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## Should You NOT Be a Christian? (Part III)


**1 Corinthians 3:20-21:** (NASB) <sup>20</sup>...*The Lord knows the reasonings of the wise, that they are useless.* <sup>21</sup>*So then let no one boast in men...*

Several weeks ago, we began working on a response to a YouTube video sent to us by a college student entitled, "Why I am no longer a Christian," a 1½ hour step-by-step presentation of how another young man went from devoted Christian to atheist. It was a well-done, non-inflammatory treatise on why the author now believed Christianity to be just a story. Today is Part III of this three-part series and we will primarily focus on the core issues of his reasoning that drove him away from Christianity and into the camp of atheism. How valid are these points? Stay with us and judge for yourself! I

 **God's hand in everything, *Why I am no Longer a Christian, youtube.com***

- *Since I was young, I had been taught to see God in everything - any miraculous event, any scientific wonder, any mathematical intricacy, and any fortuitous personal interaction. All were assigned ownership to God. God was the source of all beauty, all power, and all knowledge. Anything I experienced, both good and bad, was because of Him and all things led to His glory. All things worked out for the best through Him, even when they seemed bad. Ultimately, God's hand guided everything, including my life.*


**James 1:17:** What does it mean when we say God's hand is in everything? If there is a mathematical equation, did God create the equation or did He put in place the entire system of mathematics and allow us to develop that equation? **So, if everything is credited to God, then how do we explain this...?** **James 1:12-15:** Free choice gives us temptation. Not every hard thing comes from God, but God allows those things to occur. The more grandiose and sensational we claim God to be from a child-like perspective, the more we set ourselves up for future failure, *unless* we grow up...it is a little like a child proud of his dad bragging to his little friends, "My dad is so strong he can pick up a car!" God gives us the freedom of choice and the ability to see, understand, learn, step up and fail. We are allowed to experience sin.

 **Feel Jesus sitting next to me, *Why I am no Longer a Christian, youtube.com***

- *Whenever I could see clearly through a situation in my life, I knew it was of God. I learned to associate any luminous experience with the guidance and presence of God. I wanted to associate the insight I received in both prayer and thought with the guidance of God. In fact, sometimes this guidance felt so personal that I could literally feel Jesus' presence like he was sitting next to me, or in my heart, just as the Bible said. Jesus had knocked on the door of my heart and asked me to open up and I had done so. Jesus lived in my heart and affected every action I took.*

It sounds like he had so many emotions that it crowded out what Jesus really stood for. **Here is the Scripture he may be referencing, which was a message to the seventh stage of the church in Revelation. Revelation 3:20:** There is a difference between "feeling" Jesus in your heart and having Jesus in your heart. Last week we discussed that there are a lot of Scriptures about the heart. The heart has more influence but it is much more susceptible. We need the heart to work together with the head. It is possible that because this young man tried to apply the theory/head knowledge he was learning in college to his very emotionally-based Christianity, it just crumbled in his hands. **Ephesians 4:14-15:** If you are emotionally based, you can easily be tossed to and fro. Emotions are not stable. The basis or understanding the truth *is* stable. Having Jesus in your heart includes the mental application of the text above and below. **2 Corinthians 11:14-15:** Perhaps Satan does not want Christianity to progress and he pushes his agenda of making it purely an emotional experience. We don't "grow up" so we falter and fall. Sounds like a good scheme, doesn't it? Feelings are good when based on understanding - head AND heart.

What kind of inspiration does the Holy Spirit give us?

 **Inspired like the Bible writers, *Why I am no Longer a Christian, youtube.com***

- *I was certain that, just as the writers of the Bible had been inspired by God, so was I. These images (of clarity, voice and reason described in another part of his video) were my guide and the things they said had to be discerned with careful thought, prayer and discussion with others. These images were powerful and carried deep meaning and one of the most frequent ways that I felt God communicated with me. It became difficult sometimes to determine whether the images I saw were coming from God or my own imagination. But I always knew which was which because of the feelings associated with them. I came to believe that Holy*

*Spirit images were those which I felt in a church or were associated with religious themes, such as God's will or the Bible. These, I knew, were the Holy Spirit. I felt God's tangible presence in church.*


Again, notice the *feelings* associated with his statements. **Let's examine the inspiration of the writers of Scripture:** 2 Timothy 3:14-17: (NASB) <sup>14</sup>You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, <sup>15</sup>and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings (Old Testament) which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup>All Scripture is **inspired by God <2315>** and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; <sup>17</sup>so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. Interesting that there was not a single word about feelings discussed. This states plainly that all Scripture is “inspired by God.” What does that mean? We will look at it more closely momentarily.

 **Strongest proof of God, Why I am no Longer a Christian, youtube.com**

- *I felt God's presence personally when I prayed for the Holy Spirit to return to me and cause me to speak in tongues again, which is something I did almost every night for almost a year after becoming baptized. When speaking with atheists and my friends in college, I felt God would lay specific words on my heart to share with them. These words would come in a jolt of inspiration and clarity where I felt God would show me precisely what to say and what words to share. This feeling guided my every word...These perceptions of a personal relationship with God were my strongest evidence that He existed.*

The phrase “inspired by God” is actually one word in the Greek, Strongs #2315 - theopneustos. It is the ONLY USE of this word in the entire Bible - what makes anyone think they can be on such footing? What was inspired? The Scriptures. Every use of the word for “scripture” in the New Testament refers to the Old Testament, so how can we say that the New Testament was inspired in the same way? **Well, look at this one exception:** 2 Peter 3:14-17: (Some people believe that Peter and Paul disagreed and their teaching diverged. But here we have Peter speaking about Paul, referring to him as *our beloved brother Paul*. Peter clearly had deep respect for Paul.) The sacred writings of the Apostles were to be considered as Scripture, just like the writings of the Old Testament. This is not about feelings; this is about knowledge of the word of God. In our previous Part II of this subject, we discussed how the YouTube presenter was “bored” with the Old Testament because of his expectations of what it should contain. He did not see *why* certain things were put there as a pattern of the development of the life of Jesus. That was beyond him with only “heart” and not “head.”

**Scriptural inspiration produced prophecy and insight into the plan of God:** Matthew 22:31-32: Reading the words of Scripture is like seeing God's perspective toward man. If we are not reading and grasping the words, and are instead just feeling emotions, it will not provide the depth of Scripture that is available. **The following is more in line with what a true follower of Jesus is promised:** Luke 12:11-12: So at times when those in authority demand an answer from you, do not fear. Unlike what the YouTube presenter presumed, this is *not* the same as having the inspiration of those who wrote the Bible. None of us are promised that kind of inspiration. We are to study the sacred writings and apply them to our lives with our heart and head. **Here is how we are taught to view trial and tribulation:** 1 Peter 4:12-14

 **Unprecedented failure, Why I am no Longer a Christian, youtube.com**

- *A few months before meeting the professor, I was suddenly experiencing an unprecedented failure in my course work through a statistics class that I was taking. In response to these failures, I had only heightened my devotion to prayer and seeking God's guidance. I read the Bible diligently, seeking the wisdom of God as shown by Paul in the New Testament. I went to church and tried to see God's guidance in my fellow Christians. But most of all, I listened for that voice and looked for those images that seemed to have guided me throughout my entire degree up until this point. But nothing was working. This was the first time this had ever happened in my life. God's will had seemed so clear when I was younger! But suddenly nothing was working. Certainly God's will seemed hidden from me. Nothing seemed profound. Nothing seemed important. Nothing seemed like it had the clear marker of God's will. I felt lost in an ocean of information.*

He was basing his Christianity on just the *feeling* of God in his life. **Interestingly, when pressed to show proof of the majesty of Jesus, Peter does refer to a voice:** 2 Peter 1:16-21: There literally was a voice from heaven, but that is not how we will hear God. **Instead of**

listening for a voice that comes out from you, **FIND the voice of the old, old story:** <sup>17</sup>And we have more firm the prophetic word, to which we do well giving heed, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, till day may dawn, and a morning star may arise—in your hearts; <sup>20</sup>this first knowing, that no prophecy of the Writing doth come of private exposition, <sup>21</sup>for not by will of man did ever prophecy come, but by the Holy Spirit borne on holy men of God spake. Even more firm than Peter’s only personal experience is the prophetic word of God. Peter explained what the most important thing is. Our core values and strength is from the Word. When we misplace our priorities to find our core strength from *within* ourselves rather than finding it from its true source, we are destined for discouragement.

**Feelings gone, tongues hollow, Why I am no Longer a Christian, youtube.com**

- *...I was worried about no longer feeling that I could clearly discern God’s will. I was worried about the fact that I no longer seemed to feel anything when I went to church, and that I no longer felt the Holy Spirit pushing me to speak in tongues. I was worried by the fact that when I did speak in tongues, it no longer seemed to feel special, but rather for some reason, it suddenly felt hollow and rehearsed.*

How many times did he say “feeling” and “feel” in those few seconds? If that is where your Christianity finds its base, you are in trouble. What was the sole purpose of speaking in tongues? It was to communicate the Gospel to those of another language by speaking in their native language! It was not, according to Scripture, to build you up. It was not an emotional thing. 1 Corinthians 14:6-9: If you do not understand the tune, the instrument should not be making blaring sounds. It is disruptive, and uncomfortable and serves no purpose. The ability of tongues, or speaking other languages, was to proclaim the Gospel of Christ. It was a miracle given to spread the Gospel into other languages. So, this young man was building his Christian life upon a foundation of how HE felt, the inspiration HE was sure HE had, the inner voice HE heard, the tongues HE spoke and the successes HE experienced. All of those things are not foundation stones of Christianity. He built his Christianity on the results and not the foundation. Next we will look at the reasoning HE applied to become an atheist.



**Simulacrum God just a concept, Why I am no Longer a Christian, youtube.com**

- *The concept of God is intricate and profound. If it were real, it would have drastic implications for the world we live in. But in all of academia, through all disciplines, we have found no reason to believe that it is anything more than a concept. Given what we know, God is just a concept. The professor’s words echoed the sentiments of philosopher Jean Baudrillard, whose work I briefly encountered a few months before: Simulacrum = something that is only an image of something either real or imagined, but that is interacted with as if it really is what it represents. This interaction can be referred to as a simulation of what a real interaction with the real thing would be like.*

Video games are a good example. Games where you virtually play tennis or baseball, or games that you shoot, stab and mutilate - all give you opportunity to interact with an image as though it were real. Here is the big question: If all academia proclaims God as just a concept, **WHAT IS THE ALTERNATIVE TO BELIEF IN GOD?**



**Could the world be without God, Why I am no Longer a Christian, youtube.com**

- *(My professor asked me) Chris, do you see how it is possible that all of this - the entire history of religion, the entire history of the world, the entire history of the universe, and your entire religious life could have happened without God actually existing? As I read this question, my mind walked through all the arguments I had made for God throughout my life. I always assumed the reason my intercessory prayers were not answered with supernatural frequency was because intercessory prayers contradicted with God’s omissions. I assumed that an omniscient God already knew what was best for me, and that it was me who needed to listen to Him and not the other way around. However, I could see how it was possible that my intercessory prayers were not answered because there was simply no God there to answer them.*

Is there design in the creation of the universe or is it just a result of random occurrences? Think about bees and flowers. Flowers evolved to be just exactly what bees needed and bees evolved exactly to be what flowers needed at exactly the same time without design?

**Meteorology:** Water is recycled in the earth’s water cycle. (How did Job know?)

Job 36:27-29 **Oceanography:** The ocean has currents. (How did King David know about ocean currents and how birds fly on air currents?) Psalms 8:8



**Academia and the Documentary Hypothesis, Why I am no Longer a Christian, youtube.com**



- *I had always assumed that the Bible's origins were unknown to academia and that we had no reason to doubt that it had been inspired by God. However, through the Documentary Hypothesis, the professor had shown me that academia had made a well-documented and thorough study into the origins of the Bible and had come to a consensus about precisely how much of it was put together using human reasoning. Among the evidence they found was a set of clear political goals that served very human purposes. So I could see how it was possible that there really was no God inspiring them, but rather the Bible was just the result of their own human reasoning. I could see how it was possible that they only felt God was inspiring them.*

Yes! Clear political goals! Does academia have the slightest clue as to where these goals lead? **Genesis 12:1-3:** The "political agenda" was to bless the entire world. **God's clear agenda is to develop a people through whom the world will be blessed: 2 Corinthians 6:17-18**

Do you know how a woodpecker can so violently pound its beak against a tree and *not* suffer brain damage? It all has to do with its tongue, which wraps around the back of its brain and stabilizes it against the shock of the pounding. How did THAT develop by random chance? It had to be designed. God as a Grand Designer created, set things in motion and let them go...

 **Occam's razor, Why I am no Longer a Christian, youtube.com**

- *What the professor was engaging in my mind was the concept of Occam's razor. Occam's razor states that when faced with two opposing explanations with the same set of evidence, our minds will naturally prefer the explanation that makes the fewest assumptions. So if an event or process can be explained without an extra superficial element, our minds will naturally shave that element away using Occam's razor. For example, if I heard a loud bump in my closet, I may initially think there is some kind of animal in there moving around. However, if upon opening the closet I discover that I've left a box preciously close to the edge of the shelf and that the box is now on the floor, I probably wouldn't think there was an animal anymore.*

So if there are two opposing explanations, our minds will disregard the one that makes the least amount of sense. **Interestingly, the Scriptures tell us to do that: 1 Thessalonians 5:21**

 **Occam's razor cuts both ways, Why I am no Longer a Christian, youtube.com**

- *Further, if I looked around carefully in the closet with a flashlight and didn't find an animal or any evidence of an animal such as hair or claw marks, or any evidence that an animal had escaped the closet such as a hole in the wall, I probably wouldn't think there is an animal there. In my mind I have two opposing explanations: One is that an animal knocked the box off the shelf causing the noise I heard. The other is that the box just fell off the shelf because of natural processes like the lack of friction and gravity, or the fact that the shelf was tilted. If I wanted to go on believing that an animal had caused the noise, I would have to make assumptions that I have no evidence for.*

In his example, the animal represents the existence of God. The box fell off the shelf and he wants to believe that an animal caused that to happen. But there is no evidence for it - only natural circumstances. To go on believing that the animal (God) made the sound is a reasonable explanation would be foolish. Here is the problem...Occam's razor cannot shave the FACT that this young man began the chain of events himself by placing the box on the shelf. Therefore, the "natural processes" that caused it to fall were directly precipitated by his conscious action - he created the scenario! He caused the box to fall over. It was not a random, natural occurrence, but rather as a result of a created effort. His razor should have said that the box randomly appeared on the shelf. There was an intelligent action behind the scenario.

Just one more quick amazing fact the Bible stated thousands of years before scientists understood... **Job 38:31:** The Pleiades are a cluster of seven stars that always travel together. The three stars comprising the Belt of Orion are separating, something that scientists just recently discovered. How could Job have possibly known this information? Man has found that the smaller we go, the more complex systems are. So, would Occam's razor cut intelligence or chance out of that process? **Psalms 139:14 Psalms 8:4 James 3:17-18** If you believe in God above, you believe in design and something bigger than us. God has a plan for all of mankind. Follow reason and not random chance and you can find answers and peace.

***So should you NOT be a Christian...?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!***