

1: Christian agnosticism - Wikipedia

Christian agnostics practice a distinct form of agnosticism that applies only to the properties of www.enganchecubano.com hold that it is difficult or impossible to be sure of anything beyond the basic tenets of the Christian faith.

What Is an agnostic? An agnostic thinks it impossible to know the truth in matters such as God and the future life with which Christianity and other religions are concerned. Or, if not impossible, at least impossible at the present time. An atheist, like a Christian, holds that we can know whether or not there is a God. The Christian holds that we can know there is a God; the atheist, that we can know there is not. The Agnostic suspends judgment, saying that there are not sufficient grounds either for affirmation or for denial. At the same time, an Agnostic may hold that the existence of God, though not impossible, is very improbable; he may even hold it so improbable that it is not worth considering in practice. In that case, he is not far removed from atheism. His attitude may be that which a careful philosopher would have towards the gods of ancient Greece. If I were asked to prove that Zeus and Poseidon and Hera and the rest of the Olympians do not exist, I should be at a loss to find conclusive arguments. An Agnostic may think the Christian God as improbable as the Olympians; in that case, he is, for practical purposes, at one with the atheists. He holds that a man should think out questions of conduct for himself. Of course, he will seek to profit by the wisdom of others, but he will have to select for himself the people he is to consider wise, and he will not regard even what they say as unquestionable. How do you know what is good and what is evil? What does an agnostic consider a sin? The Agnostic is not quite so certain as some Christians are as to what is good and what is evil. He does not hold, as most Christians in the past held, that people who disagree with the government on abstruse points of theology ought to suffer a painful death. He is against persecution, and rather chary of moral condemnation. He admits, of course, that some kinds of conduct are desirable and some undesirable, but he holds that the punishment of undesirable kinds is only to be commended when it is deterrent or reformatory, not when it is inflicted because it is thought a good thing on its own account that the wicked should suffer. It was this belief in vindictive punishment that made men accept Hell. Does an agnostic do whatever he pleases? In one sense, no; in another sense, everyone does whatever he pleases. Suppose, for example, you hate someone so much that you would like to murder him. Why do you not do so? They have the same motives for abstaining from murder as other people have. Far and away the most powerful of these motives is the fear of punishment. In lawless conditions, such as a gold rush, all sorts of people will commit crimes, although in ordinary circumstances they would have been law-abiding. There is not only actual legal punishment; there is the discomfort of dreading discovery, and the loneliness of knowing that, to avoid being hated, you must wear a mask with even your closest intimates. And there is also what may be called "conscience": All this, it is true, depends upon your living in a law-abiding community, but there are abundant secular reasons for creating and preserving such a community. I said that there is another sense in which every man does as he pleases. No one but a fool indulges every impulse, but what holds a desire in check is always some other desire. But if he has no such wishes, the mere abstract concepts of morality will not keep him straight. How does an agnostic regard the Bible? An agnostic regards the Bible exactly as enlightened clerics regard it. He does not think that it is divinely inspired; he thinks its early history legendary, and no more exactly true than that in Homer; he thinks its moral teaching sometimes good, but sometimes very bad. Samuel ordered Saul, in a war, to kill not only every man, woman, and child of the enemy, but also all the sheep and cattle. Saul, however, let the sheep and the cattle live, and for this we are told to condemn him. I have never been able to admire Elisha for cursing the children who laughed at him, or to believe what the Bible asserts that a benevolent Deity would send two she-bears to kill the children. Since an agnostic does not believe in God, he cannot think that Jesus was God. Most agnostics admire the life and moral teachings of Jesus as told in the Gospels, but not necessarily more than those of certain other men. Some would place him on a level with Buddha, some with Socrates and some with Abraham Lincoln. Nor do they think that what He said is not open to question, since they do not accept any authority as absolute. They regard the Virgin Birth as a doctrine taken over from pagan mythology, where

such births were not uncommon. Zoroaster was said to have been born of a virgin; Ishtar, the Babylonian goddess, is called the Holy Virgin. They cannot give credence to it, or to the doctrine of the Trinity, since neither is possible without belief in God. Can an agnostic be a Christian? The word "Christian" has had various different meanings at different times. Throughout most of the centuries since the time of Christ, it has meant a person who believed God and immortality and held that Christ was God. But Unitarians call themselves Christians, although they do not believe in the divinity of Christ, and many people nowadays use the word "God" in a much less precise sense than that which it used to bear. Many people who say they believe in God no longer mean a person, or a trinity of persons, but only a vague tendency or power or purpose immanent in evolution. Others, going still further, mean by "Christianity" merely a system of ethics which, since they are ignorant of history, they imagine to be characteristic of Christians only. When, in a recent book, I said that what the world needs is "love, Christian love, or compassion," many people thought this showed some changes in my views, although in fact, I might have said the same thing at any time. If you mean by a "Christian" a man who loves his neighbor, who has wide sympathy with suffering, and who ardently desires a world freed from the cruelties and abominations which at present disfigure it, then, certainly, you will be justified in calling me a Christian. And, in this sense, I think you will find more "Christians" among agnostics than among the orthodox. But, for my part, I cannot accept such a definition. Apart from other objections to it, it seems rude to Jews, Buddhists, Mohammedans, and other non-Christians, who, so far as history shows, have been at least as apt as Christians to practice the virtues which some modern Christians arrogantly claim as distinctive of their own religion. I think also that all who called themselves Christians in an earlier time, and a great majority of those who do so at the present day, would consider that belief in God and immortality is essential to a Christian. On these grounds, I should not call myself a Christian, and I should say that an agnostic cannot be a Christian. But, if the word "Christianity" comes to be generally used to mean merely a kind of morality, then it will certainly be possible for an agnostic to be a Christian. Does an agnostic deny that man has a soul? This question has no precise meaning unless we are given a definition of the word "soul. If this is what is meant, an agnostic is not likely to believe that man has a soul. But I must hasten to add that this does not mean that an agnostic must be a materialist. Many agnostics including myself are quite as doubtful of the body as they are of the soul, but this is a long story taking one into difficult metaphysics. Mind and matter alike, I should say, are only convenient symbols in discourse, not actually existing things. Does an agnostic believe in a hereafter, in Heaven or Hell? The question whether people survive death is one as to which evidence is possible. Psychical research and spiritualism are thought by many to supply such evidence. An agnostic, as such, does not take a view about survival unless he thinks that there is evidence one way or the other. For my part, I do not think there is any good reason to believe that we survive death, but I am open to conviction if adequate evidence should appear. Heaven and hell are a different matter. Belief in hell is bound up with the belief that the vindictive punishment of sin is a good thing, quite independently of any reformatory or deterrent effect that it may have. Hardly an agnostic believes this. As for heaven, there might conceivably someday be evidence of its existence through spiritualism, but most agnostics do not think that there is such evidence, and therefore do not believe in heaven. I also deny Zeus and Jupiter and Odin and Brahma, but this causes me no qualms. I observe that a very large portion of the human race does not believe in God and suffers no visible punishment in consequence. And if there were a God, I think it very unlikely that He would have such an uneasy vanity as to be offended by those who doubt His existence. How do agnostics explain the beauty and harmony of nature? I do not understand where this "beauty" and "harmony" are supposed to be found. Throughout the animal kingdom, animals ruthlessly prey upon each other. Most of them are either cruelly killed by other animals or slowly die of hunger. For my part, I am unable to see any great beauty or harmony in the tapeworm. Let it not be said that this creature is sent as a punishment for our sins, for it is more prevalent among animals than among humans. I suppose the questioner is thinking of such things as the beauty of the starry heavens. But one should remember that stars every now and again explode and reduce everything in their neighborhood to a vague mist. Beauty, in any case, is subjective and exists only in the eye of the beholder. Agnostics do not think that there is any evidence of "miracles" in the sense of happenings contrary to natural law. We know that faith healing occurs and is in no sense miraculous. At Lourdes, certain

diseases can be cured and others cannot. Those that can be cured at Lourdes can probably be cured by any doctor in whom the patient has faith. As for the records of other miracles, such as Joshua commanding the sun to stand still, the agnostic dismisses them as legends and points to the fact that all religions are plentifully supplied with such legends. There is just as much miraculous evidence for the Greek gods in Homer as for the Christian God in the Bible. There have been base and cruel passions, which religion opposes. If you abandon religious principles, could mankind exist? The existence of base and cruel passions is undeniable, but I find no evidence in history that religion has opposed these passions. On the contrary, it has sanctified them, and enabled people to indulge them without remorse. Cruel persecutions have been commoner in Christendom than anywhere else. What appears to justify persecution is dogmatic belief.

2: What is an Agnostic?

Agnostic theism, agnostotheism or agnostitheism is the philosophical view that encompasses both theism and agnosticism. An agnostic theist believes in the existence of a god or gods, but regards the basis of this proposition as unknown or inherently unknowable.

To this wholly erroneous imputation, I have replied by showing that the term "Agnostic" did, as a matter of fact, arise in a manner which negatives it; and my statement has not been, and cannot be, refuted. Moreover, [] speaking for myself, and without impugning the right of any other person to use the term in another sense, I further say that Agnosticism is not properly described as a "negative" creed, nor indeed as a creed of any kind, except in so far as it expresses absolute faith in the validity of a principle, which is as much ethical as intellectual. This principle may be stated in various ways, but they all amount to this: This is what Agnosticism asserts; and, in my opinion, it is all that is essential to Agnosticism. That which Agnostics deny and repudiate, as immoral, is the contrary doctrine, that there are propositions which men ought to believe, without logically satisfactory evidence; and that reprobation ought to attach to the profession of disbelief in such inadequately supported propositions. The justification of the Agnostic principle lies in the success which follows upon its application, whether in the field of natural, or in that of civil, history; and in the fact that, so far as these topics are concerned, no sane man thinks of denying its validity. Still speaking for myself, I add, that though Agnosticism is not, and cannot be, a creed, except in so far as its general principle is concerned; yet that the application of that principle results in [] the denial of, or the suspension of judgment concerning, a number of propositions respecting which our contemporary ecclesiastical "gnostics" profess entire certainty. And, in so far as these ecclesiastical persons can be justified in their old-established custom which many nowadays think more honoured in the breach than the observance of using opprobrious names to those who differ from them, I fully admit their right to call me and those who think with me "Infidels"; all I have ventured to urge is that they must not expect us to speak of ourselves by that title. The extent of the region of the uncertain, the number of the problems the investigation of which ends in a verdict of not proven, will vary according to the knowledge and the intellectual habits of the individual Agnostic. I do not very much care to speak of anything as "unknowable. But whether these things are knowable by any one else is exactly one of those matters which is beyond my knowledge, though I may have a tolerably strong opinion as to the probabilities of the case. Generation after generation, philosophy has been doomed to roll the stone uphill; and, just as all the world swore it was at the top, down it has rolled to the bottom again. All this is written in innumerable books; and he who will toil through them will discover that the stone is just where it was when the work began. Hume saw this; Kant saw it; since their time, more and more eyes have been cleansed of the films which prevented them from seeing it; until now the weight and number of those who refuse to be the prey of verbal mystifications has begun to tell in practical life. It was inevitable that a conflict should arise between Agnosticism and Theology; or rather, I ought to say, between Agnosticism and Ecclesiasticism. For Theology, the science, is one thing; and Ecclesiasticism, the championship of a foregone conclusion 3 as to the truth of a particular [] form of Theology, is another. With scientific Theology, Agnosticism has no quarrel. On the contrary, the Agnostic, knowing too well the influence of prejudice and idiosyncrasy, even on those who desire most earnestly to be impartial, can wish for nothing more urgently than that the scientific theologian should not only be at perfect liberty to thresh out the matter in his own fashion; but that he should, if he can, find flaws in the Agnostic position; and, even if demonstration is not to be had, that he should put, in their full force, the grounds of the conclusions he thinks probable. The scientific theologian admits the Agnostic principle, however widely his results may differ from those reached by the majority of Agnostics. But, as between Agnosticism and Ecclesiasticism, or, as our neighbours across the Channel call it, Clericalism, there can be neither peace nor truce. The Cleric asserts that it is morally wrong not to believe certain propositions, whatever the results of a strict scientific investigation of the evidence of these propositions. He tells us "that religious error is, in itself, of an immoral nature. It necessarily follows that, for him, the attainment of faith, not the ascertainment of truth, is the [] highest aim of mental life. And, on careful analysis of the nature of this

faith, it will too often be found to be, not the mystic process of unity with the Divine, understood by the religious enthusiast; but that which the candid simplicity of a Sunday scholar once defined it to be. It is desirable there should be an end of any mistakes on this topic. If our clerical opponents were clearly aware of the real state of the case, there would be an end of the curious delusion, which often appears between the lines of their writings, that those whom they are so fond of calling "Infidels" are people who not only ought to be, but in their hearts are, ashamed of themselves. It would be discourteous to do more than hint the antipodal opposition of this pleasant dream of theirs to facts. The clerics and their lay allies commonly tell us, that if we refuse to admit that there is good ground for expressing definite convictions about [] certain topics, the bonds of human society will dissolve and mankind lapse into savagery. There are several answers to this assertion. One is that the bonds of human society were formed without the aid of their theology; and, in the opinion of not a few competent judges, have been weakened rather than strengthened by a good deal of it. Greek science, Greek art, the ethics of old Israel, the social organisation of old Rome, contrived to come into being, without the help of any one who believed in a single distinctive article of the simplest of the Christian creeds. Again, all that is best in the ethics of the modern world, in so far as it has not grown out of Greek thought, or Barbarian manhood, is the direct development of the ethics of old Israel. There is no code of legislation, ancient or modern, at once so just and so merciful, so tender to the weak and poor, as the Jewish law; and, if the Gospels are to be trusted, Jesus of Nazareth himself declared that he taught nothing but that which lay implicitly, or explicitly, in the religious and ethical system of his people. Here is the briefest of summaries of the teaching of the prophets of Israel of the eighth century; does the Teacher, whose doctrine is thus set forth in his presence, repudiate the exposition? Nay; we are told, on the contrary, that Jesus saw that he "answered discreetly," and replied, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. The causes which have led to the development of morality in mankind, which have guided or impelled us all the way from the savage to the civilised state, will not cease to operate because a number of ecclesiastical hypotheses turn out to be baseless. And, even if the absurd notion that morality is more the child of speculation than of practical necessity and inherited instinct, had any foundation; if all the world is going to thieve, murder, and otherwise misconduct itself as soon as it discovers that [] certain portions of ancient history are mythical; what is the relevance of such arguments to any one who holds by the Agnostic principle? Surely, the attempt to cast out Beelzebub by the aid of Beelzebub is a hopeful procedure as compared to that of preserving morality by the aid of immorality. For I suppose it is admitted that an Agnostic may be perfectly sincere, may be competent, and may have studied the question at issue with as much care as his clerical opponents. But, if the Agnostic really believes what he says, the "dreadful consequence" arguer consistently, I admit, with his own principles virtually asks him to abstain from telling the truth, or to say what he believes to be untrue, because of the supposed injurious consequences to morality. We leave the practical application of the convenient doctrines of "Reserve" and "Non-natural interpretation" to those who invented them. I trust that I have now made amends for any ambiguity, or want of fulness, in my previous exposition of that which I hold to be the essence of the Agnostic doctrine. Henceforward, I might hope to hear no more of the assertion that we are necessarily Materialists, Idealists, Atheists, Theists, or any other ists, if experience had led me to think that the proved falsity of a statement was any guarantee against its repetition. We have not the slightest objection to believe anything you like, if you will give us good grounds for belief; but, if you cannot, we must respectfully refuse, even if that refusal should wreck morality and insure our own damnation several times over. We are quite content to leave that to the decision of the future. The course of the past has impressed us with the firm conviction that no good ever comes of falsehood, and we feel warranted in refusing even to experiment in that direction. Now this supposed Summa of Nazarene theology distinctly affirms the existence of a spiritual world, of a Heaven, and of a Hell of fire; it teaches the Fatherhood of God and the malignity of the Devil; it declares the superintending providence of the former and our need of deliverance from the [] machinations of the latter; it affirms the fact of demoniac possession and the power of casting out devils by the faithful. And, from these premises, the conclusion is drawn, that those Agnostics who deny that there is any evidence of such a character as to justify certainty, respecting the existence and the nature of the spiritual world, contradict the express declarations of Jesus. But, whether the Gospels contain trustworthy statements about this and other

alleged historical facts or not, it is quite certain that from them, taken together with the other books of the New Testament, we may collect a pretty complete exposition of that theory of the spiritual world which was held by both Nazarenes and Christians; and which was undoubtedly supposed by them to be fully sanctioned by Jesus, though it is just as clear that they did not imagine it contained any revelation by him of something heretofore unknown. If the pneumatological doctrine which pervades the whole New Testament is nowhere systematically stated, it is everywhere assumed. The writers of the Gospels and of the Acts take it [] for granted, as a matter of common knowledge; and it is easy to gather from these sources a series of propositions, which only need arrangement to form a complete system. In this system, Man is considered to be a duality formed of a spiritual element, the soul; and a corporeal element, the body. And this duality is repeated in the Universe, which consists of a corporeal 5 world embraced and interpenetrated by a spiritual world. The former consists of the earth, as its principal and central constituent, with the subsidiary sun, planets, and stars. Above the earth is the air, and below is the watery abyss. Whether the heaven, which is conceived to be above the air, and the hell in, or below, the subterranean deeps, are to be taken as corporeal or incorporeal is not clear. However this may be, the heaven and the air, the earth and the abyss, are peopled by innumerable beings analogous in nature to the spiritual element in man, and these spirits are of two kinds, good and bad. The chief of the good spirits, infinitely superior to all the others, and their creator, as well as the creator of the corporeal world and of the bad spirits, is God. On the other hand, the chief of the bad spirits is Satan, the devil par excellence. He and his company of demons are free to roam through all parts of the universe, except the heaven. These bad spirits are far superior to man in power and subtlety; and their whole energies are devoted to bringing physical and moral evils upon him, and to thwarting, so far as their power goes, the benevolent intentions of the Supreme Being. By leading Eve astray, Satan brought sin and death upon mankind. As the gods of the heathen, the demons are the founders and maintainers of idolatry; as the "powers of the air" they afflict mankind with pestilence and famine; as "unclean spirits" they cause disease of mind and body. The significance of the appearance of Jesus, in the capacity of the Messiah, or Christ, is the reversal of the satanic work by putting an end to both sin and death. He announces that the kingdom of God is at hand, when the "Prince of this world" shall be finally "cast out" John xii. The strictest Protestant, who refuses to admit the existence of any source of Divine truth, except the Bible, will not deny that every point of the pneumatological theory here set forth has ample scriptural warranty. The Gospels, the Acts, the Epistles, and the Apocalypse assert the existence of the devil, of his demons and of Hell, as plainly as they do that of God and his angels and Heaven. It is plain that the Messianic and the Satanic conceptions of the writers of these books are the obverse and the reverse of the same intellectual coinage. If we turn from Scripture to the traditions of the Fathers and the confessions of the Churches, it will appear that, in this one particular, at any rate, time has brought about no important deviation from primitive belief. From Justin onwards, it may often be a fair question whether God, or the devil, occupies [] a larger share of the attention of the Fathers. It is the devil who instigates the Roman authorities to persecute; the gods and goddesses of paganism are devils, and idolatry itself is an invention of Satan; if a saint falls away from grace, it is by the seduction of the demon; if heresy arises, the devil has suggested it; and some of the Fathers 6 go so far as to challenge the pagans to a sort of exorcising match, by way of testing the truth of Christianity. The masses, the clergy, the theologians, and the philosophers alike, live and move and have their being in a world full of demons, in which sorcery and possession are everyday occurrences. Nor did the Reformation make any difference. Whatever else Luther assailed, he left the traditional demonology untouched; nor could any one have entertained a more hearty and uncompromising belief in the devil, than he and, at a later period, the Calvinistic fanatics of New England did. Finally, in these last years of the nineteenth century, the demonological hypotheses of the first century are, explicitly or implicitly, held and occasionally acted upon by the immense majority of Christians of all confessions. They are fain to conceal their real disbelief in one half of Christian doctrine by judicious silence about it; or by flight to those refuges for the logically destitute, accommodation or allegory. The allegory pit is too commodious, is ready to swallow up so much more than one wants to put into it. If the story of the temptation is an allegory; if the early recognition of Jesus as the Son of God by the demons is an allegory; if the plain declaration of the writer of the first Epistle of John iii. As to accommodation, let any honest man who

can read the New Testament ask himself whether Jesus and his immediate friends and disciples can [] be dishonoured more grossly than by the supposition that they said and did that which is attributed to them; while, in reality, they disbelieved in Satan and his demons, in possession and in exorcism? Jesus is made to say that the devil "was a murderer from the beginning" John viii. To those who admit the authority of the famous Vincentian dictum that the doctrine which has been held "always, everywhere, and by all" is to be received as authoritative, the demonology must possess a higher sanction than any other Christian dogma, except, perhaps, those of the Resurrection and of the Messiahship of Jesus; [] for it would be difficult to name any other points of doctrine on which the Nazarene does not differ from the Christian, and the different historical stages and contemporary subdivisions of Christianity from one another. And, if the demonology is accepted, there can be no reason for rejecting all those miracles in which demons play a part. The Gadarene story fits into the general scheme of Christianity; and the evidence for "Legion" and their doings is just as good as any other in the New Testament for the doctrine which the story illustrates. It was with the purpose of bringing this great fact into prominence; of getting people to open both their eyes when they look at Ecclesiasticism; that I devoted so much space to that miraculous story which happens to be one of the best types of its class. And I could not wish for a better justification of the course I have adopted, than the fact that my heroically consistent adversary has declared his implicit belief in the Gadarene story and by necessary consequence in the Christian demonology as a whole. It must be obvious, by this time, that, if the account of the spiritual world given in the New Testament, professedly on the authority of Jesus, is true, then the demonological half of that account must be just as true as the other half. And, therefore, those who question the demonology, or try to explain it away, deny the truth of what Jesus [] said, and are, in ecclesiastical terminology, "infidels" just as much as those who deny the spirituality of God. This is as plain as anything can well be, and the dilemma for my opponent was either to assert that the Gadarene pig-bedevilment actually occurred, or to write himself down an "Infidel. So far as I can judge, we are agreed to state one of the broad issues between the consequences of agnostic principles as I draw them , and the consequences of ecclesiastical dogmatism as he accepts it , as follows. The demonology of the Gospels is an essential part of that account of that spiritual world, the truth of which it declares to be certified by Jesus. Agnosticism me justice says: There is no good evidence of the existence of a demoniac spiritual world, and much reason for doubting it. Hereupon the ecclesiastic may observe: Your doubt means that you disbelieve Jesus; therefore you are an "Infidel" instead of an "Agnostic. No; for two reasons: Just as a man may frankly declare that he has no means of knowing whether the planets generally are inhabited or not, and yet may think one of the two possible hypotheses more likely than the other, so he may admit that he has no means of knowing anything about the spiritual world, and yet may think one or other of the current views on the subject, to some extent, probable. The second answer is so obviously valid that it needs no discussion. I draw attention to it simply in justice to those agnostics who may attach greater value than I do to any sort of pneumatological speculations; and not because I wish to escape the responsibility of declaring that, whether Jesus sanctioned the demonological part of Christianity or not, I unhesitatingly reject it. The first answer, on the other hand, opens up the whole question of the claim of the biblical and other sources, from which hypotheses concerning the spiritual world are derived, to be regarded as unimpeachable historical evidence as to matters of fact.

3: Agnostic theism - Wikipedia

The Christian Agnostic could be described as mind expanding or mind bending. A person who reads this book should have good basic beliefs before beginning. Leslie Weatherhead ventures into some very controversial territory regarding the Christian faith.

Speaking more broadly, some agnostics state that it is difficult to hold any truth with certainty. Types of Agnosticism Agnosticism typically takes one of two forms--hard and soft. Hard agnosticism simply has no container that can keep its universal solvent, and therefore it becomes an untenable position to hold and must be discarded. At issue is not the lack of human ability for knowing a particular truth, but rather the agnostic struggles with how a truth claim can be verified or shown to be true. It is the ancient pursuit of what in philosophy is called epistemology--how do we know, and how do we know that we know? When the issue of determining the existence of the Christian God is added to the mix, things get even stickier. This first standard seems reasonable as pure conjecture or hearsay should not be a basis for committing oneself to a belief. The second condition appears logical also and is sometimes termed the principle of falsification, which was used by philosophers such as Anthony Flew in his initial writings on religion. The writers of the New Testament never state that their beliefs were based on hearsay or were events that could not be authenticated. In terms of falsification, the apostle Paul gave the enemies of Christianity a single truth claim that, if proven untrue, would crumble and destroy Christianity in an instant: That, Paul says, is how Christianity can be falsified: But earlier in that same chapter, Paul actually challenges his readers of that day to go check for themselves that the tomb of Jesus was truly empty: But, given that we cannot do that today, how can modern-day people know that Paul and the other apostles were telling the truth? The apostles answer that question through their grave markers. All except John were martyred for their testimony. People may be deceived and die for a lie, but no one dies for what he knows is a lie. Greater evidence for believability cannot be had. Criterion 2 and 3: Huxley says that a belief should be discarded if the sole purpose is to satisfy some psychological desire and if the belief is not well-grounded from a reality perspective thus producing false hopes in its target. Oftentimes, the psychiatrist Sigmund Freud is quoted to show how religion fails such a test. Speaking of religious beliefs, Freud said: We call belief an illusion when a wish-fulfillment is a prominent factor in its motivation, and in doing so we disregard its relation to reality, just as the illusion itself sets no store by verification. Could it not be true that atheists have wishes and urges of their own? Such a desire can be very motivating and drive a person to hold an atheistic position. Second, as many have said, the New Testament is not written like a lie. Rather, what is found is a strong commitment to accuracy no matter where the evidence led them. Such dedication is seen in the pen of Luke: Lastly, as has already been pointed out, the New Testament writers died for their testimony. As theologian and professor Peter Kreeft points out: If they lied, what was their motive. What they got out of it was misunderstanding, rejection, persecution, torture, and martyrdom. Hardly a list of perks! With the hard agnostic position being ruled out as self-defeating and the soft agnostic position being challenged by the compelling evidence of the New Testament, the more reasonable conclusion for the agnostic to reach, once everything has been examined, seems to be that Christianity is true. Mentor Books, , p.

4: What is Christian Gnosticism?

This review is from: The Christian Agnostic (Abingdon Classics) (Paperback) I read this book over 30 years ago when I was a struggling young Christian trying to make sense of other philosophies and beliefs that I was exposed to, even drawn to.

What is Christian Gnosticism? There is actually no such thing as Christian Gnosticism, because true Christianity and Gnosticism are mutually exclusive systems of belief. The principles of Gnosticism contradict what it means to be a Christian. Therefore, while some forms of Gnosticism may claim to be Christian, they are in fact decidedly non-Christian. Gnosticism was perhaps the most dangerous heresy that threatened the early church during the first three centuries. Influenced by such philosophers as Plato, Gnosticism is based on two false premises. First, it espouses a dualism regarding spirit and matter. Gnostics assert that matter is inherently evil and spirit is good. As a result of this presupposition, Gnostics believe anything done in the body, even the grossest sin, has no meaning because real life exists in the spirit realm only. Gnostics see themselves as a privileged class elevated above everybody else by their higher, deeper knowledge of God. To discredit the idea of any compatibility between Christianity and Gnosticism, one has only to compare their teachings on the main doctrines of the faith. On the matter of salvation, Gnosticism teaches that salvation is gained through the acquisition of divine knowledge which frees one from the illusions of darkness. Although they claim to follow Jesus Christ and His original teachings, Gnostics contradict Him at every turn. Jesus said nothing about salvation through knowledge, but by faith in Him as Savior from sin. Furthermore, the salvation Christ offers is free and available to everyone John 3: Christianity asserts that there is one source of Truth and that is the Bible, the inspired, inerrant Word of the living God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice John Even when the so-called Christian Gnostics quote from the Bible, they rewrite verses and parts of verses to harmonize with their philosophy, a practice that is strictly forbidden and warned against by Scripture Deuteronomy 4: Such views destroy not only the true humanity of Jesus, but also the atonement, for Jesus must not only have been truly God, but also the truly human and physically real man who actually suffered and died upon the cross in order to be the acceptable substitutionary sacrifice for sin Hebrews 2: The biblical view of Jesus affirms His complete humanity as well as His full deity. Gnosticism is based on a mystical, intuitive, subjective, inward, emotional approach to truth which is not new at all. It is very old, going back in some form to the Garden of Eden, where Satan questioned God and the words He spoke and convinced Adam and Eve to reject them and accept a lie.

5: What is Christian Agnostic? | Yahoo Answers

Christian Agnosticism While believers can speak with some certainty of God's purpose on redemptive history, they cannot know the purposes of God in the same way in daily events.

Monday, July 23, What is Christian agnosticism? I am a Christian agnostic. One of my friends has told me that in talking with me, he needs to remember that I truly mean both words; not a compromise or a middle ground between both viewpoints, I genuinely mean both things. In particular, the Christian agnostic label falls strangely on evangelical ears, and understandably so, because of the evangelical emphasis on salvation through personal faith in Christ. While I might use those words to describe what I think, I mean something a little bit different by "faith" and "Christ", and I want to be careful not to play a linguistic shell-game -- I do believe something different from evangelical Christians. Instead, I mean only two things: Living like the Bible says that Jesus lived is the best way to live. I am not Jesus. Point 1 seems to me to be reasonable. I need a compass for my life. Some people think that the best way to pose this compass is in terms of values, like courage or honesty or respect, or in terms of a goal, like financial success, world peace, an end to poverty, or having a family. We never see big, abstract goals come to fruition, and values are ambiguous, but I come face-to-face with people who cook my lunch, play croquet with me, who give me hugs, or tell me jokes. The ineffability of God, the unfathomable beauty of compassion, self-sacrifice, and courage, I can only apprehend when wrapped up in a person. Point 2 is more subtle, and you can tell, by seeing what people in our culture think. There seems to be an understanding that "good people" deserve to go to heaven, regardless of how they relate to God. There is a general agreement that Jesus things like loving people and listening are good things. Dan Liebert , Verbal Cartoonist, wrote: If they ever make a musical about my life, there will probably be a lot of songs about jacking off and pizza. The joke, as I understand it, is that The Onion reports on life not based on what is really important, but on what Don Turnbee, for instance, would think is important. There was a guy I knew once, I took classes with him. He was just stunningly lame. He wore coke-bottle glasses and velcro shoes and a Mister Rogers sweater. I had to check Wikipedia to know that we ever had a president named Benjamin Harrison. The thing that I always wondered about this fellow was whether he was aware that he was lame. I very much like the Jesus Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner. I think that the theology behind that prayer is the best lens through which I can see the world. The repentance in the Jesus Prayer is my antidote for lameness, found by my embracing my lameness. The purpose of this world view is up in the air. At the least, it can function as a layover on a spiritual journey. That is, if I can find God to be real, and basically congruent with who the Bible describes Jesus to be, I can find inspiration and hope from that, but, if not, I still have some idea of what the right thing to do is.

6: Agnostic Christianity: Faith for a New Year | James McGrath

and christian agnosticism The last two centuries of Christian theology [within nonevangelical denominations] are the record of an evolving attack on the role of knowledge in the Christian faith.

Leslie Weatherhead[edit] Wikiquote has quotations related to: In the summary chapter of *The Christian Agnostic*, Weatherhead stated what he believed in a sort of twelve-part creed: Weatherhead believed in God, whom he felt most comfortable referring to as "Father". Like most Christians, he felt that the Creator was higher on a scale of values, but that God must also be personal enough to interact in a direct relationship with people. Weatherhead believed in the divinity of Christ, in that he Jesus stood in a special relationship with God and "indeed an incarnation of God in a fuller sense than any other known Being. Jesus called himself the Son of Man and the Word. To say that Jesus was the "only begotten son" of God would be an impossibility, as such information is not presently available. Since Jesus was morally superior, many theologians assume him to be sinless, though Jesus never made that claim for himself. For Mickelm and subsequently for Weatherhead , it would be a perversion of God to suppose that "God did not and could not forgive sins apart from the death of Christ. As for the Holy Spirit , Weatherhead conceded agnosticism. His view was that this would equate to worshipping two gods instead of one. His view of the church was an idealistic one. The church on earth should be a photocopy of the divine original, in which all who loved Christ would be joined together to "worship and move forward to the unimaginable unity with God which is his will. He was, however, critical of many passages, including some from Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, because they went against the nature of what Jesus taught, stating that "some of the passages of Browning are of far superior spiritual value. The knowledge of God has always existed". The Council of the Vatican declares, "God, the beginning and end of all, can, by the natural light of human reason, be known with certainty from the works of creation". He described himself as "agnostic Christian". Mexican actor and director, claims to be "culturally Catholic" and "spiritually agnostic". Spanish surrealist painter born in Figueres, Spain. He allegedly claimed to be both an agnostic and a Roman Catholic. British-born American theoretical physicist and mathematician, famous for his work in quantum electrodynamics, solid-state physics, astronomy and nuclear engineering. He describes himself as "a practicing Christian but not a believing Christian". Hungarian-American mathematician and polymath who made major contributions to a vast number of fields, including set theory, functional analysis, quantum mechanics, ergodic theory, geometry, fluid dynamics, economics, linear programming, game theory, computer science, numerical analysis, hydrodynamics, and statistics, as well as many other mathematical fields. Along with David J. While he now considers himself agnostic, he still has a fondness for the Church.

7: Christian Agnosticism | James McGrath

Christian agnosticism, even Christian atheism in the sense of the apophatic theological tradition, may even lead some to deep sense if personal certitude that goes well beyond what can be attained.

Jump to navigation Jump to search I believe passionately that Christianity is a way of life, not a theological system with which one must be in intellectual agreement. He served as minister of the City Temple, London, for nearly twenty-five years. Quotes[edit] The Christianity of tomorrow will embrace all truth wherever it is found or however men have come to apprehend it, whether through specifically Christian teaching or through Buddhism or Mohammedanism, Hinduism, Confucianism, Taoism, Zoroastrianism or even through the bleak desert of apparent atheism. Why do men hug words to their hearts after the living truth has long since fled from them? The Christian Agnostic [edit] Dr. Weatherhead contends that the theological demands of Christianity are a barrier to an honest participation by a great number of people and that many agnostics are much closer to belief in the true God than many churchgoers. It is from this viewpoint that he writes in this unconventional book. He makes a strong case for his contention that loyalty to Christ and to his spirit can go hand in hand with the rejection of unlikely theological dogma and creed. Traditionalists may be shocked by the opinions expressed here; others will come to welcome them. Regardless of your own views, The Christian Agnostic demands to be read and pondered. Description from back cover In fact, many professing agnostics are nearer belief in the true God than are many conventional church-goers who believe in a body that does not exist whom they miscall God. I believe passionately that Christianity is a way of life, not a theological system with which one must be in intellectual agreement. I feel that Christ would admit into discipleship anyone who sincerely desired to follow him, and allow that disciple to make his creed out of his experience; to listen, to consider, to pray, to follow, and ultimately to believe only those convictions about which the experience of fellowship made him sure. Though not as important as loving, believing certainly matters. It matters so much that, if it has any relevance to the business of living, it must be born in the individual mind, not thrust by church authorities on others. It is not, I think, the Sermon on the Mountâ€”or at least not this aloneâ€”that constitutes the peculiar contribution of Christianity to human thought, for very similar maxims are to be found elsewhere, and in any event could be deduced from first principles. Quoted from Whately Carington, Telepathy, pp. Each thinker has the right to do what Paul did, to set forth truth as he sees it, in the thought-forms of his own day and generation, as long as he does not willfully distort truth merely to fit his own ideas. Christianity is a love relationship with Christ far belowâ€”or above, if you likeâ€”differences of belief or different ways of worshiping, far above differences of language or of color. Each mirrors at its best something of Christ but all are only caricatures of him. Francis and John Knox, of Calvin and St. Theresa, of General Booth and Pope John, of Billy Graham and Albert Schweitzer, who hold irreconcilably different beliefs about him, how can belief and uniformity of belief be vitally important? Further, where in the Gospels are we ever told that Christ demanded belief in some theological proposition before he would admit a seeker into discipleship? Truth is self-authenticating, and when it possesses me, nothing can shake it from its enthronement until some greater truth displaces it or gives it less prominence. How can a matter be fundamental in a religion when the founder of the religion never mentioned it? Argument cannot produce it and doubt cannot remove it. The outward beauty meets the inward recognition and in our hearts we know. A man cannot be bludgeoned by vulgar threats of damnation, into accepting that what other people say is true. I believe all that kind of talk is false. It is false psychology or a failure of insight, and it is the fruit of mental laziness; a refusal to think things through. The most important convictions in religion cannot really be reached on the word of another. But the so-called infallible church or book has no power unless I feel that what it says is true. And who can decide that but myself? I believe the craving for security in belief is one which arises from within ourselves, and can only be met adequately from resources which are within ourselves. It seems to me that it is far more important for a soul in evolution to believe a few things because it has struggled, thought and suffered to discover and possess them, than it is for it to have a comfortable and orderly faith which it has adopted from any source outside itself. A Religious Outlook for Modern Man. No one can suppose that the

final authority in religion is what the individual happens to think is true, unless his decision is preceded by long meditation, the weighing of all the available evidence and prayer for guidance. The saints are the best argument for Christianity. They have the highest authority in the world for they coerce us and yet our coercion is a willing one. They drive us along the way which in our best moments we want to go. We know, with an authority nothing can resist or overcome, that Christianity changes lives and that if Jesus Christ were given a chance he would change the world. Why should we follow traditional thought more than modern thought? We must judge the Bible by Jesus; by the total effect of a consistent personality made upon us from all sources, including our own experience. Critics could trample on my dreams and say that it was too much in the realm of feeling to have any value, but so is falling in love. Is that not real, and highly significant, and life-changing? So is the state of mind induced by music, or by some of the glories of Nature, or by some of the works of man. All I can say is that to me it was an experience of God, never to be denied. No one who has had such an experience can ever doubt but that in the end good will triumph over every form of evil, and that every life, however humble, frustrated, indifferent or even careless, is in the care of this Power and within a Plan, vast beyond our power to imagine, which will work out in a blessedness which brings utter satisfaction and quality of bliss for which there are no words. If only more such moments were given us! For it is such moments that make us love our life, that make us accept ourselves, not in our goodness and self-complacency, but in our certainty of the eternal meaning of our life. The Shaking of the Foundations. But then there must be the leap in the same direction, if the truth of those facts in religion which are only reached by faith are to be enjoyed. It is taking the road of evidence as far as it will go and then, with the energy provided by meditating on the character of God as Christ revealed him, making a leap of faith, only to land finally in a conviction as strong as proof can supply. He is so much more like God than any other. I am quite ready to say that I believe in the divinity of Christ, but I do not know what it means, nor can I find anyone who can explain what it means, least of all some of the theologians from Paul onwards. I sincerely believe that he is the Savior of the World, and if I am immediately challenged about what he saves men from, my answer is that he saves men from the utter despair which would fall upon a thoughtful man, who, conscious of high aims and immense possibilities within himself, was condemned to try to achieve them without any aid save his own, and purely human help of his fellows. December 4, Divinity is not proved by having one parent instead of two. It could be argued that such a person is removed from us and could not have been truly man. As to sinlessness, we men are a wicked lot, but all the evil in our children does not come from us. Mothers can pass on evil as well as fathers, and sinlessness cannot be physically determined. We just do not know what divinity connotes, save that it implies a plus to his humanity, a plus which was both achieved and endowed. Augustine profoundly, "that all portents miracles are contrary to nature, but they are not so. For how is that contrary to nature which happens by the will of God, since the will of so mighty a Creator is certainly the nature of each created thing? The City of God. He does not need miracle to make us love him or to prove that he is more than man. Newton was a great scientist, but it is no disparagement of Newton to realize that even schoolboys today know more than he did about atoms. Thought moves on in every field of inquiry. To be hurt and hindered by it, but to go on loving, and go on loving, and go on loving, without reprisal or answering violence until men see what sin is and what sin does, and turn with loathing from that which has so grievously hurt the greatest Lover of the human soul. It is not what God once was, or Christ once did, that can save us, but what Christ once did is the sacrament and visible pledge to us of what He is and does for ever. He committed himself to the task of recovering all humanity to God, however long it might take, however arduous the way, however unrewarding the toil. Christ does not bow before the Father in supplication that God will have mercy on his own children, but rather that Christ endlessly is at work with and within man, by all the ways open to love—without coercion, or bribing, or favoritism—to effect a unity, an at-one-ment between man and God. The impression made by the apostles was that they were drunk; intoxicated with God. Providence, Divine and Human. No true Christian wants to opt out of the trials that beset others, and no worthy idea of God could include his establishment of a kind of insurance scheme by which, if God be worshiped, cancer, for example, could be avoided. The lungs would soon perish without any correspondence with air. The mind that has no relation with truth is said to be in a state of unbalance, and the spirit too must have some traffic with God, its relevant Environment, if it is to

maintain its fullest health. But we must not lose faith when God does not answer prayer in the way we think we should if we had his power. It may be surgery, or medicine, or psychiatry, or prayer. And if we could do these things we should be left, not with faith, but with a head-in-the-sand superstition. But doubt is not the enemy of faith. It is the growing edge of faith. All truth is one, and religion must be as eager as science to know the truth as far as man can perceive it. If something we have treasured as truth is really contradicted by unanswerable evidence, then in the name of the God of truth we must part with it however venerable it may be. Let us never suppose that we can take over faith from our parents without examination, or believe anything merely because another says it is true. But let us not be content with a static agnosticism which never rouses itself to make inquiry. Let us examine the evidence and then in complete loyalty to its trend make a leap both of intellect and will, and, committing ourselves, acting as if all were established, try out in life the faith that carries us on wings after the hard road of fact and reason stops. I have excluded the idea of the Fall of Man. That recognition, at first, was based on behavior that paid, that avoided the retribution of the tribe and the gods, and that enabled the primitive society to function. It is true in every moment of existence. It involves no scientific description of absolute beginnings. Moses is not nearer to the Fall than we are, because he lived three thousand years before our time. The Fall refers not to some datable, aboriginal calamity in the historical past of humanity, but to a dimension of human experience which is always present—namely, that we who have been created for fellowship with God repudiate it continually; and that the whole of mankind does this along with us. When we come to Jesus, the moral demand made upon man by his new insights was impossible to reach were it not that he offered power to become and claimed himself to be the Way as well as the Goal. Spiritually, and apparently mentally, he goes on where he left off. We do not leave birth to God. Man should learn to become the lord of death as well as the master of birth. Every time we confront beauty, truth, goodness or love, our response to them judges us. The time of purging can only continue until purification is reached. And a God driven to employ an endless Hell would be a God turned fiend himself, defeated in his original purpose.

8: Christian Agnosticism - The Aquila Report

The Case for Christian Agnosticism To change one's thinking is to admit one's ignorance. But at some point along the way to modern theology, we bought into the idea that ignorance is a sign of.

Were I to rate the writing style on its own merits, it would have been closer to two or three stars due to excessive quotations which tend to make this read like a high school research paper and a proclivity for mild repetition. Second, I discovered this book after a friend of mine described himself as an atheist agnostic. I later looked up the definition and found myself wondering if there were such a thing as a Christian agnostic, because if so, I was pretty sure at this point I was one. It seems to be out of print, but I was able to find a used paperback online for a decent price. First, he believes that there are essentials of the Christian faith that one can know with certainty. This certainty, he says, comes from "the authority which truth itself possesses when it is perceived to be true by the individual concerned. Someone like the Pope, for example. The doctrine is of no importance at all, he says, otherwise it would have been part of the missionary message of the early church. The gospel of Mark never mentions it, and neither do the writings of Peter, Paul and John. It could be argued that such a person is removed from us and could not have been truly man. As to sinlessness, we men are a wicked lot, but all the evil in our children does not come from us. Mothers can pass on evil as well as fathers, and sinlessness cannot be physically determined. He tells the reader not to accept or reject the Virgin Birth, just to put it aside. One of the more difficult concepts for me to explore is the idea that some of the sayings attributed to Jesus may not be accurate or authentic. Further, I was essentially taught that the Bible was word-for-word the infallible Word of God. I must, I feel, judge the Bible by Jesus, not Jesus by the Bible, written as it was by fallible men who sometimes contradict one another, and who must sometimes have been mistaken in their estimate of him. Eliot as much more inspired than the author of the Song of Solomon. The chapter on Death and Survival, for instance, is full of anecdotal evidence of life after death -- essentially ghost stories and tales from seances -- punctuated with statements that such "evidence" should be hard to deny. And while he truly does seem convinced, for my part, these chapters just make it easier to mark these ideas down as "awaiting further light. This book will be difficult for some to digest, particularly those harboring intense theological indoctrination. Such people will, no doubt, scream heresy and toss this book in the garbage at their first encounter with Weatherheads iconoclasm. However, I would encourage such people to read this book through before formulating their final opinions about it. I would strongly recommend that any reader stay in prayer intermittently while reading this book, constantly beseeching God for the clarity and peace. Prayer will help one maintain the perspective that God is God and that all the minute ramblings and postulations that men may perform, no matter how much they may appeal to our reason, merely scratch the surface of fully knowing God. Read this book with humility and take from it that which enhances your ability to understand and leave anything that frustrates you alone. This book goes a long way in explaining how Christianity is a way of life and not a mere theological system. Many should read this book to understand how nothing more is really necessary beyond the simple openness of the Christian love that Jesus demonstrated so dramatically for us. We need not insist that anyone follow elaborate rules, rites, theologies, doctrines, or creeds, unless it feels right to them. The only real prerequisite is to open oneself to love others unconditionally and to let God into these relationships. The most effective way to a greater knowledge of God is through the experience of unconditional love. Once we embrace love, the rest will come on its own. Christ admitted those into discipleship who merely agreed to be with him and allowed his disciples to develop their own personal creed from their own experiences. It would be much more effective to invite your unbelieving neighbor to minister to the poor, help a sick neighbor, visit prisoners, read to illiterate children, or other actions of love than it ever would be to simply invite them to church. Let them find the physical church after they first experience the love. In this book, Dr. Weatherhead suggests that many Christian doctrines and rituals have nothing to do with expressing Christian love. Weatherhead asserts that it is time for the world to dismiss the lies, superstitions, distortions, and mythology with which the joyously simple message of Christ has been overlaid. Weatherhead contends that unless we can break out of the prison of literal Bible readings, false expressions, ancient creeds,

antiquated hymns, and ridiculous expectations of one another, we will continue to repel many from the far more glorious truths inherent in simple expressions of Christian love. Our five senses give us only a minute amount of knowledge in comparison to all that God knows. Algebra, which appears orderly to me, might well seem disorderly nonsense to an uneducated person. Cutting an unconscious mans body might seem purposeful cruelty to an uneducated savage, but a surgeon views it differently. To bridge this sort of enormous communication gap, Jesus drew word-pictures called parables. Parables help men see the truth in their own hearts. Today we have to recognize that similar communication gaps exist in our society and that bridging these gaps is how we bring new people to Christ. In the paragraphs below I visit some of the major concepts that Weatherhead espouses: The Virgin Birth Jesus never mentioned the Virgin Birth, neither was it for centuries any part of the missionary message of the church. Mark never mentioned it, nor Peter, Paul, or John. Matthew goes to great lengths to show that Jesus was descended through Joseph from David, which seems meaningless if Joseph was not his father. Mary was descended from Aaron, not David. Does one really have to believe in the Virgin Birth to believe in Jesus and to experience the love of Jesus? If Jesus draws me near to God, why do contentious particulars about whether or not Jesus had an earthly human father matter? Could the account of the Virgin Birth be a parable to help us all understand that we all have a heavenly father and that every man, to the extent to which he is good, is a revelation of that heavenly father? Jesus refers to his brothers, sisters, and mother as those who do Gods will, in contrast to his hereditary lineage. If we take the Virgin Birth literally to mean birth without sexual intercourse, than we have to ask ourselves if Jesus was wholly human or not. If Jesus was not fully man, the whole religious significance of God becoming man is brought into question. From this perspective, God is father of not only Jesus, but also of all of us that follow him. Being re-born spiritually is to be released from the hereditary nature and purified into the spiritual nature. It is the manner by which we transcend from physical to spiritual beings. We assume that Jesus was sinless, but we have no way of proving that Jesus was sinless. Only God is good. Jesus was a vessel full of God. Jesus contained as much of God as has been poured into any man and likely lived on a moral level so high that his temptations were more subtle than we have the spiritual sensitivity to even discern as temptation at all. Nowhere in the Bible does it say that Jesus was God. Jesus prayed to God. Jesus did not encourage people to worship him, he encouraged people to worship God. Jesus referred to himself as the Son of Man. About Miracles In Matthew Jesus clearly worked many miracles but implied that others could learn to do miracles. We should ourselves be seeking how to cure people and other amazing things. But clearly, Jesus was more interested in demonstrating servitude than his miraculous abilities. What does it mean to believe? Religious truth has no authority until it authenticates itself in the mind of the believer. Believing is accepting something as true because you see it to be true, not because it is imposed upon you. If one has only reached religious convictions on the word of another then they, in reality, may have no true convictions. If ones religion has been incessantly pounded into them as a child, perhaps exploring their doubts will bring them to a more authentic faith. Revelation is progressive and each step along the way entails a personal acceptance of truth. The reason religion seems bland to many is because they have accepted the authority of the church but never really accepted what Christ stands for. Christianity is a way of seeing the world and living in the world. Christ never said you must believe this and that! Instead Christ said, in Luke It is not true because Paul says so, or the Pope says so, or because John Wesley says so. It has the authority of the truth only when our own individual insight can leap up and recognize it and possess it as our own. When Jesus spoke of Faith, he meant trust. One man Jesus healed by faith did not even know who had healed him and certainly had absolutely no concept of any theology about Jesus! Taking the Bible literally Did God converse with a snake in Hebrew? Does the Bible say that the flesh of swine is not to be eaten, that usury is wrong, and that wages earned one day are not to be kept back till the next morning? Do we today want to follow the rules for a Levitical priest in B. Did God really turn a terrified woman into a pillar of salt, order massacres, and allow his devoted servant Job to be visited with diseases and pain? Did a donkey really speak as related in 2 Peter 2: Were the parables that Jesus told actually factual events or simply related as examples? Does it matter whether the parables actually occurred or whether Jesus was simply drawing an analogy? Does a story have to be factually true in order to convey an important moral truth? Why did Jesus die the way he did? Is there any legitimacy in the

ancient Jewish custom of murdering animals for remission of sins? Would the God you know in your heart really condone such a slaughter? The Psalmists cries in Is sin a debt that Jesus paid for with his death? Did Jesus experience some measure of suffering that in some fantastic ledger-account balanced the degree of sin in the world? The prodigal son, the woman taken in adultery, and the boy let down through the roof were all forgiven immediately; they did not have to await any sacrifice and neither do you when you are forgiven in the here and now.

9: Agnostic | Define Agnostic at www.enganchecubano.com

But a Christian agnostic is unlikely to understand the crucifixion as a death demanded by an angry God, but rather as a sacrifice in terms of the risk God was willing to take knowing what would happen should He become incarnate.

But at some point along the way to modern theology, we bought into the idea that ignorance is a sign of weakness. Agnosticism became conflated with indifference, or worse. I nodded as though I understood, and our dialogue flattened out into a monologue. I missed an opportunity to learn something, and maybe to teach something, because I am afraid of the vulnerability of ignorance. To admit ignorance is to relinquish control. But ignorance is a part of the human condition. I came hardwired with very little knowledge. To pretend that I am done learning, to act as though I have filled out the empty spaces in my understanding is to cement ignorance into stupidity. It is to avoid vulnerability at the expense of growth. Unfortunately, this tendency to flee from ignorance is nowhere as common as it is in theology. Theological ignorance carries with it a tremendous vulnerability. Admitting it to oneself necessitates existential, moral, and relational openness. It demands the difficulty of dialogue. The obvious and safe defense against this vulnerability is feigned certainty. It is to nod as though we understand, and continue our monologues. Jesus began his ministry with a call to metanoia, the Greek word commonly translated as "repentance" but which literally means change-thinking. The call to repent was replaced with a demand to consent and the honest questioning that is an integral part of metanoia came to be seen as a sign of bad faith. And we became a society of gnostics. Seven years ago, I began to study religion academically because I was certain that the Christian faith contained an exhaustive vocabulary for discussing the truth. But the more words I learned, the more highlighted the gaps between our language became. I wrote some brilliant papers and some bad ones which navigated the nuances of systematic theology. I constructed arguments with a rhetorical precision sufficient to rebut the most careful objections. I applied all my skill to filling out the gaps in my understanding. Under the desperate weight of his eyes, I knew that my answers were insufficient, so I read him the best non-answer I could find: When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. There is no poetry in the accumulation of answers. Poetry, and truth along with it, comes from an encounter with those corners of life which have not yet been filled with language. It comes from entering into our ignorance with the honest courage to question. It comes from a willingness to shake up the mental sediment in which we have hidden our secrets. On the cross, Jesus was an agnostic. He was willing to face death with a why on his lips. Sometimes, in the comfort of a sunny afternoon, when much less is at stake, I have found the strength to entertain such questions myself.

The macro economy today 14th ed by bradley schiller Mechanical engineering design shigley 8th edition Gre
book 2018 torrent Study Guide T/A Economics 6e Extra Sensory Perceptions (Alternatives (London House))
Regulation is the wrong solution to the wrong problem Creating and using a Web presence for publicity Hum
Rel Career&Bld Cc Pk (7th Edition) Learning theories in education Counseling and community Caskets, other
boxes, memorials, and markers CULTURE, RACISM, AND FAMILY The Symphony of Life From policy to
process Living A Radical Peace Advanced Epitaxy for Future Electronics, Optics, and Quantum Physics
Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening by Robert Frost Bringing up moral children in an immoral world
Killing Steamboats David Jones, letters to Vernon Watkins The Collected Works of Paul Valery Cona
switches price list 2017 Node.js design patterns 2nd edition Folk revival connection : the musicians Permanent
magnet generator plans Don Fernando Felix and his Little Farm Paul, adoption, and inheritance James C.
Walters The wit and wisdom of the Rev. Sydney Smith Problems with publications related to the Clinch River
Breeder Reactor Project Foreword Peter S. Carmichael You the new morality A sketch of old Utica Libya
Culture Smart! Security and International Relations Bookkeeping and accountancy 12th Appendix 2 :
ChronoCage What is speed ing The art of Graeme Base Images of the earth I remember Babylon