

Why I Apologize for the Christian Faith

This, with some special notes to help the gentle reader understand the context of what is being said, is the second comment I made on made on the 6th video released by The Christian Atheist on YouTube (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3NcFf0-Ml0&list=PLS9AH1236qO_UWA6dSXWf2BLxJWJP48yZ&index=37&t=366s). The videos mostly talk about either his story of being raised a Christian, converting to Atheism and finally returning to Christianity, or of insights he has gained from such an incredible journey.

This is my second comment to this video, and perhaps more appropriate to what was said in the video.

I find interesting your idea of avoiding arguments for or against God. I agree that there is such a thing as a rational Atheist, just as I (obviously) believe there is such a thing as a rational Theist. But I can't let the fight go. There is, no doubt, much Bad Faith [having beliefs not supported by credible evidence] on all sides of this debate. I've learned to avoid the non-Christians of Bad Faith, and I do what I can to admonish Christians of Bad Faith to stop making the problem worse than it already is. I yearn for a pagan or Atheist who can talk intelligently about their faith so I can have a real discussion.

Without exception, every experience I have had with an Atheist who could present a rational argument against God has been with someone who is misinformed on who Jehovah really is. I don't like to call it "straw manning" [misrepresenting the opposing viewpoint with deliberate flaws so as to be able to attack these flaws] because way too many Christians, in Bad Faith, are preaching exactly what Atheists are using for premises. I can't fault an Atheist for using a faulty premise when they are only repeating what a Christian told them. I don't think the biggest threat to Christianity is by some dead philosopher of Atheism, I think it is the Christian who takes a perverted pride in having an Absurd belief in God. And any effort I make to try to correct this misconception only further erodes the credibility of Christianity as a whole, because now Christianity is being presented as being splintered, and Christians willing to say anything to win over a convert.

But, contrary to what most philosophers say, I don't believe the point of the argument is simply to argue. I believe the point of the argument is to discover the Truth, or at least a fragment of it. I doubt that the Truth can ever be fully known in this lifetime, but that does not mean we can't get glimpses of it. If we can indeed find fragments of the Truth, then the argument still has a purpose other than to simply argue. One can "win" an argument by exposing an unTruth for what it is, or by finding a new aspect of the Truth. As such, I believe that if two interlocutors [opposing sides of a debate] end a debate, and neither of them sees any point in at least reconsidering a previously held position, then the debate was a failure. Unfortunately, to even suggest to my interlocutor that he has a valid point (even if it's a minor one or tangential to the debate) seems to end the debate with my interlocutor thinking he has won. I don't so much feel defeated as disappointed. It is sad that today's generation cannot accept the idea that one can be partially right and partially wrong.

Atheism is the belief in the nonexistent. Any argument they have against Theism is automatically at the disadvantage because they are limited to Abductive Reasoning [consider all possible options, and attempt to discredit all but one]. Theists, on the other hand, could theoretically create any scenario they wished with an all-powerful god, creating an endless number of theories the Atheist must therefore dismiss. A great many Atheists I have come across have cried "foul" of this practice, and they are right to do so. Yet Jehovah is different. Jehovah is all-powerful, yet He limits what He does for the good of man. A true understanding of Christianity shows that we cannot simply make stuff up to justify

Jehovah. The Christian monk Ockham specifically sought to put an end to this nonsense when he developed his famous Razor [Entities should not be multiplied beyond necessity; this is specifically to stop *ad hoc* modifications to theories so they can never be found false]. I recently pointed out in an Atheist video claiming to debunk Jehovah that the Euthyphro Problem and the two dilemmas of Epicurus and Averroes were all answered by the first three pages of the Bible using rather plain language (Genesis chapters 1 through 3) [this was the topic of my 7 October 2021 posting in One Hundred Eighty Nine: You Can't Prove a Negative]. The only problem I really have in defending Jehovah is the matter of pain and suffering, but it's not because I don't have a rational answer to it (all we really need is the third chapter of Genesis). It's because of the emotion involved: no one in pain wants a logical answer; they want comfort.

My faith in Christianity is in no small way based on how easy it has been to dismiss arguments made against it. As one born and raised Christian, no doubt it has been easier for me to deflect attacks than for non-Christians to internalize the rational arguments I can present. But I do believe that if I had been raised non-Christian, and could come to an understanding of certain key aspects of the Christian faith, then I would eventually find myself back as a Christian after all. And I think that is why I continue to argue for Jehovah despite all the stone walls I have come across. I have a hope that some day, I might come across someone much like myself but who was ignorant of these key aspects. I hope that I can provide the missing pieces so they can come to the same conclusion that I have.

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