

Some questions that unbelievers will ask to challenge Christians

Do Christians really believe that good people will go to hell, just because they don't believe in Jesus? (the thought being that 'good' people go to hell while the murderer said a prayer goes to heaven)

No, good people do not go to hell; in fact, only sinners are punished in hell. But ... there is no one who can be good enough to go to heaven on their own. The Bible says *only God is good* (Ma 10:18); *There is none righteous, no, not one* (Ro 3:10); and *all of our righteousness are like filthy rags*. (Is 64:6). Only Jesus lived a perfect and sinless life – *Jesus the Son of God ... has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet was without sin*. (Heb 4:14, 15). Only Jesus was good enough to merit heaven for Himself and all who are joined to Him by faith. One is not saved by merely saying a prayer; one is saved on the basis of their union with Jesus Christ and Him alone, by faith (John 14:6, 2 Tim 1:9)

Do Christians really believe that Jews, Muslims and other professing religions worship the same God as Christians? (This can be tied to the idea that *all roads lead to heaven, we're all God's children*, etc.)

No, all roads don't lead to heaven; all people are not God's children! Christ is the only way or path to salvation (John 14:6). So, any religion that presents another path or way is by nature a false religion. One can make a case that the God of the Jews is the same the same God of the Christian; nevertheless one can not merely believe in the God of Judaism and know God. One must trust in Jesus for salvation. Although we believe Jesus is spoken about in the Old Testament, one who puts their trust in Judaism alone will not attain salvation (Acts 4:10-12)

Is being a Christian just a matter of saying a prayer, or signing a card?

No, there are no magic words which make one a Christian. But that said, one still does pray to God asking Him for forgiveness for their sins and turning from them; this is called repentance. Romans 10:9 says, *If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved*. Salvation is a thing God does for you in eternity past (Eph 1:4). But in another sense salvation comes to us at a certain time in our lives. There's even another sense of salvation, in that you are being saved, and that the Lord will save you in the future (Matt 10:22).

What must I do to be born again, or a true Christian?

One must know they are a sinner guilty of breaking God's law (Ps 51)
One must believe Jesus is the only way for them to be saved (Ro 3:10-12)
One must know that they cannot be saved by their works (Ro 4:2-5)
One must confess with the mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in their heart that God has raised Him from the dead (Rom 10:9-13)

If Christianity was so right, why are there so many denominations?

While there are many extravagant estimates as to how many Christian denominations there are in the world, many of these so-called denominations are not true churches at all. That said, admittedly, there still are a great many. Certainly the root of the problem of lack of unity between Christian denominations is the result of remaining sin in the life of every believer. While we cannot justify all denominational division, it must be said that all Christians are not the same – and God permits for various expressions of worship within His church. As long as the essential doctrines of the faith are agreed upon, there exist differences over important, but secondary doctrines that genuinely sincere Christians do not come to the same conclusion on – like baptism, church governments, and other things. In these areas we may decide to fellowship with those of a like mind in these areas – this is what led to what are called denominations. While this may not be the way it should be, and one day in eternity it will not be like this, the fact is, in this life, we have various Christian denominations. This however is no proof nor does it even suggest that Christianity might be wrong!

If God created everything, why is there evil and suffering in the world?

The source of evil in the world can be attributed to the fall of man as recorded in Genesis 3. Our first parents, Adam and Eve sinned by going against God's decree. But that said, the so-called problem of evil has been debated amongst true biblical scholars for many years. One must come to the conclusion God allowed this to happen, since the Lord is sovereign over all. *For I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me ... My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure* (Isa 46:9-10) There's no getting around that the fact that God is sovereign, and there is evil and suffering in the world. But instead of causing us to run from God, the reality of suffering should cause us to run to God for salvation and deliverance – for He is sovereign and holds the power to enable us to overcome in the midst of all kinds of suffering.