



Is Christianity Harmful?

January 8, 2023 Message Notes

TEXT: MATTHEW 7:15, 21-23; 23:25-28; ROMANS 13:11-14, 14:16

Is Christianity harmful? Is it dangerous? Jesus said, it can be. But before coming to the conclusion it all needs to be thrown out, maybe we should see if it's being applied according to God's directions.



NOTES

“Asking for a Friend”

‘Intersect’ – Oxford Center for Christian Apologetics workshop

Text “Question” to **786-610-1010** to submit questions you may have.

Conversations about the gospel and Christianity today focus on cultural issues, issues many find to be barriers to following Christ.

- Is Christianity harmful?
- What would Jesus do with racism?
- What am I worth? And why?
- How can we be caretakers of creation?
- How would Jesus respond to abortion?
- What will heaven be like?
- What happens when we die?
- What can believers do about depression and mental illness?

Is Christianity harmful? Is it dangerous?

A group of authors known as the New Atheists are popularizing these claims:

- “Religion is ‘the root of all evil’”, Richard Dawkins, *Viruses of the Mind*
- “Religion poisons everything”, Christopher Hitchens, *God is Not Great*
- “Science must destroy religion”, Sam Harris
- “...secularity became an aspect of individualism...”, Psychiatrist Robert Cole

Secularism is now seen as part of radical, personal individualism and vies for control over religion to help save people from it.

So, is Christianity dangerous? Jesus said, it can be.

“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly, they are ferocious wolves. You recognize them by their fruit.”

Matthew 7:15

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles? Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’”



Matthew 7:21-23

Jesus makes a scathing judgment on Bible teachers at the time who were all about appearances.

“You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and self-indulgence.”
Matthew 23:25

“You are like whitewashed tombs...on the inside you are full of dead man’s bones and everything unclean...on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.”
Matthew 23:27-28

“You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?”
Matthew 23:33

You don't like hypocrites? Neither does Jesus Christ.

According to Jesus, religion, even religion using his name, can be harmful. Jesus said deceivers would come and mislead many, misusing the Bible to justify it.

Prescription bottle caution - WARNING: TAKE ONLY AS DIRECTED.

Before coming to the conclusion it all needs to be thrown out, maybe we should see if it's being applied according to the Great Physician's directions.

“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.”
Luke 9:23

Every true Christ-follower can tell you that taking up your cross kills your ego, destroys your pride, smashes your rebellion, and exposes your self-interest, self absorption, and willful self-centeredness.

“The Christian ideal hasn't been tried and found wanting, it has been found difficult and left untried.” – G.K.Chesterton

Is Christianity is flawed and unfit for humans? No.
Then how do we respond to the accusations?

“Do this, understanding the present time: the hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because your salvation is now nearer than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the



armor of light. Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.”

Romans 13:11-14

“Do not let what you know is good be spoken of as evil.”

Romans 14:16

What is the Armor Of Light?

Awareness: Understand the times you are in.

rebellion, deception, contradiction, when God is called evil and evil is called God.

That ‘truth is relative’ and ‘there are no absolutes’.

Readiness: Be prepared. Guard your boundaries

Mental – Sexual – Emotional

Boundaries are appropriate when it comes to:

What goes in your body.

What you do with your body.

What you feel from your body.

Christlikeness: Wrap yourself up in Jesus.

Abuses come when Christianity isn't applied appropriately.

But much good comes when the medicine of Christ's truth, grace and forgiveness is taken as directed and we follow Christ as Lord.

“In most of Europe, as in Africa, South America and in many other parts of the world, the birth of literacy and literature essentially, not accidentally, coincides with the arrival of Christian missionaries.” – Dr. Lyle Jeffrey

A Case For Faith, by Lee Strobel

Our vision and calling this year is to pray: "God's will be done on earth, as it is in heaven". Pray for our nation and our world.

“Seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you...Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.”

Jeremiah 29:7

The generosity of God's grace travels with God's people.

Do good, not evil. Pray. Become a part of his mission to a world in need.

