

# 8 Reasons Why I'm not a Christian

*Discussion Questions*

## Session 1: Christianity Does Not Work

### Notes

***Faith in self and Christ are mutually exclusive.***

Change your Religion to Relationship.

Religion is about how *man* can get to God, but Christianity is about how *God* came to man.

***Nothing is so trivial to escape God's attention,  
and nothing is so large as to be beyond His power.***

- Deny yourself.
- Die, don't dominate.
  - Christ died to overcome the penalty of sin.
  - We have to die to overcome the power of sin.
- Make a Decision.
  - Remove an agenda.
  - Decide to believe God's truth.
- Discipline your life.
  - Change your beliefs, not your behavior.
  - Belief: Give outward expression to an internal condition.

**The Myth:** Christianity does not work.

**The Misconception:** I need to work it backwards.

**The Truth:** Christianity is not a religion; it is a relationship with God.

***God does not promise a fair life. There is no utopia here on earth.  
What God has promised is forgiveness of sins and a home in Heaven.***

### Discussion Questions

- Are you living with disappointment because you feel as if some of God's promises to you have gone unfulfilled?
- What discrepancies do you see between what the Bible teaches and the real world?
- What is the difference between religion and relationship, as Ric describes it?
- What would it mean for you to suffer and be misunderstood for Christ?
- What would it mean for you to deny/die/decide before you discipline?

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## Session 2: God Does Not Care

### Notes

*Even the Son of God questioned why God had forsaken Him.*

- Gideon asked, "God, where are you?"
- Jeremiah asked, "God, have you forgotten about us?"
- Ezekiel asked, "God, can't you see what's happening?"
- David asked, "God, did you forget about me?"
- Jesus asked, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

We must keep the big picture in view.

*Life is about our discovery of God.*

**The Myth:** God doesn't care.

**The Misconception:** We have to take care of each other.

**The Truth:** God is in control, and He sees the bigger picture.

*Can you thank God for trusting you with a negative experience  
even if you never find out why it happened?*

### Discussion Questions

- What situation in your own life has caused you to question whether or not God cares about you?
- Have you ever felt abandoned by God? When?
- Mike used the phrase, "borrowed faith." What does that mean?
- How does freedom of choice act as the vehicle for suffering?
- Can you thank God for trusting you with a negative experience, even if you never find out why it happened?

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## Session 3: Christianity Does Not Own Truth

### Notes

***The truth of a religious system is not determined by the lifestyle of its followers.***

In an effort to maintain peace, should we sacrifice what we believe to be true?

- God has revealed Himself to man through creation.
- God has communicated to us through His Word.
- God has introduced himself to us through His Son.

***The Heavens declare the glory of God,  
Scripture describes His nature,  
And Jesus Christ represents Him among us.***

**The Myth:** It doesn't matter what I believe.

**The Misconception:** It's all the same, anyway.

**The Truth:** Christians don't own truth. God IS truth.

***Truth is not something that we form, but something that we discover.***

***Man can be drawn away from God by nothing.***

### Discussion Questions

- How does a person's lifestyle influence your opinion of their beliefs?
- Is there a time when peace is more important than truth?
- What makes Christianity different from other world religions?
- How are faith and truth connected?
- How does what you know about truth affect how you chose to live?

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## Session 4: Your Heaven is my Hell

### Notes

***If we really understood the truth about Heaven,  
there would be no other place we would rather be.***

God promises things so wonderful that they go beyond man's wildest imagination.

God is able to do exceedingly abundantly about all we could ask or think.

- Heaven is a welcoming place—a home.
- Heaven is a personal place—designed for you.
- Heaven is a happy and satisfying place—absent of sorrow and tears.
- Heaven is a new place—a fresh start.
- Heaven is a beautiful place—beyond John's ability to describe.
- Heaven is a busy place—an active society.

***It took God six days to create the universe,  
but He's been working on Heaven for 2,000 years.***

**The Myth:** Heaven is a nondescript place that may or may not exist.

**The Misconception:** As long as your good outweighs your bad, you'll make it to Heaven.

**The Truth:** Heaven is a welcoming, personal, satisfying place designed specifically for you.

***Someone who finishes their life without regrets  
is someone who hasn't examined their life closely.***

### Discussion Questions

- What are some theories about Heaven that you've heard your friends express?
- Is there anything that you are dreading about Heaven? In what way?
- Which part of Heaven makes you the most excited?
- What is required to enter Heaven?

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## Session 5: Your Hell is My Heaven

### Notes

***Choosing not to believe in Hell doesn't make it any less real.***

The story of Lazarus and the rich man tells us a little about what Hell is like.

- People are aware in Hell.
- People are tormented in Hell.
- People can remember their lives in Hell.
- People cannot escape from Hell.
- People in Hell do not want others to go there.

Hell was not created for people; it was created for the devil and his angels.

***Hell wasn't made for you, and God does not want anyone to go there.***

Because we are not perfect, we cannot be permitted into Heaven.

What we deserve because of our sin is death; the Bible talks about three different kinds of death:

- Physical death—separation of body from soul
- Spiritual death—separation of soul from God
- Eternal death—separation of soul from God forever

***One of the reasons Hell is offensive to us is because sin is not offensive to us.***

Jesus came to rescue you and me from Hell.

**The Myth:** Hell is fun.

**The Misconception:** A loving God and an eternal Hell cannot coexist.

**The Truth:** God loved us enough to make a way for us to escape Hell.

***The big question is not, "How can a loving God send people to Hell?"  
It's "How can people choose Hell when there is a loving God?"***

### Discussion Questions

- What do your friends believe about Hell?
- Why do you think that so many people are offended by Hell?
- If you were to die today, what parts of your life would you regret?

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## Session 6: Christians are Stupid

### Notes

***The inability of Christians to articulate what they believe is a leading cause of the belief that "Christians are stupid."***

- God's Word is revolutionary and powerful.
- God declares His thoughts to us.
- Knowing God is not about being smarter than everyone else.

The world tries to portray faith as an irrational choice that runs against the evidence.

Science is gradually discovering that the things the Bible has always told us to be true are true.

***God creates; science discovers.***

- What you decide to believe about Jesus Christ is the most important decision.
- The person who has a relationship with God ought to walk as He walked.
- Regardless of what people think of us, we should share the truth in love.

***There is no greater knowledge than knowing Jesus Christ as our Savior.***

### Discussion Questions

- Have you ever met someone who thought that all Christians are stupid?
- Why do you think that so many people think Christians are stupid?
- Facts apart from belief are worthless. What makes the difference between knowledge and faith?

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## Session 7: Christians are Hypocrites

### Notes

***Any religious system that is more caught up with rules than relationship will be full of hypocrites.***

A hypocrite is someone whose behavior doesn't match what they say they believe.

- Saul wanted to change his behavior but not his beliefs.
- David changed both his behavior and his beliefs.

When confronted about their sin:

- Saul made excuses.
- David confessed his sins in true repentance.

***Repentance is a gift that God wants to give to me.***

Marks of true repentance:

- Lack of rationalization
- Genuine sorrow
- Open confession of sin
- Restitution

### Discussion Questions

- In what ways does your behavior betray what you say you believe?
- What does God desire to do with a repentant sinner?
- Why do you think that true repentance is so rare?

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## Session 8: God is Mean

### Notes

*We try to explain the unexplainable because we're trying to protect God's reputation.*

#### The Accusations:

- Christians are boring because God is boring.
- God wants to regulate happiness.

#### The Rebuttals:

- Jesus came so that we might have abundant life.
- The more we know of Scripture, the more freedom we will experience.

**The Myth:** God is mean.

**The Misconception:** God is boring.

**The Truth:** God is God and we are not.

*Job could not explain his suffering, but he continued to trust God.*

### Discussion Questions

- Have you ever tried to explain something to protect God's reputation? How did it go?
- If you were God, what would you have done differently?
- Why do you think you are here?
- What do you think it would take for you to have the kind of faith that Job had?