know.

I mean, it's going to be his will that I die someday. At that time, I think he's going to stop providing for me here. You know, there are, I don't know anything about others.

I'm not saying I'm special. I'm saying that there are promises of God, which I've counted on being true, and they've proven true. When people have starved to death, were they counting on the promises of God? I can't say, but I can't be sure they were, because I don't know very many Christians who consistently count on the promises of God.

So it seems to me that what God really has promised comes true to those who believe him, about promises of God. And every promise that God has really made, when I've trusted him, has come true. That's my experience.

Now, I had a listener to my previous lecture where I made this point, who said, you said at the beginning of your talk that you were going to talk about emotional things, and then you end up talking about emotional things. I didn't say anything about emotional things. I'm not talking about emotion.

I'm talking about solid things, like checks in the mail. I'm not talking about how I feel. I'm talking about what really happens in my relationship.

My relation with my wife, I know is real, because there's real interaction. Is there emotion involved? Sometimes. But if there wasn't, I'd still know she was real, because we still interact.

It's not an emotional thing that makes me know my wife exists. It's interaction. It's relationship.

And my relation with God is not primarily feelings. In fact, I have to say I probably have less in the area of emotions in my religious life than many other people do. Maybe

because I'm more cerebral, but the point is, I don't care.

I mean, emotion is a nice thing, maybe, and I'm not against emotion. But emotion is the wrong thing to base your beliefs on. And that's why I would never be an atheist, because the only way you can be an atheist is by having reasons that are strictly emotional.

An atheist only has emotional reasons for being an atheist. No rational reasons. And I put that out there.

I invite people to come on my show. I've been on the air for 23 years. No one has ever called to prove that wrong.

Every atheist I've ever talked to, it all ends up being emotional. I don't like Christians. I don't like what religion has done.

It just doesn't feel real to me that there could be miracles. Well, that's all emotion. Give me some facts, not about you.

You're telling me about you. You're not telling me about God. I'm talking about God.

I'm a believer in God, and that's about him, not about me and how I feel about him. So I would say that I have solid and unflappable reasons for still being a Christian. And I would say to anybody who is no longer a Christian, why aren't you still a Christian? I would say it's not because of God.

I say it must be you. And anyone who's never been a Christian, I would say usually it's somebody who has never looked into the reasons for believing. And that's why I take the time to give my reasons for being still a Christian.

That's why we're closed.