

The Jesus Effect

This is where Jesus is key. The coming of Jesus 2000 years ago has affected the whole of humanity – in legislation, moral codes, relationships, health care, education,



environment etc. The teaching and life of Jesus have globally driven positive change. Yes, some Christians have notoriously abused their positions but Jesus

teaching was never meant to be used like that. His life and teaching give us an excellent illustration of what God is like. Indeed Jesus said if we want to know what God is like, we should look at him.

Jesus was good. He was not willing to see people being undervalued by systems, structures or powers. The social outcast, the ill (mentally and physically), the bereaved, the broken-hearted, the depressed and despairing were as equally important as the leaders of the nations. Everyone deserved and deserves to live life to the full, an abundant, joyful, valued life, life with meaning.

Christianity sees Jesus as much more than a human being. There are four good records of his teaching and activity as well as non-Biblical references to his life. They provide evidence to the uniqueness of this man and, crucially, that

after his execution which was prompted by the local religious leaders, he returned from the dead to meet with hundreds of people, some who had been his followers and some, like St Paul, who had been strong opponents.

Probably the single difficult belief, then, in Christianity, is that Jesus, in some real sense, was God. His resurrection is evidence of that. Consider it for a moment. If God, in Jesus, dies so that the world may know what the nature of God truly is, then we have a picture of God who is prepared to love so much that he puts himself in harms way for us. Creator dies for Creation – a major Christian headline.



Christians believe that if there had just been one of us– God would still have died for that single person.

Life, all life, **your** life is precious to God. God has been waiting billion of years for us to exist. Everyone of us is worth more than tons of gold.

What is love?

God is love, says a verse in the Bible, and that is key to Christianity. Follow the logic: God wants each of us to be valued for the life we have, to be part of everyone's life, to be known and loved by us. And for us to be sheltered, held, journeyed with, lived alongside of.



Would you become a Christian

You may have no religion, or be a member of a religion which is not Christianity. Either way, please do read through this leaflet. In it I'll tell you why I am a Christian, not a Muslim, a Hindu, a Buddhist, a Jew, an agnostic or an atheist.

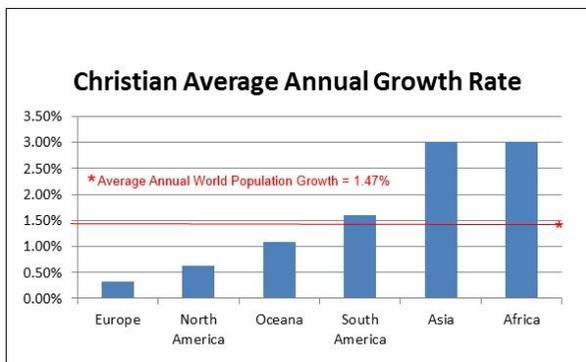
Believing Baloney?



Many think that to be a Christian you need to sign up to believing a lot of baloney before breakfast. That is not true for Christianity,

although the media do like to portray Christians as very odd, and usually they show extreme brands of Christianity which do not correspond to the vast and overwhelming majority of the 2.2 billion (31% of the entire world) who call themselves Christian.

Christianity is the largest religion, and, is growing faster than population growth.



I was a science academic at a UK university for 30 years. All my life I've been, someone who needs evidence, logic, rational underpinning to anything I do. I can't take a pile of beliefs and just believe them – why? Because I value evidence and proof.

The Bible, which is the key text for Christians, is a sacred book, full of history, insight, love, hope, guidance and instruction.

It is full of stories, many of which are illustrative of life. Jesus, the key figure in Christianity, told stories to make a point. Indeed the whole Bible has stories told to touch minds and hearts in different ways. It is not a scientific paper or a history book. Its writings are full of allegory and truth that help Christians to understand things about God.



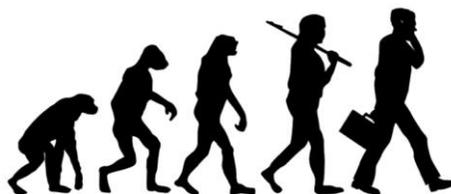
Revd. Adrian Low, Chaplain to the Costa del Sol West of the Anglican Church – part of the Diocese in Europe of the Church of England. See www.costachurch.com for more information 28.7.18

What about creation?



Probably most Christians believe, as I do, in evolution, the best evidence suggesting that the world is 4 billion years old, that the universe started with an event, often called the big bang 13.8 billion years ago. There is much evidence of evolution making it almost irrefutable. So I, for one, cannot take the first few chapters in the Bible which describe the creation of the world in seven days as an analysable historical and scientific document. This was a story written to emphasise the centrality of God in creation and the importance of relationships, goodness, love and environment.

There is absolutely no contradiction in science, evolution and Christianity. None at all. I



believe in God. A mind, a being external to humanity that was (and still is) instrumental in the design and life of the universe. The alternative is a universe with no purpose or design and that does not satisfy me as either a scientist or as a human. The underpinning systems, elements, particles and constants seem to point to design. The ongoing adaptation, selection, coincidences and

resulting beauty seem to point to design. From the universe, where planets are still being 'born' three or four every second, to the fundamental particles that operate in a quantum space disappearing and reappearing instantly, butterfly effects and immeasurable complexity, there seems to me to be a vast design to the universe, the foundations of which were set at the big bang, but which have been influenced by God constantly since then to ensure life exists.



In my view, given the vast volume of evidence, there is a designing mind, a mind we call God.

God keeps the show on the road!

People say to me: 'I do very well without God in my life, thanks.' Many scientists say that our continued existence is maintained by God. Rather like the need for a computer to co-fly some of modern military aircraft that were it left to a human, would simply not be flyable, many believe that God is constantly keeping the show on the road. This is not the leaflet to say why I think that, but I'm always happy to discuss! You see, God is already permanently active in your life. The question is whether you are open to recognising that fact?

The Stoics thought God to be apathetic, others saw God as a being to be assuaged, even someone never to be woken - so those believers kept quiet and avoided arguments!