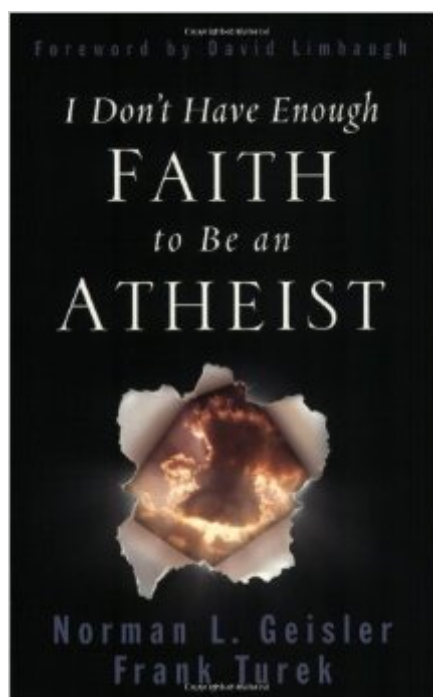


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I Don't Have Enough Faith To Be An Atheist



Synopsis

To some, the concept of having faith in a higher power or a set of religious beliefs is nonsensical. Indeed, many view religion in general, and Christianity in particular, as unfounded and unreasonable. Norman Geisler and Frank Turek argue, however, that Christianity is not only more reasonable than all other belief systems, but is indeed more rational than unbelief itself. With conviction and clear thinking, Geisler and Turek guide readers through some of the traditional, tested arguments for the existence of a creator God. They move into an examination of the source of morality and the reliability of the New Testament accounts concerning Jesus. The final section of the book deals with a detailed investigation of the claims of Christ. This volume will be an interesting read for those skeptical about Christianity, as well as a helpful resource for Christians seeking to articulate a more sophisticated defense of their faith.

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Customer Reviews

THE BOOK:I am an agnostic who is looking for something to believe in. I have searched for years now, and generally am met with lukewarm explanations and radical fundamentalism from both camps. I am not self-righteous or pig-headed enough to categorically dismiss atheist or religious arguments simply because their tone bothered me, but it does get tiresome to be on the receiving end of what is usually more bitterness and dogmatic posturing than any kind of intelligent thought or reason. Again, I'm talking about atheists as well as religious zealots. Which is why I enjoyed this book so much. This is a concise, well-crafted, thoughtful and thought-provoking piece of work. There is real insight to be gleaned from the pages, and although the sum total isn't what any open-minded

person would call 100% convincing, it definitely gets much closer than anything else I've discovered. There is much talk about this book setting up straw men to be knocked down, and although the book does do that on a few occasions, it is by no means what the ultimate premise is based on. In fact, although there were some sketchy arguments and hastily covered bases, and although there were explanations missing and topics omitted, I still felt, on the whole, that it was one of the more successful books I've read from either camp. The tone (while every once in a while devolving into brief moments of snideness and cockiness) is generally quite intelligent and emotionally removed. There is little here that is bullying or smug, and for that I was grateful. It leant the text, with its vast array of debates and discussions, a snappy and no-nonsense delivery that helped elucidate the more hazily understood, philosophical explanations. Although, in the end, I wasn't entirely convinced by the book, I was pushed much closer to being convinced than I have yet by any book, religious, atheistic, or otherwise.

THE CRITICS: In the course of my research, I read the reviews and the comments made by consumers on .com in order to determine how best to spend my money. I don't want to buy an atheist or christian apologetic book if what I'm going to get is watered down theories and trite cliches. At this point, I think it would be appropriate to point out that this is, in fact, a forum for discussing the merits of the product, and not the merits of the beliefs or arguments espoused within. I understand that it's hard to remove the deeper values of the work from the work itself, but it can be done. So, if, for instance, if you are an honest consumer, you can point out the cinematic brilliance of films like the Last Temptation of Christ in spite of what that film may or may not say about the religion you may or may not adhere to. I was dismayed by how many inflammatory and rather pointless criticisms I found for this book. I'd never read it, but I could tell by the tone and stance of the reviews that they were reacting more out of indignation toward the subject matter than out of any knowledge of the text itself. One reviewer scorned the book for being written by David Limbaugh, when the man only wrote the forward. Another person decried the book for being "all about politics," when, as far as I could tell, there wasn't a word about politics, just beliefs or the lack of them. If you are a critic of christianity, that's fine. Trust me, I understand your point of view. But your clumsily summarized view points and your indignant rebuttals do little to enlighten people who may be interested in buying this book. There are forums in which you can openly discuss and debate these topics, but this is not one of them. This is about saying whether or not the book is worth buying. Instead of doing that, most of you have instead attempted to explain your own beliefs, as if you want to write your own book in response to Christianity, but can't be bothered. For someone such as myself, looking for intelligent and candid help with the question of Larger Purposes (or their absence), your poorly worded rants and emotional appeals -- especially

those of you wearing your rage on your sleeve -- do nothing to help me. For future reference, if you really want to help someone like me understand your points of view, instead of typing out some sloppy summation or more key-worded dismissals (argument from ignorance! straw men!), perhaps you could actually RECOMMEND A DIFFERENT BOOK. I am always on the lookout for some way to increase my knowledge of the world, and my knowledge of what that world may do to better explain the validity or non-validity of any religion. Unlike many of you, though, I haven't been convinced yet, either way. I read your reviews in the hopes that you may be able to point me down the same path that led to your own enlightenment of absolute certainty, but all most of you did was make vacuous complaints about the book and then insult people who might actually believe or buy it. So, if you've come online to write a scathing review or to tear apart the praisers of this book, go right ahead. But keep in mind that your own viewpoints -- as right or wrong as they might be -- are less welcome than your criticisms of the actual book in question. And if you DO think you've got it all figured out, and if you DON'T think this book does, you could at least try to share that knowledge by pointing someone like me in the right direction, and by doing that without the same snobbish condescension that you sometimes find in the religious believers whom you so adamantly decry.

Pros:1. Truth is not relative to an individual. Some people believe all religions are true or that truth is relative to someone's tastes. This is obviously silly and Geisler does a good job pointing this out.2. Morality is also not relative. There are such things as absolute evil and good actions. Is the Holocaust immoral because of your tastes? Society's tastes? Or because it goes against an unchanging moral standard? Euphyro's dilemma and other things are not touched on, but the section on morality deals primarily with refuting moral relativism. It's more offensive than defensive.Cons:1. Geisler's and Turek's primary argument for the universe being finite is based on evidence for the big bang. While they do write them in an entertaining way, they are flawed. Many atheists believe that there is a never-ending series of Big Bangs and Big Crunches. Also, big bangers believe that the big bang was caused from 'nothing'. Geisler does put forth some good philosophical arguments against an infinite universe and a multiverse.2. Evil. Geisler doesn't touch on evil in the best way. I would recommend 'Christianity for Skeptics' by Komar and Sarfati for a better handling of it. Geisler argues that we don't know how evil helps people become stronger in every circumstance. Obviously not everyone gains from suffering. Plenty of people just live miserably and then die.Overall, I would not give this book to an atheist friend, but it did educate me on a few new arguments. The section on evolution does not go into enough detail, and I know from experience that once you tell an atheist that 'evolution isn't true' they immediately have hundreds of

questions. Geisler and Turek probably should have either left it out and focus more on philosophy or go into more detail. It does at least describe how natural selection is a selective force, not a creative force which is a common misconception. I recommend 'World Winding Down' by Carl Wieland for a good introduction into creationism. It touches on the big bang and mutations.

Well written book. Based on the scientific evidence, logic and reason, Geisler and Turek do a good job showing it's more plausible to believe in the design of the universe and the God of the Bible as the Grand Designer, and how it takes much more faith to be an atheist. They begin with 'can truth be known' and progress logically through the scientific evidence, the philosophical, teleological, and moral arguments, and then on to the historical evidence for the reliability of the Bible and who Jesus claimed to be. It's like a compilation of all the other books I've read on Intelligent Design, the Historical Reliability of the Bible, and Jesus' claims - not as in depth, but still very informative. I would recommend this book to anyone who is honestly seeking the truth, regardless of their current worldview.

Very well written book on apologetics. Norman Geisler is a master at getting right to the point and showing the contradictions in evolution and presenting the proofs for the validity of the Bible and Christianity. I would recommend this book for anybody who wants to give it as a gift to unbelievers to read.

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