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Why Are You a Christian?

“Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures.” Acts 17:2

I receive emails from Jim at pleaseconvinceme.com. This is a short portion of his bio on his website: “...he was a conscientious and vocal atheist until he was 35 or 36, and always considered himself to be an “evidentialist”. His experience in law enforcement only served to strengthen his conviction that truth is tied directly to evidence. But Jim took his first serious and expansive look at the evidence for the Christian Worldview and realized that Christianity was demonstrably true.” This is a portion of a recent post I received:

OBJECTION: Christians believe Christianity is true simply because they were raised in a Christian culture. If they were raised in a Muslim culture, they would believe that Islam is true with the same passion and certainty.

RESPONSE: The answer to this objection lies in Christian history. While it is true that cultural and geographic influences often favor a particular point of view or behavior, our personal experience demonstrates that individuals often make private, independent choices in spite of the accepted beliefs of their culture. As an example, many of us are vegetarians in spite of the fact the culture is predominantly carnivorous. The history of Christianity also confirms that the vast majority of Christian converts concluded that Christianity was true in spite of their geographic location or cultural background. You can demonstrate this by helping the skeptic recognize the facts of history:

The History of the Ancient World

Christianity emerged in a culture that was largely Jewish or Pagan (a polytheistic mix of religious beliefs within the Roman Empire) and completely hostile to the claims of Christianity. History records the hardship that was faced by 1st Century Christians who concluded that Christianity was true and devoted their lives to Jesus. These believers did not become Christians because Christianity was the default religion of the time.

This was only one of the historical evidences cited in the article and there are more that Jim cites. I don't know about you, but I have heard this objection to Christianity raised. Some say that we only believe what we believe and practice what we practice because of the way we were raised. However, this is absolutely not the truth. I know of countless examples of young adults now who were raised in the church of Christ but who now either attend other churches or don't attend church at all. There are various reasons for these changes. One of the main things that causes young people to abandon the church completely is the allure of the world...“the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life” (1John 2:16). It has also been my experience to find that many people simply don't know enough about the Bible and what it teaches to even discuss it. In fact, there are many voices in the world today that encourage us to forget trying to prove anything from the Bible and to base everything on simple relationships. This is another reason that many leave the church. They marry someone and so they just go and do whatever the spouse is doing, no questions asked. Why are you a Christian? Can you defend your faith?

“...and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.” Acts 17:11