



Truth for Today

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Why I am a Christian

by Don Hooton

Many people choose to be Christians for different reasons. Some are good – some not so much. And perhaps it is a good place to begin in your thinking today with the question made to a statement of belief: Why I am a Christian. First, let's begin with the "not-so-good" reasons that I am NOT a **Christian**.

First, some become Christians because of other Christians and some never come or leave because of other Christians, just as Bertrand Russell wrote in his book *Why I am not a Christian*. The paradox emphasizes that real Christianity is not defined by the way people live. It is undeniable that many accomplish much good in the name of Christianity (Mother Theresa comes to mind). It is also undeniable that people have performed horrendous acts in the name of Christianity (the Crusades comes to mind). Still, G. K. Chesterton wrote that "the reason why I am a Christian is that the Church is living and not a dead teacher." I have lived long enough to believe that people can influence others both positively and negatively – but I am not a Christian because of other Christians.

Also, some become Christians because they are afraid of hell. Some become Christians to sort of cover all bets – a Pascal's Wager sort of mind set – that given all the available options and the potential consequence, it makes sense to do the Christian thing. So, if Christianity is false then Christians have nothing to lose. But if Christianity is true then Christians have everything to gain and non-Christians have everything to lose. So, given the available options and the potential consequences, it makes sense to be a Christian – and besides, the people can be nice and the potlucks – even nicer. But this is not the reason why I am a Christian.

I am a Christian simply because I believe that **Christianity is true**. While on one level, I confess that I was introduced to Christianity and following it was easy because my parents raised me that way. If my parents raised me as an atheist or in some other religion, perhaps I would not be a Christian. What would I be? That's a guess. However, I can honestly say that if I became convinced that Christianity was not objectively true, I would renounce my faith. I am committed to truth and I believe that Christianity is true. Hence, I am a Christian.

But why am I convinced that Christianity is true? I see nature (Romans 1:18ff with Psalm 19) and I see the Bible (Psalm 119). These together have given me foundational reason to then respond to the unique claim of Christianity that Jesus was raised from the dead – proven by an empty tomb and many witnesses (1Corinthians 15:1ff).

I am a Christian because it just makes sense.

First, **there is a long run here**. Belief in God and in a morality where there was right and wrong has always existed throughout human existence. Of course, it is not unified – but the fact that it is present must raise the question - Why? Does a belief in God have some evolutionary or survival value? Truthfully, this points to something supernatural within humanity, an imprint of the Divine on the human consciousness. Add to that, there is the vast complexity of the universe that argues for a designer. There is a the "perfect" environment within the earth for the existence of life in general and human life in particular; there is a clear ex-

pansion rate of the universe, the distance of the earth from the sun, the complexity of the human brain, the relative masses of atomic particles, and many more. Because of that, well known atheist J. L. Mackie wrote, "*There is only one actual universe, with a unique set of basic materials and physical constants, and it is therefore surprising that the elements of this unique setup are just right for life when they might easily have been wrong*" [J.L. Mackie, *The Miracle of Theism*, Oxford University Press, 141].

Second, **the origin of life defies natural explanation**. Astronomer Sir Frederick Hoyle (an agnostic) made the following analogy of the possibility of the chance origin of life: "*What are the chances that a tornado might blow through a junkyard containing all the parts of a 747, accidentally assemble them into a plane, and leave it ready for take-off? The possibilities are so small as to be negligible even if a tornado were to blow through enough junkyards to fill the whole universe*" [F. Hoyle, *The Intelligent Universe*, Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 220]. Hoyle also wrote, "*There are so many of these odd coincidences essential to life that some explanation seems required to account for them*" [19]. University of Virginia astronomer J. Trefil estimates the probability of life existing anywhere in the universe to be one in a billion. "If I were a religious man," Trefil wrote, "*I would say that everything we have learned about life in the past twenty years shows that we are unique, and therefore special, in God's sight*" [R. Rood and J. Trefil, *Are We Alone?*, Scribner, 252]. Sir Francis Crick is quoted in *Scientific American* as saying, "*The origin of life appears to be almost a miracle*" [J. Horgan, "In the Beginning...", *Scientific American*, vol. 264, no. 2, pp. 116-125, 2/1991]. Harold Klein, in the same article, says that "the simplest bacterium is so... complicated from the point of view of a chemist that it is almost impossible to imagine how it happened" (120).

Third, **the Bible itself is evidence of its supernatural origin**, written over a 1500-year time span by 40 different authors in different cultures and languages, while still containing an astounding consistency in its message. Dr. Nelson Glueck was the president of Hebrew Union College and a highly respected archaeologist whose reliance upon the historical accuracy of the Bible led to the discovery of 1,500 ancient sites. Concerning that, he said, "*It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a Biblical reference. Scores of archaeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or exact detail historical statements in the Bible. And, by the same token, proper evaluation of biblical description has often led to amazing discoveries*" (Dr. Nelson Glueck, *Rivers in the Desert*, New York, 136). Renowned archaeologist Dr. William F. Albright also asserted the accuracy of the Bible: "*Thanks to modern research we now recognize its substantial historicity. The narratives of the Patriarchs, of Moses and the Exodus, of the Conquest of Canaan, of the Judges, the Monarchy, Exile, and Restoration, have all been confirmed and illustrated to an extent that I should have thought impossible forty years ago*" (William F. Albright, *History, Archaeology, and Christian Humanism*, Edinburgh, 293).

So, using the language of believers, "*I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well*" (Psalm 139:14). And regarding the Bible, "*Your word, Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens*" (119:89).

And that is why I am a Christian.

NEWS & NOTES

UPDATED PRAYER LIST

- **Hailey Boniche**'s surgery was been rescheduled on Friday, 2/7, at St. Luke's the Woodlands.
- **Kay Coss** passed away on Tuesday, 2/4. Prayers for her husband and her daughter Kay Barkoh and her family. Funeral will be Monday (2/10) at 11:00 a.m. (viewing at 10:00 a.m.) at the Impact Church of the Woodlands, 5401 Shadow Bend Place, 77381.
- **Harvey Goble** has 2/25 appointment with his surgeon.
- **Dehbrenda Preuss** will have Crohn's related surgery at The Methodist in the Houston Medical Center on 2/27.
- **Annette Yaws** had good news at her last visit with the doctor. The concern over the fistula is resolved. It healed on its own.
- **Jon Banks** was taken to the ER on Tuesday and later admitted with episodes of incredible pain from his liver and blocked intestines at UTSW hospital in DFW.
- **Several people** are battling seasonal ailments. Prayers for wellness is appreciated.
—See *Enews for Ongoing Prayer List*

MEETINGS, EVENTS, SINGINGS & STUDIES

- **WINTER ADULT CLASSES**
 - **ROMANS** | SUNDAY in the Auditorium
 - **THE MESSIAH'S MISFITS** | SUNDAY in Classroom #5
 - **INTRODUCING THE PSALMS** | WEDNESDAY in the Auditorium
- **UPCOMING SPRING ADULT CLASSES**
 - **ROMANS** | SUNDAY in the Auditorium

- **TURNING POINT** | SUNDAY in Classroom #5
- **THEN SINGS MY SOUL - PSALMS TO SING TODAY** | WEDNESDAY
- **BARNABAS GROUP** | Postcards on the Barnabas table. See Leo Betancourt
- **BUILDING A GODLY HOME** Study | 1st Sundays, 3/1, 4:00 p.m. auditorium
- **2:52 Kids Class** (MEMORIZING BIBLE FACTS & PRAISE) [2-12] | 3/1, 4:00 p.m. classroom #9
- **TEENS STUDY** (Video Study of Where Jesus Walked) [13-18] | 3/1, 4:00 p.m. class #5
- **SONG LEADER TRAINING CLASS** | (3rd Sundays) 2/23*, 4:00 p.m.
- **YOUNG ADULT STUDY** ["twenty-somethings"] Friday, 2/15, 5:30 p.m. at the Hootons.
- **TUESDAY ADULT BIBLE STUDY** [10:30 a.m. | studying Luke in classroom 5.
- **TEEN BIBLE DEVO** [12-18, 3rd Saturdays] 2/15, TBD, 6:00 p.m.
- **ADULT BIBLE STUDY** [30/40 somethings, bi-monthly] | 3/28, 6:00 p.m., C/T Chapman's.
- **OUTREACH MEETUP STUDY** | Mondays at Panera Bread at 7:00 p.m.
- **MEETING** with Ethan Longhenry **Begins TODAY** from Los Angeles, CA | 2/9-12
- **SINGING** | Sat., 3/7/2020
- **VBS** | FOCUS ON FAITH | Mon-Thurs., 6/22-25
- **YOUTH LECTURES** | NEW DATE | Sat-Sun, 8/8-9
- **MEETING** | with Ben Hall from Brooklyn, NY, 9/13-16/2020
- **LADIES DAY BIBLE STUDY** | with Sarah Lyon from Mason, OH, 10/10
- **MENS DAY BIBLE STUDY** | with David McCleister from Brandon, FL, 11/7

AREA EVENTS

- **MEETING** | Centerville Church of Christ | Centerville | 2/9-12
- **MEETING** | Alston Road church of Christ | Sugar Land | 2/21-23

DIRECTORY UPDATES

- **PHOTO DIRECTORIES** The most recent printed directory is in the foyer for members. Changes? See Brian Clark for any corrections or changes.
- **We would like all families** to update their information and ALL worship leaders to do the same. If you have any questions about the DIRECTORY application of our website, be sure to see Brian Clark.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

- **VOLUNTEER SIGN UPS for 2020**, including Communion Prep, visitor greeting and bimonthly building lockup.
- **WOULD YOU TEACH?** John Beighle is the deacon now assigned Bible Class programs and is looking for teachers for the next quarter (March-May). Email or text him if you would like to teach. He has 3 open spots at the moment.

Attendance	Last Month Avg	Last Week
Sunday Bible Class	112	127
Sunday Worship AM	180	163
Sunday Worship PM	97	111
Wednesday PM	84	77

Sunday AM Worship	2/9/2020	2/16/2020	Communion Preparation
Song Leader	Alan Stilts	Keith Arrants	February — Preuss
1st prayer	Barrett Blankenship	Adam Bohanan	Visitor Hospitality
Scripture Reading	Jacob Cowart — Prov. 4:1-9	Dwight Haas — Acts 9:20-31	February — Suarez
Lord Supper Lead	Trent Williams	Gerald Hodges	Elders
Bread	George Chapman	Trent Williams	Keith Arrants 936.582.1244
Fruit of Vine	Al Suarez	Kaku Barkoh	George Chapman 281.298.1303
Offering	Brian Clark	Jeremy Crump	Norman Davis 832.326.2966
Helper	Steve Dargan	Chris Latson	Don Hooton 936.443.6230
Helper	Granville Betton	Bobby Cleek	Deacons
Preaching	Ethan Longhenry	Don Hooton	John Beighle 806.367.3389
Usher	Dwight Haas	Jay Dunlin	Adam Bohanan 281.798.1093
Closing Prayer	Jeremy Crump	Granville Betton	Brian Clark 281.513.0706
Announcements	Keith Arrants	George Chapman	Gary LeBlanc 281.292.0262
Sunday PM Worship	2/9/2020	2/16/2020	Craig Preuss 832.477.0578
Song Leader	Steve Dargan	Dwight Osteen	Evangelists
1st prayer	George Chapman	Lester Cockrell	Don Hooton 936.443.6230
Scripture Reading	Clint Ford — Eccl. 11	Joshua Suarez — John 17:1-10	<p>You can also find us here...</p> <p>WOODLANDSCHURCHOFCHRIST.org</p> <p>facebook.com/woodlandschurchofchrist</p> <p>@woodlandscc</p> <p>woodlandschurchofchrist</p> <p>woodlandschurchofchrist</p>
Lord Supper	Leo Betancourt	Barrett Blankenship	
Preaching	Ethan Longhenry	Don Hooton	
Closing Prayer	Dwight Haas	Michael Henss	
Wednesday	2/12/2020	2/19/2020	
Song Leader	Hayden Clark	Dwight Haas	SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Worship Assemblies Sundays at 10:20 am & 5:00 pm Bible Classes for All Ages Sundays 9:30 am & Wednesdays 7:00 pm
Invitation	Ethan Longhenry	Adam Bohanan	
Closing Prayer	Jeremy Crump	Hayden Clark	
Announcements	Dwight Haas	Barrett Blankenship	