

Review: Ray Comfort, *Faith Is for Weak People: Responding to the Top 20 Objections to the Gospel*, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI, 2019

Pages: 215

Sharpen Your Evangelism

Ray does well to condense common objections which anyone who witnesses for their faith will find close agreement to. Old canards come up time and again, however, in today's world simply having rational answers to these is unfortunately not enough as people like to lash rather than "endure sound doctrine".

Nevertheless, attempting to move into the realm of the conscious and simply preaching law and the gospel is never a bad thing and may save you some witnessing pain.

The study questions after each chapter are an excellent learning aid and well worth answering personally; if you do this you will learn more.

Introduction (pp. 13-16)

I) Big Things First - Dealing With the Goliath of Fear (pp. 17-23)

1. So few Christians have a deep concern for the lost because many are either false converts, lazy ("that's the pastor's job"), suffer from the fear of man, or due to their soteriology don't see a need.
2. The Church's mission is not social justice, it is to "seek and to save the lost" (Mt 18.13), and the lost can only be saved by the gospel, not by charitable works.
3. Spurgeon called evangelism an "irksome" task since you are always confronting strangers with a message they don't want to hear.
4. The greatest fear in evangelising is rejection; a single rejection can outweigh hundreds of prior positive encounters.

5. David's motivation for fighting Goliath was to avenge the insults he made against the God of Israel.
6. The hardest thing is to trust God financially, as opposed to leaning on a salaried wage, partly due to societal pressures and pride. Conversely, it becomes easier and easier to trust God for protection while evangelising.
7. Lack of trust on someone else's part is offensive in proportion to the time and effort invested into the relationship. A Christian not trusting God would be highly offensive to Him.

II) More Important Than Apologetics (pp. 25-36)

1. The Church's biblical agenda is to go and teach all nations per Matthew 28.13.
2. The moral law is like a stone in the sling of the gospel which must be flung first for the weapon to be effective.
3. Lot's wife turning into a pillar of salt, Balaam's donkey rebuking the prophet, and Jonah being swallowed by a whale and surviving for seventy-two hours are all hard-to-believe stories.
4. The Indiana Jones analogy reveals that the disarming power of the Ten Commandments is able to overcome all apologetic objections, like the gun over the sword.
5. The hook is the Ten Commandments and the sinner's conscience is the jaw.
6. Jesus used the law in the encounter with the rich young ruler in Luke 18.18-24, hitting him with the seventh, sixth, eighth, fifth, and ninth commandments in that order, then exposing him on the first commandment with his worship of Mammon.
7. Charles Spurgeon, Charles Finney, and Billy Sunday all preached the law of God.

III) "If God is supposed to Be in Control of the World, Why Does it Seem so Out of Control?" (pp. 37-41)

1. Pandemic viruses, rape, murder, genocide, pornography, starvation, divorce, abortion, kidnapping, and prostitution all demonstrate that this world is fallen.
2. An unbeliever is usually like a blind man without knowledge of God's holiness, however, some are really misotheists and know full well what they are doing.
3. Life before the fall was abundant, without want.
4. Satan is the god of this world (II Cr 4.4).
5. The coming kingdom of God will be a millennial reign with Christ in charge (Rv 20.4).
6. The wolf will lie down with the lamb in the Millennial reign.
7. Belief is important as ultimately all philosophies assume some basic axioms or beliefs to be necessarily true in order to do epistemology. As applied to the gospel, without belief first it is impossible for a sinner to be saved.

IV) "What Sort of God Would Threaten to Torture People in Hell Forever Just Because They Don't Believe in Him? I (pp. 43-50)

V) "What Sort of God Would Threaten to Torture People in Hell Forever Just Because They Don't Believe in Him? II (pp. 51-71)

Lady Justice's sword represents punishment, held below the scales to symbolise judgment first, and she is blindfolded to denote impartiality.

A slingstone has no real power without the sling.

1. All three Northwestern Airlines pilots were drunk during flight, endangering all passengers.
2. God's holiness is as a consuming fire (Hb 12.29) against our sinfulness.
3. Looking directly at the sun for a length of time permanently destroys receptor cells in the eye.

4. Looking at Jesus should remind one of His consuming holiness.
5. Objective Lady Just has her scales raised over a sword ready to punish the guilty.
6. Romans 3.20 forcefully states the law has no power to save, only to condemn.
7. Romans 7.7 dispels the notion that being delivered from the law is identical to being delivered *to* sin.
8. I am currently 6.5/10 for the lost; less so for rich and proud Australians, more so for the poor of other countries who are more receptive.

VI) Why Should I Care About What Happens After I Die if You Can't Even Prove That There's Life After Death? (pp. 67-73)

1. No one can know there's no afterlife as they must prove the negative.
2. I John 5.13 states Christians have eternal life.
3. Multitudes were raised in the Old Testament; one by Elisha's bones being touched, a whole army by God which Elijah saw, and the son of the Shulamite woman by Elisha, and a son of a widow of Zarepta by Elijah.
4. "Marvelling" at a resurrection miracle is discounting the power of God over life and death.
5. Jesus' resurrection was the first permanent one (the others [even Lazarus] still had to die again somehow).
6. Unbelief in God's Word is a sin as it is calling God a liar at base.
7. Faith that acid is corrosive can be tested by pouring some on skin as if it were water.

VII) How Can You Believe That God Is Love When There Is so Much Suffering in the World? (pp. 75-83)

1. Since only God is omniscient, admitting ignorance about something is always possible.

2. Use of modern technology and communications infrastructure is all done on faith; only a handful of of engineers know exactly how they work.
3. I have not suffered that much in life.
4. Suffering never made me question God's existence or His goodness.
5. Suffering should point believers to the way out, rather than towards a non-sequitur that the Creation doesn't have a Creator.
6. God shouldn't be blamed since **A)** most suffering is caused by human folly or rebellion against God, and **B)** God is always within His rights to remove life in a manner He sees fit given He gave it and sustains it by His good pleasure.
7. The gospel lifts the Christian above suffering in this life given the certain promise of eternal life in heaven.

VIII) Isn't the God of the Old Testament Different From the God of the New Testament? (pp. 85-91)

1. God should be guiltless of genocide in the eyes of atheism since He doesn't exist!
2. Go requires morality per Leviticus 20.7.
3. "I have no beliefs in any gods" is designed to remove any onus on the atheist to account for the creation; that the default position should be atheism over theism.
4. Romans 1.20 says that the world is without excuse when it comes to knowledge of the Creation and therefore existence of a Creator.
5. Atheists' main issue is God's standards of morality compared to their own.
6. The God of each testament is the same from Hebrews 13.8.
7. Modern knowledge can never bring repentance because the carnal mind is at enmity with God and cannot be subjugated by the law (Romans 8.7).

IX) Would You Sacrifice Your Child if God Asked You to? (pp. 93-97)

1. The religious leaders thought they had Jesus since they were overconfident in their own understanding of the law.
2. The question of child sacrifice is put to Christians to equate them (and God) with child murder.
3. Abraham told Isaac that God would provide *Himself* a sacrifice.
4. Abraham and Isaac are Father and Son.
5. John called Jesus the Lamb of God in John 1.29.
6. Idolatry (breaking the First Commandment) is loving something other than God.
7. Oprah doesn't like the God of the Bible and so decided to create one in her own image.

X) Aren't Religions the Cause of More Wars and Suffering Than Anything Else in History? (pp. 99-106)

There were 1,763 wars up to 2004 per the *Encyclopedia of War*. Under seven percent were religious, two-thirds of which were caused by Islam.

95M died in WWI and WWII.

Mens rea means “guilty mind”, meaning that the act is not culpable unless the mind is guilty.

1. 95M died in WWs I and II.
2. Only 7% of all wars were religious.
3. Atheism has killed over 100M.
4. Subjective morality is the belief that one's own morality is just that and can be determined either by self or some group of selves.

5. Atheists face a moral dilemma in objectively labelling anything as “good” or “evil”, also whether child pornography is wrong if victims are anonymous and unawares.

6. *Mens rea is to be guilty by having acted with intent.*

7. A reprobate mind is one hardened against sin and discernment of good.

XI) If God Is so Loving, Why Won't Christians Let Gay People Be Themselves? (pp. 107-113)

1. Christians have an image of being against peoples’ “innocent” sexual lifestyles.

2. Awakening suddenly from a deep sleep cause cause the person to go in shock and react irrationally.

3. The way around the sodomite’s prejudice is not to mention his perversion, rather the Ten Commandments.

4. The objective is to awaken their conscious to sin and see they are guilty *in spite of* their deviancy.

5. I Cr 6.9-10.

6. Jesus said that whosoever looketh upon a woman with lust hath already committed adultery with her in his heart (Mt 5.28).

7. I Timothy 1.9-10 says the law was made for sodomites.

XI) Are You Saying That You Are Going to Heaven, But Millions of Sincere Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists Are Going to Hell Because They Don't Believe as You Do? (pp. 115-121)

1. Some questions are loaded with untrue premises and so cannot be answered with a simple “yes” or “no”.

2. Diverting to God’s law is important to stimulate the conscious and attempt to move into the realm of the conscious, or spiritual, rather than stay with the mind.

3. Omniscience is all knowing and omnipotence all powerful.
4. Proverbs 15.8 says that the wickeds' sacrifices are abomination to God.
5. Religious works offend God as they are offered by imperfect vessels and so are inherently corrupt.
6. The gospel is good news to *all* men as Luke 2.14 says.
7. An agnostic has a belief on having no belief either way, whereas an atheist actively believes there is no God.

XII) Why Are There so Many Hypocrites in the Church? (pp. 127-128)

1. “Scratch a saint and you’ll find a sinner” points to the “old man” still part of each Christian which can lead him into sin under provocative circumstances.
2. The inner man is revealed by his words (Matthew 12.34), particularly when the atheist begins using profanity, his deeds (Lk 6.43), whether good or evil, and his inaction in the face of evil (Romans 7.19a).
3. Thomas Jefferson invented an inalienable right called the “pursuit of happiness” and attributed it to God.
4. The greatest error of human pursuits is believing that they will result in happiness in and of themselves.
5. Doing God’s will is more important than a Christian’s personal pursuit of happiness.
6. Jesus Christ delivers from death (Hb 2.15).
7. Felix the governor reacted with fear and trembling at Paul’s preaching.

XIII) Why Should We Believe the Biblical Account of Creation When Evolution, Which Is Proven Science, Says Something Different? (pp. 129-136)

The monobrow is said to be a vestigial remnant of the browridge of our ancestors.

Atheists are at war with Christians.

1. Atheists fight to live their life restrained only by their subjective morality as opposed to submitting to God's law.
2. Christians fight to save those who don't want to be saved.
3. Richard Dawkins claimed it would be absolutely immoral not to abort a baby with Down syndrome in the womb.
4. Adaptation is the changing of a species as a result of external environmental factors.
5. Speciation is the changing of an animal so that it can no longer breed with its ancestor-species (however 'species' is defined).
6. There is no observable experimental evidence for Darwinian evolution; all we observe is slight changes within "species" and never a change from one kind into another.
7. Asking someone if they believe in the afterlife is one option to move the conversation on.

XIV) The Bible Was Written by Men. Don't Men Make Mistakes? (pp. 137-145)

Skeptics often ask if there is a possibility that God doesn't exist, which is designed to negate the axiom of a Creator.

חַפַּץ means to "take hold".

Deuteronomy 22.28-29 refers to consensual sex as the previous verses deal with rape and require the death penalty for the man.

1. Knowing what happens in the end is comforting since no matter how many battles we may lose, the victory will be ours.
2. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation.

3. God's existence is axiomatic since we are already living in the creation to consider this.
4. Paul did not rely on human wisdom to preach the gospel since the power to convict a sinner is only found in God's words.
5. Atheists strain at a gnat by equating sodomy with eating shellfish, and that 'rape victims' must marry their 'rapists', yet swallow a camel by passing over the many proofs of scripture's inspiration as found in prophecy.
6. Scripture is a weapon to be used to defeat the enemy.
7. Jesus defines a believer as one knowing both Father and Son and having life eternal.

XV) You Can't Prove God Exists; Even if You Could, if Everything Needs a Cause, What god Made God? (pp. 147-158)

The power of the Holy Spirit and the sinner's conscience are two important proofs of God's existence.

1. The Second Law of Thermodynamics states that all the energy in the universe is inexorably moving to a lower or disordered state of "entropy" where less work can be done.
2. If the earth were eternal then there would no be any energy differences in any part of the universe meaning no work would be possible, which is not what we observe.
3. DNA is deoxyribonucleic acid and is a twin-coiled four-nucleotide code on a sugar-phosphate backbone contained in every cell. The body uses the code to make certain proteins and self-replicate.
4. Like a book, DNA can be read in a line, and has chromosomes (chapters) of coded letter groups set apart for some purpose (e.g. the non-somatic reproductive chromosomes [X or Y] and the other 22 somatic ones).
5. DNA is proof of an Intelligent Designer since it functions as a book, and no one believes you can get a book without an author to write it.

6. God addresses idolatry in the first two commandments.

7. Idolatry is setting up any image (physical or virtual) as a personal god and obeying it rather than the Living God.

XVI) Unbelievers Are as Good as Any Christian, if Not Better, so Why Aren't We Good Enough to Get Into Heaven? (pp. 159-172)

The US has about a million self-identified witches, many of which believe they will go to Summerland in the next world.

1. Talking to witches is no problem seeing as you are at least starting from a point that the spirit world exists.

2. When the witch denies God it makes it harder to continue as they are attacking the axiom of Christian truth.

3. Talking about going to hell for tattoos and the historical misrepresentation of Halloween are rabbit trails.

4. John 1.1, John 14.9, and I Timothy 3.16 each prove Jesus is God.

5. The Catholic Church says salvation is by grace *with* good works, i.e., that they definitely contribute to a person's salvation.

6. Sin is transgression of the law (see I John 3.4).

7. Success in some evangelistic encounters is merely getting the gospel to the other person then leaving them be.

XVII) What Happens to Those Who Have Never Heard the Gospel? (pp. 173-180)

If the damned were hopelessly lost (as Calvinism teaches) then Christians could justifiably not evangelise seeing as they have no hope to give.

The Thinker was a sculpture by Auguste Rodin and is based on a scene from Dante's Inferno where Adam is supposedly looking down at those going into hell.

Offering the gospel as a means to cure a physical addiction is done so under a false pretence and will lead to a false conversion.

1. The heavens declare the glory of God.
2. A judge is supposed to represent the law, which is meant to be an unyielding and unchanging standard. If he does not carry out the required punishment then he himself is in breach of the law.
3. Christians are obliged to reach the lost as it was a commandment of Jesus.
4. Romans 1.14 says Paul was a debtor to gentiles and the unwise across his ministry.
5. Outside of the business of life, I think of the lost and that they are headed for hell.
6. Reading more evangelistic-themed works and listening to such sermons helps keep the fire burning.
7. Offering the gospel in exchange for a promise turns it into wages of sorts for the unsaved (if they accept the gospel as an action then they will get something in return).

XVIII) Why Does God Allow Evil? (pp. 181-186)

94% of people in Hollywood have experienced sexual misconduct.

The Hays Code held back immorality in the film industry up to the 1950s.

1. The Bible records evil events as it represents real history which is full of evil.
2. A society which contains sinners will never by definition be free from sin.
3. Calling on God to punish evil is risky seeing as His hand should rightfully come down on all sinners to avoid partiality.

4. God “winked” at Athenian pantheism since they were without any knowledge of the true God and so had a reasonable excuse.
5. A world without moral boundaries is unsafe to raise a family and economic transactions cannot take place due to a lack of trust between parties.
6. Romans 2.21 condemns Christian hypocrisy.
7. God can’t immediately punish evil as in His good will He has reserved a Day of Judgment (Hb 9.27) when this will take place.

XIX) What’s so Bad About Other Religions? (pp. 187-193)

Good works are really despicable attempts to bribe the judge.

1. Christians grow old gracefully since they understand more and more that is the source of their life eternal which they are approaching.
2. Religion is popular as it provides answers to the metaphysical questions that methodological naturalism can never answer.
3. Religion deceives adherents into believing they are on the right path in life when they are on the wrong one.
4. The hope of many is in vain since the object of that hope is unfortunately false.
5. Ep 4.17-18 says that the gentiles walk in the vanity of their minds; their life is consumed by their own world of experience and desire which God calls vain.
6. The publican in Luke 18.9-14 was justified by God since he admitted guilt as a sinner and asked for mercy, something that the Pharisee didn’t think he needed to do.
7. The Christian should be motivated to reach the lost by the vanishing time in his short life.

XX) Seeing Is Believing. Why do I Need Faith? Faith Is For Weak People. (pp. 195-198)

Evangelists look for the humble, to the proud is God's law.

1. Faith offends the proud as they prefer to walk by sight, however, there is also an undercurrent of faith they implicitly assume but are unwilling to accept which causes inner conflict.
2. Faith is exercised when driving a car (that it won't break down), that your job will still be there tomorrow, and that you can always go to the grocery store and buy what you need.
3. Refusing to trust someone is really a character judgment of them that they are unworthy of your trust, which may be taken as an offence.
4. God chose to confound the wise because of their pride; they believe they are wise because of what they have done rather than the giftings and opportunities given to them by God.
5. A person can be asked if they are open to evidence of God's existence, if they are afraid of dying, or if they think they are good enough to get to heaven.
6. The proud must always be given law so that they may be humbled.
7. The gospel is always for the open so they then have opportunity to accept or reject it.

XXI) I Can Murder a Hundred People, Then Give My Heart to Jesus And Go to Heaven? (pp. 199-204)

American criminal justice is likened to an assembly line or a plea-bargaining factory.

1. A plea-bargain merely reduces the charges but still results in punishment, whereas forgiveness in Christ is total.
2. Contrition is identifiable regret expressed for one's actions.
3. In Luke 13.3 Jesus predicated salvation upon repentance.
4. A salvation without contrition is no salvation.

5. In Ps 51.1-4 David acknowledges his sin by calling it sin, saying that it was ever-before him, and asking God to get rid of it.

6. Grace is shown to be amazing by highlighting the worst sinner who has been obviously born again.

7. God alone has the right to forgive sins (cf Mk 2.7).

Conclusion (pp. 205-209)