

# Sticks in our eyes: Problems with Christianity

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Contributor

“Judge not, that you not be judged. ...How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.” Matthew 7:1-5.

“Judge not” is probably one of the most oft quoted phrases from the Bible today, but it’s also one of the most misunderstood. Ripped from the context of Jesus’ sermon, the phrase is much like the sound bites we hear from political commentators, and mostly serves to support the speaker’s own agenda, one that defends their sinful actions. “Only God can judge me” is the refrain of our generation, as if that’s a better scenario: God judging me.

Jesus is not saying that we shouldn’t call a spade a spade. He’s saying, “Don’t be a hypocrite.” So rather than explain the issues I have with Atheism, I hope to first take the log out of my own eye by reviewing the issues within Christianity, more specifically, the church. Much like the apostle Paul did in his various letters within the Bible, I am hoping to build the church up through loving correction.

First, we as Christians have a terrible knowledge of the Bible, as evidenced by the aforementioned decontextualized verse. We forget that other parts of the Bible actually call us to judge false teaching, false teachers, 2 Corinthians 11:13, and even one another within the church, 1 Corinthians 5:12. Not in the spirit of self-righteousness, but for the sake of discernment and admonishment.

Most of us have never read the whole Bible, let alone more than a chapter or two. This is really disturbing considering how vehemently some of us declare the absolute truthfulness and inspiration of the book, or how blindly we believe in a God we’ve read nothing about.

Even more frightening, is that atheists know more about the Bible than the average Christian. Not only do we Christians not know our Bible, but it seems that the people who do know it don’t believe it causing many to question its validity.

Many of us don’t even know why we should believe the Bible, leaving us to never ending circular reasoning: “Why do you believe in God?” “The Bible says so.” “Why do you believe the Bible?” “It’s the Word of God.”

Christians, are you beginning to see why

much of the world doesn’t take us seriously? My favorite reason we give for why we believe the Bible is, “I tried it, and it worked for me.” By that logic, I should still believe in the Tooth-fairy. The Tooth-fairy does exist...right?

This lack of knowledge in the Bible has a number of effects on us as Christians. Firstly, most of us are scared out of our minds that everything we’ve placed our trust in is a lie. Christianity becomes a security blanket that we fight to keep as academia and the scientific community seems to reveal its childishness, and we develop a huge cognitive disjunction between what we believe about God and what we believe about the rest of life. We end up coming off incredibly ignorant and arrogant to the rest of the world

Second, we base our beliefs on personal opinion, sinful desires, or cultural sway, rather than God’s opinion. This has differing effects with differing cultures, just as the churches in the New Testament each had their own issues of misunderstanding Jesus and his Gospel.

Us fundamentalists typically adopt moralism and demand it through political activism. The Gospel to us is a sick, twisted kind of love that says, “Be good, and then God will love you”, and we attempt to legislate morality.

Unfortunately, we become blind to our own sins of greed, pride, and gluttony, while we point the finger at homosexuality, adultery, and alcoholism. The “judge not” verse above is actually for us. We forget that Jesus was actually a friend of sinners, that he came to save the world, because it is already condemned, John 3:17-18. We forget that Jesus didn’t run for a political office, nor institute his physical kingdom over the oppressive Roman Empire, but started an invisible one in the hearts of those who believe. We forget that Jesus reserved his harshest words for the religious and political leaders of his day, Matthew 23.

Us liberal, emergent Christians adopt religious pluralism and “tolerance” over the truth of Jesus. We blindly talk about all faiths being equally valid and pointing towards the same God, not realizing how stupid we sound to every other religion.

We talk about God in vague hippy terms that make him out to be some kind of moralistic therapeutic deity that only has attributes like love and peace. We have Coexist bumper stickers, even though the Bible says other religions are the teachings of demons, 1 Corinthians 10:20, 1 Timothy 4:1.

We are offended that fundamentalist

Christians would dare call homosexuality a sin, 1 Corinthians 6:9, or that someone would write such a “judgmental” article. We have no idea what to do with the God of the Old Testament who slays the firstborn of every person in Egypt for the sins of Pharaoh Exodus 13:15. Many of us don’t even go to church because we’d rather not be preached to, even though the Bible was written by preachers.

Third, we don’t know the Bible, so we constantly fight with one another. How many unbelievers, let alone Christians, actually know the church to be a place of love and unity? I love the Church and so does Jesus. No, the church is not perfect because it’s a place where sinners come to be fixed and healed. But the fact that we have over 30,000 denominations is really, really sad, and I blame it on Biblical illiteracy and rejection that leads to self-centered living, instead of Bible and Jesus-centered living.

Christians, let us know our Great Savior. Let us read our Bibles like our lives depended on it (because they kind of do). Let us submit to the hard truths of scripture, rather than find theologians that justify our sinful lifestyles. Either that, or let’s get rid of the Bible and recognize that we believe in a non-existent God of our own invention, one that fits our agendas. At least we wouldn’t be hypocrites.

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