

Apologetics IV

1. Attacks on Christianity and the Bible

- Notes from last week: Theological Issues with Evolution, Dinosaurs, Flood.
- a. What about other religions? Arrogant to say you're right. "Closeminded."
 1. The exclusivity of Christianity is very offensive in our world. Hard for people to say that kind people who genuinely follow another religion may go to Hell.
 2. Illustration of the blind men and the elephant
 3. Contradictory statements can't both be true. One must be wrong.
 4. Again, it goes back to Jesus – did he rise from the dead?
 5. Problem: everyone thinks they're right! You are claiming to see the whole elephant. You think my view about truth is wrong and yours is right. You think your view is better. Just as "closeminded."
- b. The destiny of the unevangelized
 - 1) God is working to bring all people to Himself.
 - 2) How do they respond to the grace God has given them? Rejected it or accepted it?
 - 3) Living in an Old Testament reality – Jesus has not yet come to them.
 - 4) Romans 1:20 – We are without excuse.
- c. A loving God wouldn't send people to Hell
 - 1) Jesus warned people about Hell
 - 2) God will deal with evil – remember the problem of evil? "Why doesn't God do something about the evil in the world?" He will, he will banish it forever.
 - 3) God is just – wickedness must be dealt with.
 - 4) Separation from God necessarily leads to death. Not arbitrary; not cruel. (ex: like food)
 - 5) If you lose Hell, you lose Heaven.
- d. Why would God create people he knew would go to Hell?
 - 1) Assuming that God could have created a world where everyone freely chooses Him.
- e. Christians are... hateful, hypocritical, etc
 - 1) Christians certainly aren't perfect.
 - 2) Ex: you don't judge Beethoven by someone playing his music poorly.
 - 3) What about Jesus though? And what he taught?
 - 5) Some Christians are hypocritical. But you'll find hypocrites everywhere.

- 6) Christians are some of the only people who admit their sinfulness and live authentically.
- f. Dead men don't rise
 - 1) "Any naturalistic explanation is more likely than resurrection."
 - 2) This is only true if you're biased against the supernatural. "It can't be a miracle because I don't believe in God."
 - 3) The whole point is that it was a remarkable event!
- g. You just believe that because of your culture/upbringing
 - 1) Textbook genetic fallacy. Well then, you're just an atheist because of that.
- h. Unanswered Prayers
 - 1) Similar to emotional problem of evil – Not entitled to have God do what you want.
- i. Feeling Unworthy
 - 1) We are unworthy. But God chose to give himself for you any way; because of His love.
- j. The Bible
 - 1) Contradictions in the Bible (Discrepancies)
 - i. Are there contradictions in the Bible? How many contradictions would make the bible illegitimate?
 - ii. Ex: Moses spoke to God face-to-face, yet John 1:18 - no one has ever seen God.
Ex: Genealogy in Matthew vs Luke
 - iii. The Bible is written by people under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.
 - iv. Eye witness account will have differences – evidence of authenticity.
 - v. It's okay – ask honest questions. Some things we don't know.
 - vi. Missing words and insignificant details – Nuance.
 - 2) Violence of the Bible
 - i. The Bible is reflecting events as they happened. This doesn't mean this is how it should have happened. It was a brutal time.
 - ii. It is God's responsibility to bring justice.
 - iii. "The cup of God's wrath was not yet full."
 - iv. God sometimes uses people/war to bring judgment.
 - v. Sodom and Gomorrah as our paradigm. (And Noah).
 - 3) Slavery and women
 - i. God reveals himself to people where they are.

- ii. The Bible has a very high view of women – especially when compared to the cultural landscape.
- iii. Biblical slavery is redemptive in comparison to the cultural standards.
- iv. Biblical slavery isn't American slavery. No slave trading.
- v. There was no welfare or governmental assistance. Slavery as option for the poor.
- vi. Philemon.

4) Bible is Ancient

- i. Yes. Truth is truth no matter how old it is.
- ii. Antiquity does not imply error.

5) Different denominations and interpretations

- i. The core essentials are the same. Clear where needed.
- ii. Impossible for the Bible to address everything.
- iii. People get confused.
- iv. God wants us to seek and study and rely on him.
- v. Differences aren't always bad.

k. Christians and LGBTQ+ issues – major issue in our culture.

- 1) The creator knows what is best for his creation – what will lead to human flourishing.
- 2) Helping people do what is best for them is loving, and helping people avoid things that will hurt them. This is love. Love is at the very heart of Christianity and at the heart of God.
- 3) Ex: Parenting – Seems unfair/cruel to the child.
- 4) Problem: “I know better than God,” “I want this more than I want God.” “God owes me an explanation.”