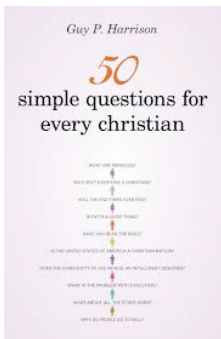


# NEWSLETTER

## 50 Simple Questions for Every Christian #2



In my first response to Guy P. Harrison's *50 Simple Questions for Every Christian*, I laid out a simple groundwork. In this issue, I will address his questions concerning the triune essence of God's existence, and I will point out the assumptions skeptics and atheists like Mr. Harrison make concerning God. I'll wait until another issue to answer Mr. Harrison's related question, "What is a god?"

Not surprisingly, the assumptions made about the Christian God are almost completely wrong and come from a naturalistic worldview, a worldview that doesn't accept anything outside the natural realm. This is scientism or naturalism. I believe Mr. Harrison calls himself a methodological naturalist and not a philosophical naturalist. The latter accepts only the natural world as reality. The former accepts that there may be something outside the natural world, but they say we can't know anything about it. I wish methodological naturalists would say, "There is something besides the natural physical world, and we will seek the answers to our questions." That is very different than saying, "Only science has the answers," or, "Only science can tell us about reality." Sometimes Mr. Harrison equivocates on this word *science* and really means *scientism*. I may be wrong about this, but we'll find out.

~~.....I've spent thousands of hours formally studying and practicing~~  
 theology and apologetics. I've also spent more than a few hundred hours studying philosophy. Although I wouldn't consider myself a professional philosopher, I would say I'm a pretty good amateur, especially in scholastic realism. I know bad philosophy when I hear it,

I'm hoping to write this blog/newsletter a couple of times a month. I'm always studying and reading and most of it gets stored somewhere. I thought I'd begin by addressing concerns I come

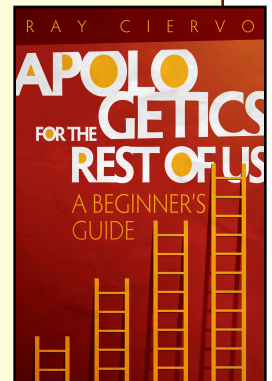


across in my study. If you have some you'd like me to address, please write to me. I do my best to answer it here. Hopefully, this newsletter will be a help to you on you

### Apologetics For The Rest of Us

*Apologetics for the Rest of Us: A Beginner's Guide* is primer to this normally heady subject. For those acquainted with the subject this is a good refresher. For someone who doesn't know much about apologetics this is a must read.

Here's one comment: *You've provided a great primer for the Body of Christ. Most of us probably won't "do the heavy lifting" of apologetics but ALL can benefit significantly from reading and digesting your book. You've laid a good foundation and, hopefully, many will make the effort to build upon it in their own lives.*



To order: Send a check for \$12(postage paid) to RCM, PO Box 507, Oakhurst, NJ 07755. Or, email [info@nopatanswers.com](mailto:info@nopatanswers.com) with your request. We'll invoice you for CC payment.

and I know enough about logic to point out fallacies when I hear them (while fighting down a gag reflex).

More than almost anything else, when people try to use Scripture to make a point against Christianity, I start to gag. However, I have become better at reacting through encountering the abundance of bad scriptural interpretation. Bad interpretation is culpable for many bad arguments about Christianity. For one thing, I'm not sure skeptics and atheists understand they are reading someone else's mail. If we want to talk about authority or authenticity or even reliability, no serious person who has searched out the reliability of the Old and New Testaments can dismiss them as "bronze age" writings from uneducated men.

Next, we must acknowledge that not all belief is based on facts. For instance, many scientists suggest a "multiverse" existence. There is no proof of this. For some, this is an escape hatch for believing in the Creation story in Genesis. Is it plausible? Sure. Is it possible? Maybe. Is it true as fact? No. A multiverse is an assumption.

The honest person knows no one was present in the beginning of the universe. Christians and theists believe a Supreme Being caused the universe. This is no more implausible or impossible than a multiverse. Christian and Jewish theists believe this is Jehovah, the God of the Old Testament. (For the Jews, this is not the Old Testament but simply the Holy Scripture. And the Muslim theists believe the Qu'ran first, then the Old Testament.)

Now let's look at Mr. Harrison's question. He does a fair job expressing the point of Christianity by summarizing it like this:

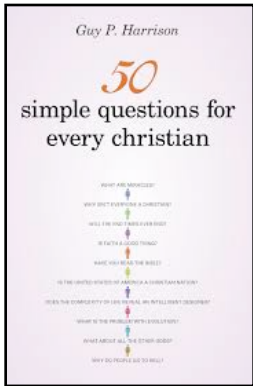
*God sent his son, Jesus, into the world so that he could die for us. His sacrifice was a pardon for our sins that allows us to be saved from death and enjoy eternal life in heaven. Without Jesus, we would all be doomed because of our inherently sinful nature. In this great act of mercy, God saved us from ourselves. And all we have to do in return to accept this gift is to repent our sins and embrace Jesus as our only lord and savior.<sup>1</sup>*

It appears this is a contradiction because in this dimension, one being equals one person.

This is fair as an assessment. I would suggest we could accept this in order to understand his point of view and begin with this question:

*We are immediately confronted with a huge problem. God is Jesus and Jesus is God. How can we say that God sent his son and sacrificed him for us when they are the same being? I understand that many Christians don't spend much time thinking about it, but according to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, God the father and Jesus the son are the same being. (The Holy Spirit, or Holy Ghost, completes the Holy Trinity.)<sup>2</sup>*

I would not expect Harrison to get this point of the Trinity with his current frame of reference or worldview. It appears this is a contradiction because in this dimension, one being equals one person. And if Jesus is the Father and is God, and Jesus is the Son also, this is a contradiction. That would be a



contradiction if they were the same person. However, the point that skeptics and atheists do not get is that there is a difference between *being* and *person*, and the physical natural world is not all there is. Of course, according to a naturalistic worldview, the physical natural world is all that exists.

In an eternal realm there could be a different understanding of beings and persons. In fact, Trinitarian Christians believe God’s nature is one being but three persons. There are several ways to attempt to explain this. However, some of them end up either as contradictions or as bad illustrations. For instance, the “links on a chain” is used to explain the person of God. This is really tri-theism, three Gods. Another one used is that of an egg—also tri-theism. Another example often used is H<sub>2</sub>O, as it can exist as vapor, water, and ice. That’s not bad, except at the point when water or vapor turns into ice. Or water turns into vapor. Theologians gag on this idea, as it represents the Son turning into the Father, etc. We do have a struggle to understand the triune nature of God.

The best understanding of the nature of God concerning the Trinity may be compared to a triangle. As a triangle is one shape with three sides, so God is one being in three persons. To remove a side from a triangle is to no longer have a triangle. The nature of God as one being in three persons has been accepted by orthodox Christians for centuries.

So the nature of God is tri-personal—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. If we only consider a naturalistic worldview, we do not get this. In an eternal dimension or with the biblical worldview, this is not a problem. It is also only a contradiction if we say God is one person and three persons. However, that is not what orthodox Christians believe. Orthodox Christianity believes God is one being in three persons.

I often find it amusing that skeptics and atheists cannot embrace an eternal dimension but can posit a multiverse or another unseen realm where universes can simply pop into existence. Why is it unreasonable to posit a realm outside of time, space, and matter? These three came into existence or at one point did not exist. Whatever gave them existence is not part of them but outside of them. It should not be a big leap to agree that whatever caused them to exist is not part of time, space, or matter.

If a multiverse is a possibility, that backs this problem up

## NJ Christian Apologetics Conference

### March 28-29, 2014

### Speakers



**MARYJO SHARP**  
Author, professor and speaker. MaryJo has authored a video-driven Bible study, *Why Do You Believe That?* and contributed to several Christian books. She is the founder of Confident Christianity, an apologetic ministry.



**J WARNER WALLACE**  
Jim is the founder of PleaseConvinceMe.com. He is also author of *Cold Case Christianity*. Jim also serves with *Stand To Reason*, an apologetic ministry.



**RAY CIERVO**  
Ray Ciervo is founder and director of Ray Ciervo Ministries and author of *Apologetics for the Rest of Us*.

Register @ [www.njconference.com](http://www.njconference.com)

Information:  
No Pat Answers is a registered Trademark of Ray Ciervo Ministries.  
All content is copyright for Ray Ciervo Ministries 2013.  
Address: RCM, PO Box 507, Oakhurst, NJ 07755  
Website: [WWW.nopatanswers.com](http://WWW.nopatanswers.com)  
Email: [info@nopatanswers.com](mailto:info@nopatanswers.com)

another step. Where did the multiverse come from? Or are we being asked to embrace the idea that a multiverse always existed, that it is “atemporal” or eternal? Why then is it possible to imagine an eternal multiverse but not an eternal dimension where God exists? I imagine skeptics and atheists are rejecting Christianity for other reasons.

We see God the Father sending His Son to become a man and live here on earth in order to become a sacrifice for sins. Mr. Harrison goes on to say, “Why?” Why didn’t God just forgive us?<sup>3</sup> We’ll answer this next time. The answer is tied to the nature of God. So, we’ll also answer: “What is a god?”

---

<sup>1</sup> Guy P. ,Kindle Edition (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2013), – location 170

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.,–

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., Kindle Locations 136–138.