



TEN reasons to reconsider



old-time Christianity



So you're
NOT
religious?



ISBN: 978-0-473-21276-6



A lot of people feel that way. There are a lot of things in life that don't make sense, and God can seem pretty hard to find at times.

But, would you be open to consider some reasons in favour of 'old-time religion'?

Christian faith has brought comfort to billions of people over the past two thousand years, giving security, hope and purpose for living.



The balance of **FAITH** and **REASON**





Faith is a strange thing because,
ironically, it needs evidence...

(For example, would you put your
faith in Pooh Bear to save your
eternal soul?)

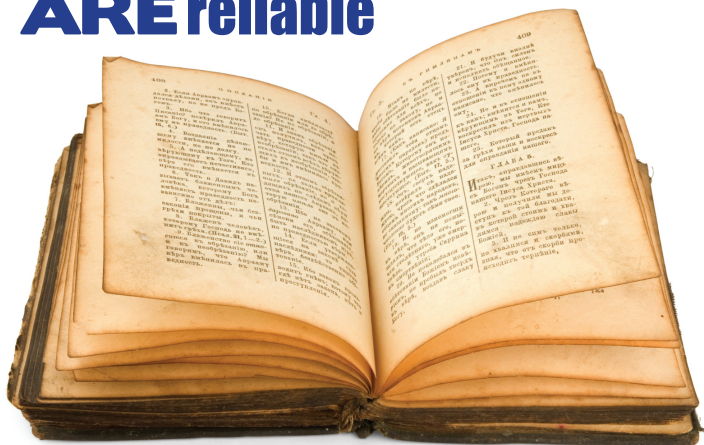
Having evidence to support
what you believe is only
sensible

...but in balance to that, to
quote an old saying,
**'it ain't faith until it's all we're
holding on to'**

*Here are ten reasons to
consider faith in God.*

Reason /:

Contrary to criticism, the Bible documents **ARE** reliable



Did you know that the New Testament documents (of the Bible) are the most reliable ancient documents on our planet? This book is more accurately preserved than Shakespeare's plays - which are only 300 years old!



Sir Frederic Kenyon, former head librarian for the British Museum and one of the leading experts in the field of manuscript evidence in his day, said, "The interval then between the dates of the original composition and the earliest existing evidence becomes so small as to be in fact negligible, and the last foundation for any doubt that the Scriptures have come down to us substantially as they were written has now been removed. Both the authenticity and the general integrity of the books of the New Testament may be regarded as finally established."¹

That's an academic way of saying - the Bible today is the same as when it was written.



Reason 2:

**Contrary to past
assumption,
archaeology
consistently
BACKS UP
the Bible's history**

A great many people in
the 20th Century tried
to disprove the Bible's
historical claims through
archaeology, but the

evidences ended up pointing
in the opposite direction.

Sceptic Nelson Glueck stated,
"As a matter of fact, ...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."²



Reason 3:

The evidence for God's existence is **STRONG**

- * Science cannot explain how life began.
- * Many scientists rejoice at confirmation of an initial big bang - but every effect needs a cause.
- * Science has discovered 'machinery' inside cells that is more complicated than previously imagined.





The idea that we are the result of accidents of chemistry is convincing fewer and fewer academics.

Even the prominent atheistic philosopher of the late twentieth century - Anthony Flew - recently gave up his atheism due to the mounting evidence that living things are designed.³

As British Astronomer Sir Fred Hoyle put it, the chance that higher life forms might have emerged randomly is comparable to the chance that "a tornado sweeping through a junkyard might assemble a Boeing 747 from the materials therein".⁴



Reason 4:

Humans don't seem to be able to fix humans PROBLEMS

It seems we need help!

In the last hundred years we've seen more than ninety million people murdered under Communism⁵ - and they believed they were making the world better. Communism is just one example of the sufferings caused by humans in the last century!⁶



We humans seem incapable of sustained good.

While it is



true evils have been done in the name of Christianity, these were contradictory to Jesus' teachings on love. Of note, evils done in the name of many other religions were consistent with their core beliefs. But, whatever the case, it remains that all of our hearts are corrupted. We keep doing selfish things!

It's not that our national leaders' ideas for fixing our planet's problems are always wrong - it's that we humans keep messing them up. Our history keeps repeating itself. We seem incapable of saving ourselves by ourselves.

As such, Christianity passes an important 'reality check'. It says that our hearts are corrupted, that we need help, and then offers that help.

"The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure."

Jeremiah - a Jewish prophet. B.C.600 (Jeremiah 17:9)





Reason 5:

Belief in God enables wrong to be wrong, and JUSTICE to exist

Our human minds are like amazing 'computers', and are programmed with a sense that 'right' and 'wrong' exist. Yet, if there is no God, there is no basis from which to say what is 'right' or 'wrong' - it's up to a community's or individual's personal choice!

This is why we feel sex outside of marriage is now considered acceptable (our culture decided), but also why Communist and Nazi leaders believed that they were doing nothing wrong when they killed all those people last Century (their culture decided).⁷



Unfortunately it is a package deal. If morals are up to us to define, we will define them differently, so such 'evils' can't be avoided!

“If God is dead, anything is permissible.”⁸

— 19th Century Russian Novelist & Philosopher,
Fyodor Dostoyevsky

However,
through belief
in the God of the
Bible

- ...our moral instinct makes sense.
- ...a clear moral standard can exist to protect us from ourselves.
- ...a dependable basis for ultimate justice for evildoers also exists.



Reason 6:

It shows there is an ultimate **MEANING** to life

Old-time Christianity tells of a God
who made us with
purpose. As such
we're not cosmic
accidents, and
what we do in life
has long-term
implications!

(Much longer
term!)





The Bible tells us,

***“I the Lord search the heart
and examine the mind, to reward
a man according to his conduct,
according to what his deeds
deserve.” - God***

(as quoted in Jeremiah 17:10)

That makes **all** of life meaningful!

**Every thought and every deed
suddenly counts!**



Reason 7:

It brings significance to life

We all want to believe that our lives are significant, but on what basis do we believe this? If 'God' is a 'cosmic force' that pervades everything, we are of the same worth as a fly because we are equally made from the same 'God-force' stuff. Or if there is no God at all, we are accidents of chance. In such views, a human has no more intrinsic value than an animal.

In contrast, Christianity gives a basis for human value. It says we were created 'in the image of God' (Genesis 1:27). This is what gives dignity to human life (as separate to animals). Humans were the pinnacle of God's creation.

The phrase 'in the image of God' can't refer to our bodies, because God is spirit. So it refers to something unseen, something inside us. God gave humans a 'spirit', a 'soul', a mind, a will...

“O Lord, you have searched me and you know me... Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? ...For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb... All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.” — King David (Psalm 139)

This is why disabled people should be cared for rather than discarded (as does happen in some parts of our world⁹). This is why we should protect the dignity of the underprivileged, the poor, and the elderly - because everyone matters!

Who
wouldn't
want to
believe
that?





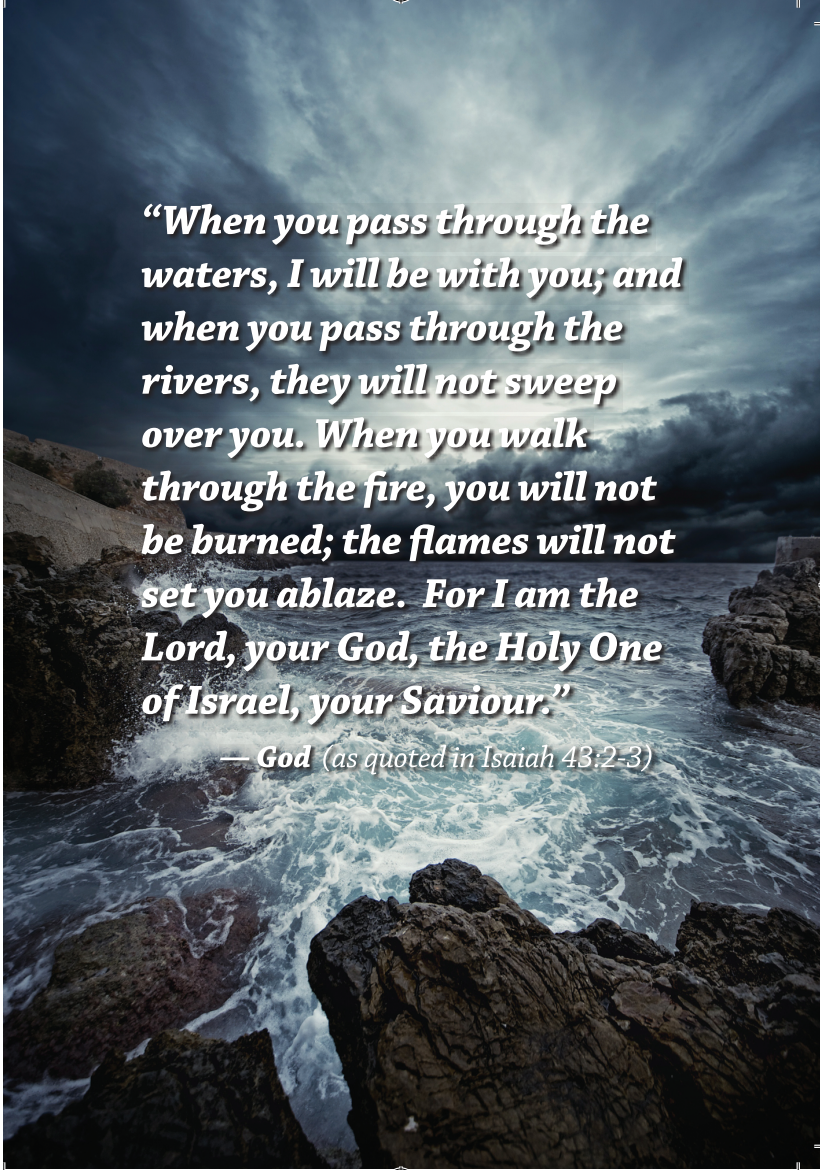
Reason 8:

It brings an inner security through suffering (and death)

An amazing story is told of Jesus sleeping in a boat right through a storm. His disciples were seasoned fishermen, but were terrified. So why did Jesus sleep peacefully in the midst of that storm?

It was because He knew that His heavenly Father (God) loved Him, so He knew that nothing could happen to Him that God didn't allow.

Faith that God's guiding hand is with us through life's trials makes a big difference. The Bible doesn't say we won't have trials - but that God will be with us through them. That perspective really changes things!



“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.”

— God (as quoted in Isaiah 43:2-3)

Reason 9:

It brings ultimate **HOPE** (the foundational Christian belief)

The core Christian message is about Jesus. Jesus was God coming to earth to die in our place.

To explain it: While our sins (wrongs) often seem a small matter to us, they are a big deal to God. It's like someone putting a drop of sewage in your cup of tea. It's a small thing, but makes a big difference. Our sin is a problem!

But, because
God loves us
He went out of
His way to make
our forgiveness

***“Where, O death, is y
O death is your sting?
is sin... But thanks be
the victory through ou***

— The Apostle Paul (1

possible. That's what the Christmas and Easter accounts are about! **Jesus died in our place.** The penalty for our wrongs is now paid!

So, through asking for this forgiveness which Jesus enabled, our sins are forgiven forever, so we are...

- (a) ...restored to the status of being God's friends, and
- (b) ...restored to our purpose here on earth, and
- (c) ...assured of heaven as our eternal destiny, because we will be with our Big Friend.

is your victory? Where, ing?" The sting of death be to God! He gives us our Lord Jesus Christ.'

! (1 Corinthians 15:55-57)

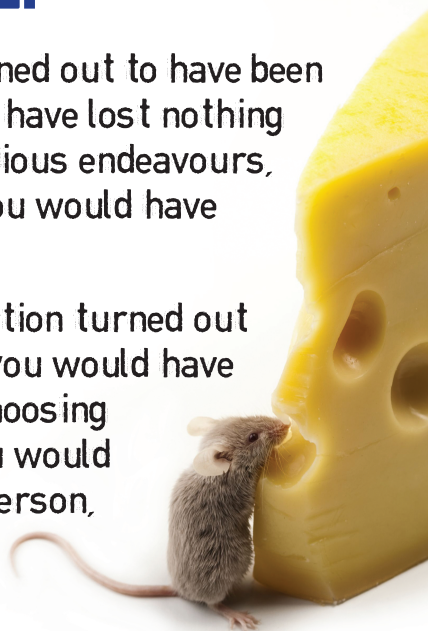
Many people fear death, but faith in Jesus takes the 'sting' right out of it!

Reason 10:

What have you got to **LOSE?**

Suppose there turned out to have been no God. You would have lost nothing through your religious endeavours, because at least you would have been good.

Suppose reincarnation turned out to be true. Again, you would have lost nothing. By choosing Christian faith you would have been a good person, and that would work in your favour for a better life next time around.





But suppose Christianity were true.
It would be a very different story,
because rather than denying the
existence of things like wrong, sin and
evil, the Bible says these exist!¹⁰

As such they need dealing
with - and if they are
not dealt with, that is
a problem!



**If Christianity is true
then beliefs matter!**

**Where would you
place your bet?**

**Which view makes best sense
of our existence, and of the human
condition?**



IN CONCLUSION

Old-time Christianity is a source of comfort to countless millions - and the reasons are clear. Our lives gain significance, purpose and hope. The logical problem of selfishness (corruption) in the human heart is addressed, and the fear of death is removed!



The Bible says that God loves you, and
it says that He proved this love when
He went the 'extra mile' by coming to
earth as a human to die in your place.

*It really is the best
news ever!*

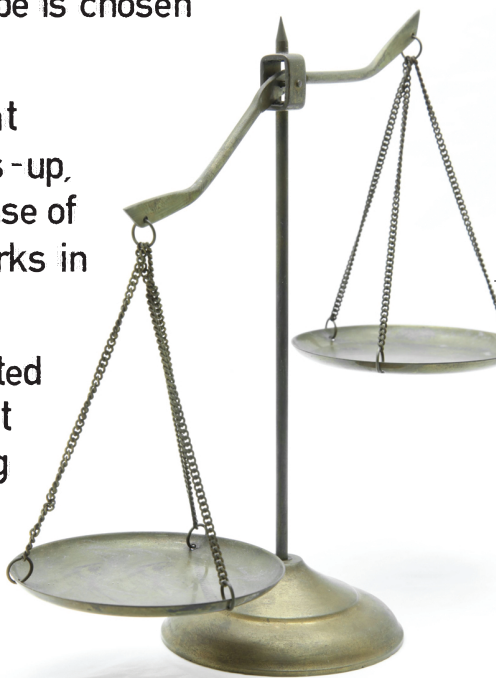


Your **NEXT** STEP?

We hope this booklet has been enlightening, showing why this path of hope is chosen by so many.

It is a belief that logically stacks-up, that makes sense of reality, and works in experience.

But if you wanted to take the next step, the saying we began with rings true:





*'Faith ain't faith until it's all
you're holding on to.'*

While all reason is considered - and even science suggests the high probability of a Creator - God remains invisible to our eyes, and following Him is a step of faith.

The promise of the Bible is that if we sincerely turn to follow God and His ways, He will forgive our wrongs, restore us as His friends, restore us to our purpose, give us the strength to live differently and give us eternal life. It's a great hope!

**If that's what you want, you could use
the simple prayer on the next page.**

Thanks for reading.





A PRAYER

Dear God, I know I'm far from perfect.
Thank you for sending Jesus to die
for my wrongdoing. I ask for the
forgiveness you offer!

Trusting you for help I now commit
to follow you for the rest of my days.
Help me to live with courage and
faith, living out what you teach in the
Bible. Help me to bring joy, hope and
help to those around me, and to show
love to others as you have loved me.

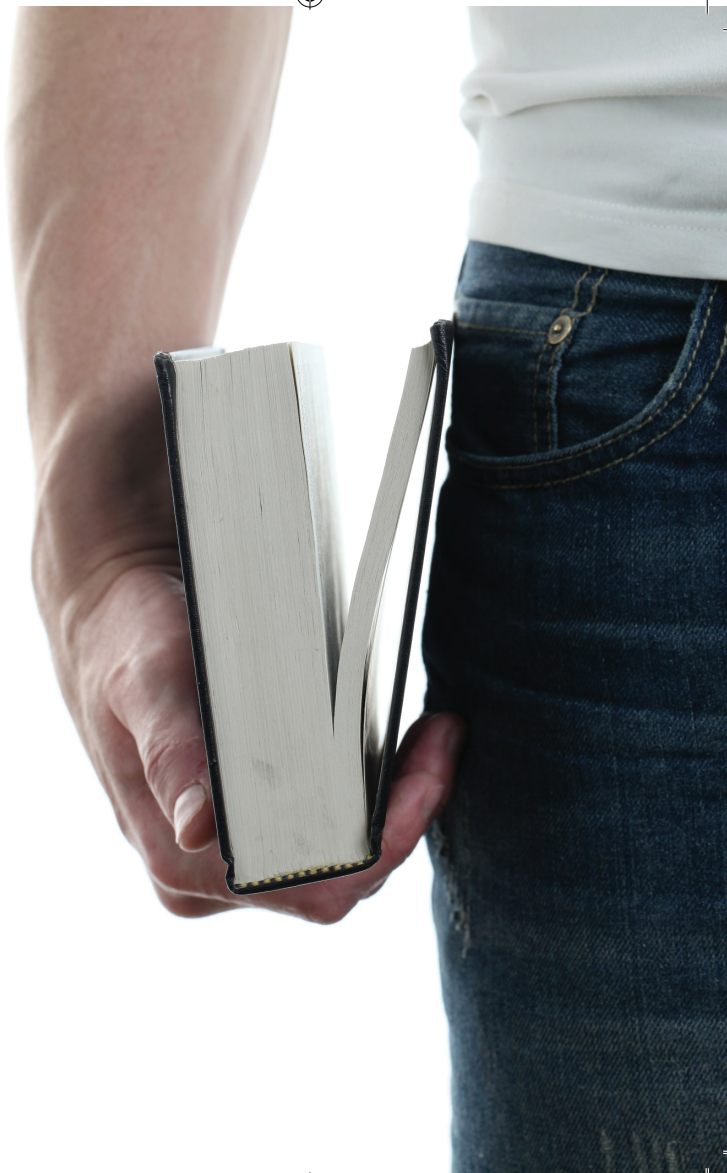
Amen.





Some basic **HABITS** of Christians

1. They read the Bible - to find comfort, and learn God's ways.
2. They talk to God (prayer) - because God does listen and respond!
While there are reasonable limits (He doesn't often answer selfish prayers) God does hear and respond!
3. They go to a Church - to learn about God from others and find friends who can encourage faith.
4. They love and serve others - including sharing of this hope He offers - because this is what following Jesus truly looks like!





WEB links

For more of what Christians believe
see: www.peacewithgod.net

Endnotes

1. Sir Frederic Kenyon, *The Bible and Archaeology*, (New York: Harper, 1940), p288.
2. Jeffrey Shelter, "Is the Bible True?" *US News and World Report*, Oct. 25, 1999, p52.
3. Quoting the Telegraph: In his last few years Antony Flew disappointed Atheists when he '... revealed that he had come to the conclusion that there might be a God after all... After months of soul-searching, Flew concluded that research into DNA had "shown, by the almost unbelievable complexity of the arrangements which are needed to produce life, that intelligence must have been involved". Moreover, though he accepted Darwinian evolution, he felt that it could not explain the beginnings of life. "I have been persuaded that it is simply out of the question that the first living matter evolved out of dead matter and then developed into an extraordinarily complicated creature," he said.' <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/culture-obituaries/books-obituaries/7586929/Professor-Antony-Flew.html>
4. Sir Fredric Hoyle, English astronomer, Professor of Astronomy at Cambridge University 'Universe' (London: Michael Joseph, 1983), p.19.



Note that not all scientists believe in the 'Big Bang Theory'. It is, however, the most widely accepted explanation of the current evidences.

5. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Black_Book_of_Communism

6. We note that Christian 'regimes' have at times also caused suffering. This is the greatest of contradictions, and maybe the strongest evidence of the corruption of the human heart, for in no other major religion is such corruption and killing more clearly defined as being wrong! Christian belief goes as far as saying that uncontrolled or unjust anger is the same to God as murder, because these are the motive it comes from. Indeed the human heart is corrupt!

7. Regarding the 'sexual liberation' of the 1960s, we note that it has led to a breakdown of the nuclear family, with children being the victims. The text infers it is a small change, but we note that the effects are culture-wide, and statistics speak clearly. The case can easily be made that we were happier and emotionally healthier under the previous sexual boundaries because they protected family and love. As such our 'sexual liberation' could easily be said to be an 'evil' - for while we enjoy brief pleasures, children are most badly affected. Many suffer emotionally for a lifetime, and the ramifications reach into every area of society. Could there have been sense to the old morality after all?

8. 1821-1881. Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, trans. C. Garnett (New York: Signet Classics, 1957), bk. II, chap. 6; bk. V, chap. 4; bk. XI, chap. 8.

9. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Infanticide#Modern_times Fitting the belief that humans are just animals, Hitler's Germany actually killed disabled people - see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holocaust_victims

10. They began at a specific point in time; when created beings used their free will to choose against God's ways (our free will being necessary if we were ever to have relationship with God). This is something God allowed to happen because He had morally sufficient reasons for allowing it, including a plan for dealing with it, and a final solution to it.



ISBN 978-0-473-21276-6



9 780473 212766 >

A 'Shining Lights'
resource
www.shininglights.co

ISBN: 978 -0 -473 -21276 -6

Written by Dave Mann

© Copyright 2012 Big Book
Publishing Limited - All rights
reserved

Unauthorised reproduction of this
booklet in all formats is strictly
prohibited

Ten reasons to reconsider old-time Christianity