

THE DEFENDER'S GUIDE FOR LIFE'S TOUGHEST QUESTIONS

Preparing Today's Believers for the
Onslaught of Secular Humanism

{ Ray Comfort }

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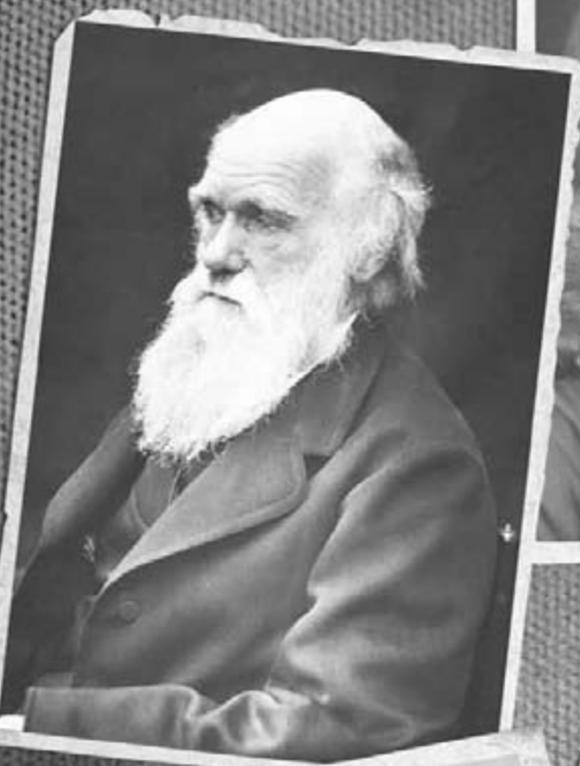
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Preface

There is a popular atheist poster that says, “Atheism: Good enough for these idiots.” The “idiots” pictured in the poster are icons of history — from top left there are the faces of Ernest Hemingway, Abraham Lincoln, Carl Sagan, Mark Twain, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Albert Einstein, and of course, Charles Darwin.

This poster is typical of those who called themselves atheists. For example, Thomas Jefferson said, “I have ever thought religion a concern purely between our God and our consciences, for which we were accountable to Him, and not to the priests.”¹ He wasn’t an atheist. Albert Einstein lamented the fact that atheists lied about his beliefs: “In view of such harmony in the cosmos which I, with my limited human mind, am able to recognize, there are yet people who say there is no God. But what makes me really angry is that they quote me for support of such views.”² The brilliant and witty Mark Twain despised organized religion, but he wasn’t an atheist. He said, “None of us can be as great as God, but any of us can be as good.”³ Benjamin Franklin loved the God who gave him life — “It is that particular wise and good God, who is the author and owner of our system, that I propose for the object of my praise and adoration.”⁴ Charles Darwin was disillusioned with Christianity,

but he was far from being an atheist. He said, “When thus reflecting I feel compelled to look to a First Cause having an intelligent mind in some degree analogous to that of man; and I deserve to be called a Theist.”⁵ President Abraham Lincoln revered God, and said, “While we are grateful to all the brave men and officers for the events of the past few days, we should, above all, be very grateful to Almighty God, who gives us victory.”⁶ The famous American astronomer and author Carl Sagan, who went to meet his Maker, dying of cancer in December 1996, was also not an atheist. He said, “An agnostic is somebody who doesn’t believe in something until there is evidence for it, so I’m agnostic.”⁷ Carl Sagan didn’t know if God existed.

There is one atheist in the poster — Ernest Hemingway. He was the American author who wrote fiction and made the profound statement, “All thinking men are atheists.” He is said to be “a hero to atheists everywhere.” Sadly, he was an alcoholic who became so depressed with life he “put the end of the barrel into his mouth, pulled the trigger, and blew out his brains.”⁸ On seeing the poster, one atheist said, “Ugh, I don’t think Hemingway is a good advertisement for atheism due to his alcoholism and suicide.⁹ Surely we could find people with lives that ended happier than his for this poster?”¹⁰ Another remarked, “If you sat down and really talked with those guys, I’m sure they’d all admit to ‘atheism’ in restricted senses of the word, though.”¹¹ Sure.

So there you have it. The one poster boy for atheism is a pretty pathetic advertisement. And you can’t blame Hemingway for killing himself. He had no idea where he came from, what he was doing on earth, or where he was going when death eventually came. All atheists are *unthinking* men, but when it comes down to it there really aren’t too many of them. As Sir Isaac Newton so wisely said, “Atheism is so senseless and odious to mankind that it never had many professors.”¹²

Most of the questions and objections in this book come from those who call themselves “atheists.” Many have placed their faith in erroneous information such as the above, and because of it have hardened themselves against God and Christianity (Romans 1). They ask questions but don’t really want answers. My hope is that you are open to reason, and that you will find that the answers will give you another perspective.

Thank you for picking up this book.

LEVITICUS 25:44

44 And as for your male and female slaves whom you may have—from the nations that are around you, from them you may buy male and female slaves. 45 Moreover you may buy of the children of the strangers who dwell among you, and their families who are with you, and they beget in your land; and you may take them as an property. 46 And you shall become your inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them as a possession; But regarding your permanent slaves, they shall be shall not rule over one another with rigor.

47 Now if a sojourner or stranger close to you becomes rich, and one of your brethren who dwells by him becomes poor, the stranger or sojourner close to you, or to a member of the stranger's family, 48 after he is sold he may be redeemed again. One of his brothers may redeem him; 49 or his uncle or his uncle's son may redeem him; or anyone who is near of kin to him in his family may redeem him; or if he is able he may redeem himself. 50 Thus he shall reckon with him who bought him: The price of his release shall be according to the number of years from the Year of Jubilee; it shall be according to the time of a hired servant for the years remaining to them he shall repay the price which was bought. 51 And if there are few years until the Year of Jubilee, he shall reckon with him, and if there are many years he shall repay him the price of a hired servant. 52 He shall not rule with rigor over him, as he is not redeemed; and his children shall be released in the Year of Jubilee and his children shall be released in the Year of Jubilee.

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Chapter One

Humanity: Rights and Suffering

Why do you concentrate on Darwin's alleged racism but mysteriously fall silent about your own religion's support and outright endorsement of the filthy practice of slavery? You're a complete hypocrite, Ray.

Both thy bondmen, and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids. Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a

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possession; they shall be your bondmen for ever: but over your brethren the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigour (Leviticus 25:44–46; KJV).

There is no denying it — the Bible not only condones slavery, it encourages it, tells owners how to treat their slaves, and even instructs owners on what they are to do if their slave needs punishment.

Before you slam this book closed and claim a slam dunk against the Bible, it's important for you to realize that we look at the issue through the colored glasses of cruel slavery of the American South. We think of slaves as being rounded up like wild animals, packed into ships, held in chains, starved to the point of death, cruelly whipped, sold like chattel, and treated worse than dogs. History shapes the word “slave” that way for us.

However, in most cases the word “slave” in Scripture and the word “servant” are interchangeable. Replace the word “slave” with the word “servant” and it will help to bring the issue into perspective for you. If you study biblical admonitions to slaves, when they were set free, they were given the option to stay as slaves for life, if they so desired.

I said “most cases” because people sold themselves into slavery when they were in debt. There were slaves taken in war. The Jews were taken and used as slaves when they were in Egypt, and they were treated with terrible cruelty.

It is important to realize that both the Old and New Testaments condemn the practice of what it calls “man-stealing.” This is what happened in Africa in the 19th century. Innocent Africans were cruelly kidnapped from their loved ones by slave-hunters, who sold them to slave-traders, who brought them to the United States to work on plantations and farms. This practice is so condemned by God that the penalty for such a crime in the Mosaic Law was

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death: “Anyone who kidnaps another and either sells him or still has him when he is caught must be put to death” (Exodus 21:16; NIV).

Sadly, much of American slavery was “justified” from Bible verses. But that is nothing new. Throughout history men have twisted the Bible for their own selfish gain. Hitler did it to foster hatred for the Jews, when he painted them as “Christ-killers.” What this does is confirm the biblical truth that the human heart truly is wicked (including mine).

Like most other members of my species, I sometimes find life overwhelming and absurd. I struggle with the knowledge that the people I love will eventually die, and that their deaths will almost certainly be preceded by a period of suffering and decline. More selfishly, I am conscious of my own numbered days, my own vulnerability to sickness and decay.

Any thinking person who looks at this life with all of its pains and struggles is going to feel “overwhelmed.” Millions try to find refuge in drugs or in alcohol. Most try to deal with their dread of death by using the word “eventually,” thinking that they are putting it off into the distant future. But the reality is, millions are cut off by death in their youth and they find that their “eventually” wasn’t distant at all.

When I was 20 years old, I began thinking for the first time in my godless life. I thought about life’s purpose and its fragility, and how it seemed insane that we had the amazing ability to put a man on the moon, and yet we didn’t even know what we were doing here on earth. I thought it strange that medical science spent billions of dollars trying to find a cure for the common cold, and it did nothing to try to stop the aging process. It seemed insane that

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we were all going to die and nobody talked about it, asked why, or even looked for an answer to it.

So I thought that it was wise to simply live a long, healthy life. I would try to die healthy. I decided to visit my doctor to see if he had some advice. Hope dissipated as I watched him light up a cigarette and breathe the carcinogen-filled smoke into his sick-looking body.

Neither can a fantasy help, one that tells us we are nothing but part of a "species." Then again, each of us can, at any moment in time, stop believing the fantasy and with a little thought use our God-given eyes and ears to know that God exists. This amazing place we call a "universe" didn't happen by accident.

Each of us (by the grace of God) can listen to the voice of our conscience, know that we have sinned against His perfect law, and understand that Hell is a reality. It's then that the Cross will make sense. Upon our repentance and faith in Jesus, God will give us everlasting life and lift us out of the futility of a godless lifestyle.

You should stop using the criminal justice system as an analogy for your God. As you have had pointed out many times, it is entirely unjust for someone else to pay the punishment for the crimes you are guilty of.

As far as I know, you are the only one who has ever said to me that it is entirely unjust for someone else to pay for crimes of which another is guilty. I have to conclude that you made this statement rashly, and without too much thought. There is nothing at all unjust about any father stepping in and paying a speeding fine for his son. It happens all the time, and the judge has no concerns about where the payment comes from, as long as it is lawful money.

How would you react if you were guilty of violating civil law, and your dad loved you so much that he sold his house and spent all of his hard-earned savings to pay the massive fine so that you

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could get out of prison? Would you point at your father and accuse him of some sort of crime? How perverse would that be? If you did that, you would not only be despising his incredible sacrifice, but you would also reveal something horrible about your own character.

That's what you are doing when you accuse Almighty God of being unjust. He became a man in Jesus of Nazareth to take the punishment for the sin of the world, so that we could live forever. If you or I accuse Him of being unjust, it reveals something horrible about *our* character. We need to humble ourselves, get on our knees, and thank God for giving us life in the first place, and then for offering wicked humanity such an unspeakable gift.

Do you really believe the Holocaust was God's punishment of the Jews?

I would never say that God used Hitler to punish the Jews. If God treated any of us justly and punished us according to our sins, we would all be in Hell in an instant. I'm Jewish and I am as guilty as any Gentile of violating His law.

However, you and I get to stay alive for a time because God is rich in mercy, is filled with what the Bible calls "lovingkindness," and He particularly lavished this loving-kindness upon the Jewish nation. If you study the Scriptures, you will see that He promised them that if they loved and obeyed Him He would give them long life, health, prosperity, and protection from their enemies.

But He also warned that if they disobeyed Him, His hand of protection would be removed. This happened when they were conquered by the Babylonian nation.

When you read Jeremiah and Lamentations, you will see that they were starved, raped, and horribly murdered. The Babylonians

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were incredibly cruel — they hanged people by one hand, ripped babies from mothers' wombs, committed genocide, and used slave labor. They, like the Nazis, were merciless. The Nazis were trying to eliminate what they believed were "lesser races." Darwin promoted this idea in his book *The Descent of Man*.

Yet with all their sins, God was still rich in mercy and He promised that He would draw the Jewish people back from where He had scattered them throughout the world (see Nehemiah 1:8; Luke 21:24). He said that He would give them their own homeland. That happened in 1948 when they became a nation in one day, as the Scriptures said they would:

Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion was in labor, she gave birth to her children (Isaiah 66:8).

This accurately describes what happened on May 14, 1948. The Zionist Jews declared independence for an Israeli sovereign nation for the first time in 2,900 years. Hours beforehand a United Nations mandate expired, ending British control of the land. During a 24-hour span of time, foreign control of the land of Israel formally ceased. Israel was literally born in a single day.

Within hours of the declaration of independence in 1948, Israel was attacked by the surrounding countries of Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia.

Right now the Jews are still surrounded by enemies who are sworn to their death as a nation. Their only hope is to turn to God with their whole heart, and if they obey Him, they will have victory. Only time will tell us if they have learned anything from history.

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I want an explanation from God regarding my dad's motor neuron disease, my friend's father raping her, and the chap in Belfast who was hacked to death in front of his wife I read about on Google today. All of which is not my fault and God had the power to stop it. God also has the power to heal my dad, resurrect that murdered guy, though I'm not sure how God would solve the rape thing.

I'm very sorry to hear about your dad and his sickness. It must be heartbreaking. I lost my dad a few years ago.

If you want an explanation from God, you need to read Genesis 3 and Romans 5. We are in a sin-cursed world because Adam sinned and we *all* sin, too. But we are in this mess due to sin, not because God made the world this way. God originally made everything perfect (Genesis 1:31; Dueteronomy 32:4) and it is *our* fault the world is like this. But take heart, this is why Jesus stepped into history — to save us from sin and death. Only Christians have something to look forward to (see Revelation 21 and 22).

But to your important question: You think that God should somehow prevent evil. He should actually stop the murderer and the rapist. This is because you (understandably) consider those two acts to be evil. How about the liar and the thief, the fornicator, pornographer, blasphemer, and the adulterer? Do you think that they are evil and should be stopped? God considers them to be extremely evil. But that's where conversion comes in (the new birth spoken of in John 3). God miraculously removes the hatred from the heart. He changes us on the inside so that we want to stop doing all evil.

So how sincere are you in your desire to see evil stopped? Are you prepared to start with yourself?

Any Christians out there want to take on why the Bible has such a low opinion of women? The Bible is so much more damaging to society in that regard than porn, in my opinion.

You obviously don't know your Bible, or perhaps you have been visiting atheist websites and getting a lopsided view of the Scriptures from a few verses from the Old Testament. The Bible highly esteems women. Take the time to read the Book of Ruth or the Book of Esther and other parts of the Old Testament, where women are portrayed as heroes. Or read Proverbs 31 to see the incredible virtues of a liberated, hardworking, much-loved wife and businesswoman.

Then read in the New Testament about how Jesus treated women with the utmost respect — the “sinful” woman who washed His feet, and the one who was caught in the act of adultery. Or read in the Epistles about how husbands are instructed to love their wives as much as they love their own bodies.

Most women have no idea how men talk about them when they are not around — how they boast of their sexual exploits. So I would suggest that you take the time to read the Bible and see how God's Word honors the fairer sex, while much of a godless world treats women as sex objects to be used and then discarded.

Sorry, Ray, I do not take my morals from a God who drowns opposing armies in the ocean, killed every living thing on earth in a global flood, punished humanity for all time for eating a piece of fruit, rained fire and brimstone on entire cities because he didn't like their behavior, killed the first born of an entire nation, and murdered his own son. Thank God he does not exist.

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It seems that you don't know your Bible. God didn't "kill every living thing on earth in a global flood." He allowed sea life, land animals on the ark, and a family of eight people to be saved. He didn't punish humanity "for all time for eating a piece of fruit." Adam was punished for his "disobedience" (see Romans 5:19). If you refuse God's mercy, you too will be punished for your disobedience, not for Adam's.

You are also wrong when you said that "God murdered His own Son." The Bible says that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. Jesus of Nazareth was the Creator in human form (see John 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:16). The reason God became a man was to suffer for the sin of the world (taking the punishment that is due us). We violated God's law (the Ten Commandments), and Jesus paid our fine. That means you can have your case dismissed. It means you can escape Hell, and receive everlasting life as a gift from God (see Romans 6:23).

God warned the pharaoh ten times that He would judge Egypt, and you pinpointed the reason for God drowning his army. It was because it was an "opposing" army. That's a good lesson for us: oppose and you lose. Like Pharaoh, you have been warned (through the Ten Commandments) that God will judge the world because it is at war with Him (see James 4:4). If you refuse to surrender, and you carry on with your rebellion, God will give you over to what the Bible calls a "reprobate mind." I would hate for that to happen to you.

You are right, though, about the fire and brimstone. The same justice of God that fell on Sodom and Gomorrah abides on you (see John 3:36), believe it or not. Please think about your eternal salvation. There's nothing more important.

Ray, what is wrong with using filthy language? Biblically or otherwise? Words are words, and it is you who projects meaning onto them. "Filthiness" is a category that certain words are intentionally used to carry, meaning that if (for example) the entire human race forgot the filthy words of today, new ones would pop up to take their place in the semantic vacuum. But I ask again, what's wrong with using the f-word (filthy word)?

If you are an atheist, you can't say anything is morally "wrong." Is rape wrong? If you answer yes, I ask you, "Who says?" If you say, "Society," then if society deemed rape morally okay, does it become right? What about murder? Is that right or wrong? What *if* society says it's right, just for getting rid of Jews and darker-skinned people? Is it then right? Is it morally okay to kill children in the womb? You say again, "If society says so." How about men marrying men? If society says so. Is pedophilia wrong? Same scenario.

You have no rock to stand on. We do. The rock upon which the Christian stands is immovable, and it will judge all of humanity (including you) on the Day of Judgment (see Romans 2:12). We have the solid rock of the law of God. The commandments were written in stone, and they are unchanging. They tell us that murder is morally wrong, and so are adultery, fornication, lust, greed, envy, and pride. Everything that violates the spirit of God's law is morally wrong (see Romans 7:14). That includes what the Bible calls "filthy language" (see Colossians 3:8).

A recent study found that the use of filthy language tends to help certain people deal with pain:

The researchers enlisted 64 undergraduate volunteers and had them submerge their hand in a tub of ice water for as long as possible while repeating a swear word of their choice. The experiment was then repeated with the

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volunteer repeating a more common word that they would use to describe a table. Contrary to what the researcher expected, the volunteers kept their hands submerged longer while repeating the swear word.¹³

All these researchers found was that certain human beings with a filthy mouth (subconsciously) place value on filthy talk. No doubt blasphemy was included in their language.

But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies (Matthew 15:18–19).

Now please explain why there has NEVER been a single substantiated report of a single amputee that regained his amputated limb back from God. Why God does not heal amputees?

How does he know that this has never happened in history, or somewhere else other than in his very limited world? The best he can offer is that he has never heard of such a thing.

His broad statement is typical of those who adamantly say that there is no God. In reality, they don't know that God doesn't exist. So they need to sit at the feet of the learned professor Dawkins and stay with the word "probably."

The question comes with the presupposition that God has never healed even one amputee. The questioner assumes that he has all knowledge of all things that God has done since the creation of the world. He knows what has happened throughout history in Africa, India, China, Russia, and every country on earth, since the beginning of time. He claims "divine omniscience."

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It would be more humble for him to say, "With the very limited knowledge that I have of the works of God throughout history, I believe that there has never been a medically substantiated case of Him healing someone whose limb (or any body part) had been amputated. I really don't know if He has or if He hasn't, but I still come to the conclusion that He doesn't exist."

I have to admit, though, that if God *did* heal an amputee today, it would be nothing short of a miracle. If He created a moving, living human arm, filled with incredibly complex and responding muscles, joined to an unbelievably complex hand, with a mass of blood vessels filled with life-giving blood, that connects to a pumping human heart, with an amazingly intricate nervous system that responds to the phenomenal human brain, it would be an "evident" miracle. It would be absolute and undeniable proof that He does indeed exist. Conceded.

Take a moment to look downward and slightly to your right. There (unless you are an amputee) you should see a living human arm. Bend it at the middle. Now slowly pull it up toward your eyes. Focus and look at it. Think for a few moments about the amazing ability of Almighty God. Listen carefully to the God-given voice of "reason." You are not an animal. You have the ability to reason. No animal can do this in a way that a human being can. Then, while still listening to that voice, slowly read this Bible verse: "And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off [amputated] his right ear. But Jesus answered and said, 'Permit even this.' And He touched his ear and healed him" (Luke 22:50–51). If, for some reason, you are not hearing the voice of reason, may He do the same to you.