

OVER TWO MILLION SOLD

# THE CASE FOR Faith

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*A Journalist Investigates the Toughest  
Objections to Christianity*

UPDATED  
AND  
EXPANDED

LEE  
STROBEL

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

## ZONDERVAN BOOKS

*The Case for Faith*

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# Since Evil and Suffering Exist, a Loving God Cannot

## Deliberations

### *Questions for Reflection or Group Study*

1. How have difficulties, challenges, and even pain shaped your character and values? How are you different today as a result of the problems you've had to face in life? Can you ever imagine thanking God someday for how suffering has molded you? Kreeft said, "I believe all suffering contains at least the opportunity for good." Was that true in your case?
2. What were Kreeft's strongest points? What were his weakest? If you had an opportunity to question him, what would you ask? Based on his other observations, how do you think he might respond to your question?
3. If you were God, how would you have designed the world differently? As you remove suffering or evil and tinker with people's free will, think through the consequences that would result. How would people form character in your Utopia? Would they be motivated to seek God in the midst of their pleasures? If you supernaturally intervened to eliminate evil, where would you draw the line to prevent murder? Child abuse? Theft? Slander? Evil thoughts that may prompt evil actions? At what point are people turned into puppets who lack free will and are therefore unable to truly express love?
4. If Marc were to sit down with the woman in the *Life* magazine photo, what three things do you think he would say to her? How do you believe she might respond?

## For Further Evidence

### *More Resources on This Topic*

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- Geisler, Norman. *If God, Why Evil? A New Way to Think about the Question*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2011.
- Greig, Pete. *God on Mute: Engaging the Silence of Unanswered Prayer*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2020.
- Jones, Clay. *Why Does God Allow Evil? Compelling Answers for Life's Toughest Questions*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2017.
- Keller, Timothy. *Walking with God through Pain and Suffering*. New York: Penguin, 2015.
- Kreeft, Peter. *Making Sense Out of Suffering*. Ann Arbor, MI: Servant, 1986.
- Lewis, C. S. *The Problem of Pain*. 1940. Reprint, New York: HarperCollins, 2001.
- Meister, Chad. *Evil: A Guide for the Perplexed*. 2nd ed. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018.
- Orr-Ewing, Amy. *Where Is God in All the Suffering?* Charlotte, NC: Good Book, 2020.
- Palau, Luis. *Where Is God When Bad Things Happen? Finding Solace in Times of Trouble*. New York: Doubleday, 1999.
- Wright, N. T. *Evil and the Justice of God*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2013.

# Since Miracles Contradict Science, They Cannot Be True

## Deliberations

### *Questions for Reflection or Group Study*

1. After reading the interview in this chapter, do you believe that miracles are possible? What would convince you that something miraculous had occurred? Do you believe the evidence of history establishes that the miraculous resurrection of Jesus actually took place? Why or why not?
2. Which one of Craig's arguments for the existence of God was most persuasive to you? Why? Taken together, do these five points convince you that it's rational to believe in the existence of a miracle-working God? If not, how else would you account for these five categories of evidence?
3. Craig prayed for God to miraculously cure his medical condition, but he hasn't. What do you think of his reaction to that? Have you prayed for God to intervene with a miracle in your life? What happened? How has this affected your attitude toward God? In what way was Craig's response to his situation helpful or not helpful to you?

## For Further Evidence

### *More Resources on This Topic*

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- Geisler, Norman L. *Miracles and the Modern Mind: A Defense of Biblical Miracles*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2004.
- Geivett, R. Douglas, and Gary R. Habermas, eds. *In Defense of Miracles: A Comprehensive Case for God's Action in History*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1997.
- Keener, Craig. *Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts*. 2 vols. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011.
- . *Miracles Today: The Supernatural Work of God in the Modern World*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2021.
- Lewis, C. S. *Miracles*. 1947. Reprint, New York: HarperOne, 2015.
- Metaxas, Eric. *Miracles: What They Are, Why They Happen, and How They Can Change Your Life*. New York: Penguin, 2015.
- Moreland, J. P. *A Simple Guide to Experience Miracles: Instruction and Inspiration for Living Supernaturally in Christ*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2021.
- Strobel, Lee. *The Case for Miracles: A Journalist Investigates Evidence for the Supernatural*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018.

# Evolution Explains Life, So God Isn't Needed

## Deliberations

### *Questions for Reflection or Group Study*

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1. Describe the education you received in evolution. In what ways did it affect your outlook toward God?
2. Before reading this interview with Walter Bradley, how specifically did you believe life arose on earth? Did the interview change your viewpoint? How and why?
3. Based on the evidence, do you believe it's reasonable to infer the existence of an Intelligent Designer? Why or why not? In light of the facts, do you believe it would take more faith to believe that life arose naturalistically or through an intelligent cause?

## For Further Evidence

### *More Resources on This Topic*

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Behe, Michael. *Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution*. 2nd ed. New York: Free Press, 2006.

Collins, Francis S. *The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief*. New York: Free Press, 2007.

Dembski, William A., and Sean McDowell. *Understanding Intelligent Design: Everything You Need to Know in Plain Language*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2008.

Johnson, Phillip E. *Darwin on Trial*. 20th Anniversary ed. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2010.

Lennox, John. *Can Science Explain Everything?* Charlotte, NC: Good Book, 2019.

- . *Cosmic Chemistry: Do God and Science Mix?* Oxford, UK: Lion Hudson, 2021.
- Meyer, Stephen. *Return of the God Hypothesis: Three Scientific Discoveries That Reveal the Mind behind the Universe*. New York: HarperOne, 2021.
- . *Signature in the Cell: DNA and the Evidence for Intelligent Design*. New York: HarperOne, 2010.
- Moreland, J. P. *Scientism and Secularism: Learning to Respond to a Dangerous Ideology*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018.
- Rana, Fazale, and Hugh Ross. *Origins of Life: Biblical and Evolutionary Models Face Off*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2014.
- Strobel, Lee. *The Case for a Creator: A Journalist Investigates Scientific Evidence That Points toward God*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004.
- Thaxton, Charles et al. *The Mystery of Life's Origin: The Continuing Controversy*. Seattle, WA: Discovery Institute, 2020.



# God Isn't Worthy of Worship If He Kills Innocent Children

## Deliberations

### *Questions for Reflection or Group Study*

1. Evaluate how well you believe Geisler succeeded in dealing with the troublesome issues of how God dealt with the Amalekites, the Canaanites, and the mob that threatened the prophet Elisha. What was the strongest part of his explanation? Is the issue of God's character a sticking point in your spiritual journey? Why or why not?
2. Do Geisler's guidelines for interpreting Scripture make sense to you? Which ones have you seen violated by critics? Do you agree that it's reasonable to give the Bible the benefit of the doubt on grounds that it has already proven reliable in numerous instances? Why or why not?
3. What's your reaction to the quotation by former skeptic Edward Boyd? Do you believe God has made it difficult for us to believe in him? What's your biggest impediment to faith? What specific steps could you take to overcome that obstacle?
4. Have you been stumped by an apparent discrepancy or contradiction in the Bible? If so, how would you go about researching an answer? Try posing your question as succinctly as you can, and then take advantage of internet and library resources, including the books listed below, and see if there's an explanation that will satisfy you.

## For Further Evidence

### *More Resources on This Topic*

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- Copan, Paul. *Is God a Moral Monster? Making Sense of the Old Testament God*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011.
- . *Is God a Vindictive Bully?* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, forthcoming.
- Copan, Paul, and Matthew Flannagan. *Did God Really Command Genocide? Coming to Terms with the Justice of God*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014.
- Cowan, Steven, and Terry L. Wilder. *In Defense of the Bible: A Comprehensive Apologetic for the Authority of Scripture*. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2013.
- Geisler, Norman, and Ronald Brooks. *When Skeptics Ask: A Handbook on Christian Evidences*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013.
- Geisler, Norman, and Thomas Howe. *The Big Book of Bible Difficulties: Clear and Concise Answers from Genesis to Revelation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.
- Jones, Clay. *Why Does God Allow Evil? Compelling Answers for Life's Toughest Questions*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2017.
- Köstenberger, Andreas J., Darrell L. Bock, and Josh Chatraw. *Truth in a Culture of Doubt: Engaging Skeptical Challenges to the Bible*. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2014.

# It's Offensive to Claim Jesus Is the Only Way to God

## Deliberations

### *Questions for Reflection or Group Study*

1. What was your emotional reaction the first time you heard the claim that Jesus is the only path to God? Has your viewpoint shifted since reading this interview with Paul Copan? If so, how?
2. How important is the resurrection of Jesus to his claim of being the one and only Son of God? If you were to defend the historicity of Jesus' resurrection from the dead, what points would you make? What are the implications for you on a personal level if the resurrection is an actual historical event?
3. Have you considered any other world religion? If so, what did you find attractive about it? What problems did you discover related to it? What aspects of Christianity attract you and which ones challenge you?
4. Paul Copan stressed that God is good, loving, and just—and therefore we can trust that he will be fair to those who never heard the gospel during their lifetime. How encouraging is that to you? How do you assess the speculations discussed in this chapter for how God might deal with those who never hear the name of Jesus?
5. The Bible says about God, "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart." What three practical suggestions would you give to a friend who wants to know how they can seek God that way? Have you taken those steps yourself? What have been the results so far?

## For Further Evidence

### *More Resources on This Topic*

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- Beckwith, Francis J., and Gregory Koukl. *Relativism: Feet Firmly Planted in Mid-Air*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.
- Bowman, Robert M., Jr., and J. Ed Komoszewski. *Putting Jesus in His Place: The Case for the Deity of Christ*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007.
- Childers, Alisa. *Another Gospel? A Lifelong Christian Seeks Truth in Response to Progressive Christianity*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale Momentum, 2020.
- Copan, Paul. *Loving Wisdom: A Guide to Philosophy and Christian Faith*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020.
- Copan, Paul. *True for You, but Not for Me: Overcoming Objections to Christian Faith*, 2nd ed. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2009.
- McDermott, Gerald R. *God's Rivals: Why Has God Allowed Different Religions?* Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2007.
- Murray, Abdu. *Saving Truth: Finding Meaning and Clarity in a Post-Truth World*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018.
- Nash, Ronald. *Is Jesus the Only Savior?* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.
- Netland, Harold. *Christianity and Religious Diversity: Clarifying Christian Commitments in a Globalizing Age*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015.
- Samples, Kenneth Richard. *God among Sages: Why Jesus Is Not Just Another Religious Leader*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017.
- Strobel, Lee. *In Defense of Jesus: Investigating Attacks on the Identity of Christ*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007.

# A Loving God Would Never Torture People in Hell

## Deliberations

### *Questions for Reflection or Group Study*

1. What was your concept of hell before you read this chapter? How has Moreland's analysis either reinforced or challenged those beliefs?
2. Mark Twain once quipped, "Heaven for climate, hell for company."<sup>18</sup> In light of Moreland's description of hell, how would you respond to someone who offered that observation?
3. Has the doctrine of hell been a stumbling block to you as a spiritual seeker or a believer in Christianity? In what specific ways has Moreland dealt with the concerns that held you back in your spiritual journey?

## For Further Evidence

### *More Resources on This Topic*

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- Chan, Francis, and Preston Sprinkle. *Erasing Hell: What God Said about Eternity, and the Things We've Made Up*. Colorado Springs: Cook, 2011.
- Gomes, Alan W. *Forty Questions about Heaven and Hell*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2018.
- Gregg, Steve. *All You Want to Know about Hell: Three Christian Views of God's Final Solution to the Problem of Sin*. Nashville, TN: Nelson, 2013.
- Lewis, C. S. *The Great Divorce: A Dream*. 1946. Reprint, New York: Harper Collins, 2000.
- Peterson, Robert A. *Hell on Trial: The Case for Eternal Punishment*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1995.
- Sprinkle, Preston, gen. ed. *Four Views on Hell*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016.
- Strobel, Lee. *The Case for Heaven: A Journalist Investigates Evidence for Life after Death*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2021.
- Walls, Jerry. *Hell: The Logic of Damnation*. South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992.

# Church History Is Littered with Oppression and Violence

## Deliberations

### *Questions for Reflection or Group Study*

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1. Before reading this chapter, what aspect of Christian history bothered you the most? If it was addressed by Woodbridge, how well did he deal with the issue? Is your opinion about that episode the same or different now?
2. Do you think the historical sins discussed by Woodbridge are anomalies in church history or reflective of something that's terribly wrong in the very DNA of the faith? What facts helped you form your opinion?
3. Has the world been better-off because of Christianity? Why or why not? On balance, have the contributions of atheism been positive or negative for humankind?

## For Further Evidence

### *More Resources on This Topic*

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Carroll, Vincent, and David Shiflett. *Christianity on Trial: Arguments against Anti-Religious Bigotry*. San Francisco: Encounter, 2001.

Dickerson, John S. *Jesus Skeptic: A Journalist Explores the Credibility and Impact of Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019.

Dickson, John. *Bullies and Saints: An Honest Look at the Good and Evil of Christian History*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Reflective, 2021.

- Ganssle, Gregory E. *Our Deepest Desires: How the Christian Story Fulfills Human Aspirations*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2017.
- Johnston, Jeremiah. *Unimaginable: What Our World Would Be Like without Christianity*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2019.
- Shelley, Bruce. *Church History in Plain Language*. 5th ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2021.
- Stark, Rodney. *For the Glory of God: How Monotheism Led to Reformations, Science, Witch-Hunts, and the End of Slavery*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004.
- . *God's Battalions: The Case for the Crusades*. New York: HarperOne, 2010.
- Wright, Bradley R. E. *Christians Are Hate-Filled Hypocrites . . . and Other Lies You've Been Told: A Sociologist Shatters Myths from the Secular and Christian Media*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2010.



# I Still Have Doubts, So I Can't Be a Christian

## Deliberations

### *Questions for Reflection or Group Study*

1. What part of Anderson's story could you especially relate to? In what ways is your spiritual journey different or similar to his?
2. What kind of doubts do you wrestle with? Is it possible that they're fueled by a motivation not to believe? If so, can you pinpoint why you're reluctant to pursue faith in Christ?
3. How has your picture of God been affected by the family in which you grew up or the church you attended as a child? In retrospect, did you grow up with a biblically accurate view of God?
4. Anderson offered several suggestions for getting off dead center in your spiritual journey—making the decision to believe, going where faith is, consuming faith-building materials, clarifying the object of your faith, and experimenting with following Jesus' teachings. Which of these steps do you believe would be most helpful to you and why?

## For Further Evidence

### *More Resources on This Topic*

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- Anderson, Lynn. *If I Really Believe, Why Do I Have These Doubts?* West Monroe, LA: Howard, 2000.
- Conway, Bobby. *Doubting toward Faith: The Journey to Confident Christianity*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2015.
- Guinness, Os. *God in the Dark: The Assurance of Faith beyond a Shadow of Doubt*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1996.
- Habermas, Gary R. *The Thomas Factor: Using Your Doubts to Draw Closer to God*. Nashville, TN: B&H, 1999.
- McGrath, Alistair E. *Doubting: Growing through the Uncertainties of Faith*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006.
- Mittelberg, Mark. *Confident Faith: Building a Firm Foundation for Your Beliefs*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 2013.
- Rota, Michael. *Taking Pascal's Wager: Faith, Evidence, and the Abundant Life*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016.
- Sharp, Mary Jo. *Why I Still Believe: A Former Atheist's Reckoning with the Bad Reputation Christians Give a Good God*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019.