

Am I crazy to be a Christian?

Here are some key facts about Christianity that led me to believe that Jesus really is “the way and the truth and the life”, as he claimed in the bible (John 14:6)



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Ultimately, you are going to need to decide what you believe is true. However, Christianity is unique from all other religions, and is also persecuted like no other religion. How is that for an endorsement? I am a Christian, and if I can act as an outsider looking in, I believe you can be logical, rational, and be a Christian at the same time. Consider Jesus in terms of what he claimed and what he did, how only he could have solved the problem of the human condition, the impact he made on the world, the simplicity and transforming power of his message, and the actual testimonies of his followers for over 2,000 years. You can't ignore these facts and Christianity truly stands apart. Who are Christians? I am not talking about all people that call themselves Christians, but followers of Jesus Christ. They believe Jesus Christ to be who he claimed he was and believe he is the Lord and Savior of their lives. By doing so, they are responding to this faith by committing to a relationship with God that in turn motivates them to consistently focus on the needs of others.

1. Jesus is the most influential figure in world history. Just a few examples, but because of Jesus:

- Western Civilization would be incomprehensible without him
- Our nation and the laws we follow are based largely on the Christian value system
- The importance of a God-ordained marriage, and also that of the physical and spiritual family was greatly emphasized in terms of its value to society
- The dignity and status of women, minorities, the weak, the sick, and the poor changed forever
- Christians fight for the value of every human life, starting with the unborn to the very oldest
- Humanitarian Aid was inspired. If Christians in the United States alone were to stop giving today, the result would be a global catastrophe of millions of deaths in the first month(s) alone.
- Tens of thousands of people voluntarily converted to Christianity shortly after his death, despite risk of ridicule, imprisonment, torture, and even death
- Christianity is the only true “global” religion. There are over 2 billion Christians in every corner of the world.

2. Jesus is the only one to claim he was God

- All other religious leaders were men who lived and died. Jesus backed up his claims by his miraculous healings, raising people from the dead, forgiving sins, fulfilling numerous prophecies, and his resurrection. His life, death, and resurrection are backed up by eyewitness testimony, written evidence through the gospels of the bible and historians of the day, and archaeological evidence.

3. Only Jesus solved the problem of death

d. Even Judaism and Islam acknowledge the problem - we broke God's law and deserved to be punished. Because of original sin our punishment was physical and spiritual death, which is ultimately separation from God. So, the only way to be saved is to live without sin. Since living a perfect life is impossible, God stepped in and solved the problem for us by becoming man (Jesus) and paying the penalty for our sins by taking them onto himself, suffering, and dying by crucifixion. Because Jesus settled the debt, Christians do not believe they need to earn their way to heaven. This is very different from all other religions.

4. Jesus is Fair

b. According to the teaching of Jesus, everyone is morally equal. This was a stunning blow to the authoritative religious leaders of his time. Jesus blew up the class system when he stated things like, "The last shall be first and the first shall be last". As a Christian, it doesn't matter how successful you are, where you were born, or how good of a person you think you are. All humans are on a level playing field to God.

5. Jesus is Simple

c. To become a follower of Jesus Christ, all one needs to do is believe in him and accept the sacrifice he made for our salvation. Then just invite him to live in your heart. No rules, no sacrificing animals, no weighing your good deeds versus bad deeds and hoping for the best. None of that stuff! This is what Christians call "Grace".

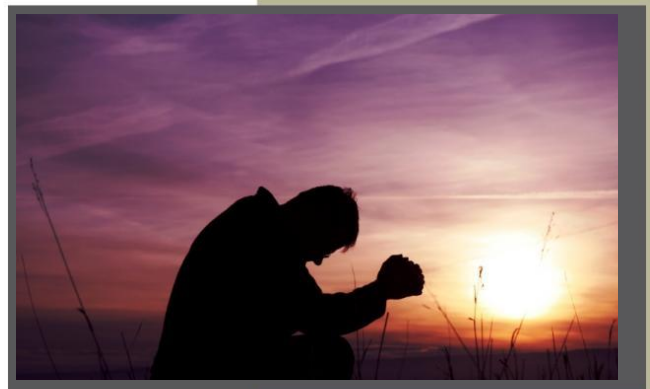
6. Giving to the Poor

- o It is Christianity that elevated the status of the world's most impoverished people. If Darwin's theory of "survival of the fittest" was right, it would be in humanity's best interest to ignore the poor and let them die off in order to elevate and promote the strong.



7. Christians cope well with suffering and death

- a. Christians believe there is meaning and purpose beyond our own understanding that offers hope during loss and difficult times, and believe they will be reunited with loved ones someday. Only God can answer exactly why pain and suffering happens in this world, but Christianity at least has a way to deal with it. The Christian response is that God gave us free will and, because of that free will, people are capable of both good and evil. Also, to the Christian, the promise of eternal life with God brings hope, especially during times of struggle and despair.



8. Christians believe they are becoming what they are meant to be, not doing what they “should” or “ought to” do.

- f. Christians are striving to fulfill a purpose they believe God has given them by applying the model Jesus Christ lived and taught. They believe that each person has been equipped with God-given gifts, talents, knowledge, and a connection to God (i.e. “Holy Spirit”), that they are using to respond to people in physical, emotional, and/or spiritual need.
- g. Christians believe in a concept of “absolute morality”, based on a divine standard. Without an absolute moral standard people would be left to invent their own morality based on their individual standards. A world without a God would also lead to a world without absolute morality, where anything goes as long as it works for the individual.
- h. Non-Christians can practice self-improvement but without a higher eternal destiny to strive for, self-improvement is literally limited to an “improved self”, but against what standards? This again leads to a subjective morality, which unfortunately we are seeing much more of in society today.



9. Christian’s have issues!

- e. Christians should not believe they are better than anyone else. They are not perfect and they should not try to make people believe they are perfect. The only one who is perfect is God, and the only way a person can be made perfect is by his ultimate sacrifice. Remember, every person is born with a sinful nature and it is impossible not to sin. The only way to be perfected is by what Jesus already did for humanity when he died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins. This is a really hard concept to grasp because our human nature is full of pride and we believe it is by our own actions and deeds that we earn favor with God. Christianity is the only religion that throws the “self” out the window and starts with a clean slate. So in a nutshell, Christians acknowledge they are pretty pathetic on their own and really need God to help them become what they are meant to be.

10. Christian's have an interesting sense of Freedom!

- i. "Religion" has gotten a bad rap and some of that is justified. When the word "religion" is used it is often followed by these words or thoughts: Rules & Rituals, Guilt, Serious, Boring, Weak, Soft, etc. While Christianity is not easy and doesn't solve all problems, there is freedom that comes with it. Because of free will, all humans can choose to accept or reject God. Christianity is not about doing a bunch of good things to earn God's love or favor. It is about acknowledging that Jesus already did all the work for us. Martin Zender in his book *How to be free from sin while smoking a cigarette* stated, "Religion is people standing on their heads for God. Truth is God standing on his head for people." Here's the catch - freedom means you can do whatever you want, but the choice to do what is right is yours. As Christian's grow in spiritual maturity, they develop a good sense and knowledge of their boundaries and choose to operate within them. Christian's do not have to follow a bunch of rules. They should not be living with guilt. They are serious when they need to be but are also called to have fun, adventurous, and even dangerous lives. They are not weak pushovers. Christians can be real about their issues and do not need to pose.



You can start right now with this prayer of salvation:

"God, I know I am a sinner and have been separated from you. I desire to be who you want me to be. Forgive my sins and come into my life and save me. Thank you for sending your son Jesus Christ to die on the cross for me. I accept your gift and receive you into my heart right now."

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." – Matthew 7:7

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Ask about my other articles, including:

"Am I stupid to believe in God?"

"Why are there so many other religions if they are all fake?"

I didn't make all this up. References I used include:

"What's So Great About Christianity", by Dinesh D'Souza

"Case for Christ", by Lee Strobel

"Top Ten Proofs – Christianity: Only True Religion", Bob Dutko
The NIV Study Bible