**A Message of Truth: The History, Science, and Politics of Christianity**

**(Second Edition)**

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Description:

Does God exist? If so, can he be known? Is it possible to have a relationship with Almighty God? Is the Holy Bible accurate? Was it inspired by God? Is Jesus Christ a real person? Did he actually come back from the dead as Christians profess? How is it that Christianity is so widespread? What makes Christianity different from any other religion? And if Christianity is true, why are Christians persecuted? Can these questions be answered with any assurance? Yes, they can. True or false, that is the ultimate question.

This book presents the controversy surrounding Christianity and the Holy Bible and examines the evidence. It invalidates the premises that the Bible is in discord with science, history, and politics. You can decide which arguments are reliable or problematic; what information is factual or contrived; whether to adopt one worldview over another; and what you will believe. A case is made for the authenticity of the Holy Bible. Its positive influence on humanity has lasted for millennia. It is the most distributed, translated, read, and debated book of all time. It is a guide to life and has shaped morality, politics, and cultures worldwide, especially in the USA. In fact, our founding documents and our nation were founded primarily on the precepts of the Judeo-Christian worldview gleaned from the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. Even those that deny divine intervention being involved in the creation of the universe and the writing of God's Word will find the Bible to be a great source of history, science, and philosophy.

This book was produced to help the reader defend his or her views about the universe, God, life, death, and religion. It is sort of a primer for grooming one to be an apologist. An apologist is a defender of his or her belief system. For example, a lot of people believe in God and many refer to themselves as Christians. But when people of faith are asked why they believe, or how they know that the Bible is true, or what makes Christianity unique, many cannot provide a satisfactory answer. Maybe after reading this book you will feel more confident giving an answer to those who ask about your beliefs, dreams, or hopes. Possibly, you can prompt others to ponder your viewpoint, and why you believe, and how you know. The theme is about exploring possibilities with the ultimate objectives being discovery and enlightenment. That pathway is paved with experience, which alone does not count as proof. Proof requires truth, and it the goal of this book to convey it. Notice, it is one thing to believe in God and quite another to believe God. He speaks to anyone who will listen, through his words and through his creation. Both will point you to the truth, and one will not contradict the other.

Keywords: What is Truth; Who is God; History of Christianity; Science of Christianity; Politics of Christianity; Faith and Spirituality; Holy Trinity; Morality; Equality; Belief Systems; Christian Apologetics; Religion and Philosophy; Diversity Versus Division; Fulfillment of Prophecy; Proof the Bible is true; Liberty and Justice; Eternal Destiny; Universe; Body and Soul; Fate

Subjects: Themes:

RELIGION/Biblical Studies/General Society and Social Sciences

RELIGION/Christianity/History Philosophy and Religion

BODY, MIND & SPIRIT/General Astronomy, Space and Time

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INSIDE LOOK

## The Conscience

Resolved: the only creature indigenous to planet Earth that possesses a conscience is the human. The conscience is very unique; it is a repository of our knowledge of right and wrong. I have argued that we are born with this faculty, insofar as it was endowed by God; this is one of the ways in which we have been created in his image (GEN 1:26–27). In the Garden of Eden, God gave Adam and Eve the knowledge of right and wrong; thus, humans possessed this knowledge from the start. He permitted them to eat of any tree in the garden except one, the Tree of Knowledge (GEN 2:16–17). But they disregarded God and ate, though they knew it was wrong even before they partook. And after they did, they immediately knew they had sinned against God and tried to conceal it (GEN 3). The devil tricked them into thinking they would acquire the knowledge of God, and in their greed and pride they ate. But it only gave them the knowledge of sin; and they became sinful like Satan, who wanted to be God and persuaded Adam and Eve to want that too. This is the great deception, that you can become a god or be your own god, as if you don’t need God Almighty.

Essentially, a principal attribute we can ascribe to the conscience is that it convicts us of our sin. We know there are recriminations for doing wrong which is counterproductive to our becoming; and we know that doing right usually yields beneficial outcomes. And even if we figure we can get away with a wrongdoing, we do not really, because our conscience punishes us (ACT 23:1; ACT 24:16; ROM 2:14–15; HEB 13:18). We are found out by our own conscience which bombards us with guilt; and we are found out by God who knows all things. Isn’t it interesting how Adam blamed Eve and she blamed the serpent, hoping they could escape the wrath of God, or play dumb, or rationalize their guilt by explaining it away (GEN 3:9–13; JOH 8:3–11)? We only succeed in digging our graves a bit deeper each time we open our mouths to justify misbehavior.

People learn from their thoughts, words, and actions when they produce positive or negative results which are usually immediate. There is no excuse for failing to do the right thing; if you don’t know what that is, you are not listening to your conscience (JAM 4:17) or paying attention to the results. All laws are based upon an absolute standard, which is God’s unconditional love. That standard is faultlessness; anything less than perfect righteousness is unrighteousness, the opposite of God. And when one violates the law, they can expect penalties, whether a violation of God’s laws, nature’s laws, or the laws of the land. Nobody is ignorant of the law, because every culture has rules. You have heard the cliché, don’t do the crime if you can’t do the time. Society will punish you your conscience will punish you and God will punish you; sometimes, nature punishes you. The best advice is to behave in a godly manner and try not to go against your better judgment (ROM 7:19–20; 1 CO 8:12; 2 CO 1:12). But that necessitates stopping to think seriously about what you are about to say or do.

The conscience is a reminder, showing us the right way to go, and redirecting our path when we have gone astray. Generally, the feeling of guilt may linger because we love the Lord; but he now owns the sin so we needn’t dwell on the guilt. But the sin and shame will not diminish until one allows the blood of Christ to cleanse him or her of unrighteousness (PSA 51:1–3; 1 JO 1:9). Otherwise, the person will die in their sin, because that is the judgment imposed by God (ROM 6:23; 2 CO 4:1–2). The true Christian knows full well, only Jesus can redeem them and bring them into God’s heavenly presence, free from the impurity of sin (HEB 9:8–14; HEB 10:1–14). To reiterate, Christ has removed from us our sin and taken it upon himself, while bestowing upon us his righteousness. Only by trusting in him can we hope to appear holy before God (PSA 32:2; ISA 46:12–13; ROM 8:1–4; 2; CO 5:19–21). Our response to this eternal reward, the greatest gift known to man, is to keep raising the bar, to continuously recalibrate that yardstick of our conscience and align it with the will of God and the obedience of Christ.

Love is clearly the standard, as commanded by Christ to love God first and everyone else next, including yourself. Love is your higher power; love is the highest power. Let your conscience be your guide, follow your heart, listen to your higher power (1 TI 1:5–7,15–19). It all means the same thing, to heed the Golden Rule (LUK 6:31). People who blatantly rebuff what is right, it is not that their consciences are misplaced, it is that they do not care having deliberately vacated all scruples (1 TI 4:1–2). They refuse to listen and they refuse to love. They do not fear judgment, because they will not assent to the retributions; the only outcome acceptable to them is getting what they want when they want it. Their philosophy is anything goes and at any price. They give no importance to the common good, because everything they do is to benefit them alone. This is a devastating way to live, leading only to oblivion. It is the way of those who want to be their own god.

There is more often a positive outcome if you do what is good and right, and more often a negative outcome if you do the opposite. Unfortunately, it doesn’t always work that way does it? In a corrupt society or with faulty leadership, sometimes people get rewarded when they do wrong, and some are punished when they do right. But there is a greater reward for those who are persecuted and tormented for doing what God demands, at least in his court of law (2 TH 1:5; 1 PE 2:19–21; 1 PE 3:15–17). So, no matter what society does or the government proclaims to be lawful, we always must adhere to God’s commands to the best of our ability. That is, God’s law supersedes all other laws. And if you are forced to choose between God and man, heaven and earth, righteousness and unrighteousness, choose God. You will be choosing life over death (DEU 30:15–20).

Short Biography: Andrew V Barber PhD is a counselor, educator, analyst, author, publisher, apologist, biblical scholar, and lifetime Christian. He has worked as a research psychologist, professor, program manager, department director, consultant and mentor in psychiatric, university, and research settings. He operated a private practice specializing in faith-based counseling, and authored *Faithbook for Christian Counselors*. Find more Information about his biography and publications at *www.andrewvbarberphd.com*.