

There is Hope Radio
Why Not Become a Christian-Part Five, Transcript
Objection-Christianity is a Crutch
PreacherRichD

Welcome to There is Hope Radio, our radio host is the Let's Get Real PreacherRichD of Creating Futures

Well, welcome to There's Hope Radio. We thank you for tuning in. Today, I have another discussion with my friend Bobby that lives in the Seattle area.

And we're gonna be talking about another objection to Christianity, why some people do not become a Christian or why they don't want anything to do with God or Christianity, the Bible, etc. And so just to give you a summary of what we've covered so far, here's some of the objections why people don't become a Christian.

Number one is Christians are hypocrites.

Number two, the concept of hell.

Number three, I'm too wicked to be a Christian.

Number four, stumbling over the Bible.

Number five, suffering in the world and that whole suffering, we had two podcasts on that.

And that whole concept of suffering, if there's a loving God that has control, why does he allow suffering? And I think we did a pretty good job of trying to answer that question. No way you can answer it completely because there's some suffering in this world that I don't think there's an answer for until we get to heaven.

But now we're gonna cover the sixth objection, the sixth objection is that I don't need a crutch like Jesus or a crutch like the Bible or a crutch like a God. I don't need a crutch to help me survive facing the fact that there is an eternity. And so the reason people refuse the gospel, the reason they refuse to read the Bible, the reason they refuse to believe in a God is because it's a crutch.

And so that's what Bobby and I are gonna talk about. I probably will talk a little bit more than Bobby because that was one of my excuses as an atheist that the whole Christianity, Bible, religion itself, didn't matter what religion, every religion was a crutch and people who are strong, people who are confident don't need a crutch like that. And so before I get into my own story, Bobby, did you ever, was it ever in your mind that you're stronger than needing a God? And I've never really asked you specifically, would you call yourself an atheist doesn't believe in God or would you call yourself that you were an agnostic that says, well, there's probably some kind of higher power but doesn't personally care about us or where were you on that in your deepest part of not being a Christian, where were you at on the God thing?

Bobby: Yeah, I think I was much more closer to an atheist than an agnostic. I suppose that there was part of, I mean, and maybe deep, deep, deep down, I may have at certain points, maybe considered that maybe something created us, but for the most part, yeah, I thought like, I mean, completely self-will because the stuff that I went through and how I survived it, and it's like I made it through. And I mean, at the time I really felt like, oh, I'm just a survivor,

I'm so tough and all that. But yeah, it was much more of an atheism, more of an agnosticism.

PreacherRichD: Yeah, okay. And then the same for me is literally there's no need for a God, so why would there be a God? I'm surviving with no God whatsoever. If there's a God, why don't he strike me down or do something to make me believe in him? If there's a God, or and explain all this science, I grew up in the big evolution time, Darwinism and all that. And so I grew up in a time that's pushed strongly. And there was a lot of stuff that now they've shown was false. I mean, there was all these missing links that they were proving that were the answer to the missing links, and they weren't missing links, they were created by man and fake fossils and taking fossils from miles and miles apart and putting together all kinds of stuff. I could do a whole show on all the hoaxes that were out there that the sciences have acknowledged that are hoaxes.

PreacherRichD: But I grew up in that environment and I grew up in an atheist home where there was no belief in a God. So I wasn't exposed to anything with Christianity, church or any of that kind of stuff. So I was pretty adamant on there was no God. I would argue and debate that. And then I even went quote on a God hunt at one time and God didn't show up. So that proved he wasn't God because he didn't show up when I wanted him to because he has to do what I say. Actually, that's not much of a God if he has to do what I have to say.

PreacherRichD: But then this whole thing about it's a crutch. You're just a weak person and so you need to have something to believe in and you're a fearful person and you're afraid of death. And so you have to believe in the fairytale God and the fairytale heaven and all those kinds of things.

PreacherRichD: And I would say for myself, I didn't ever say call that stuff fairytale. I never went that far. I just to say it wasn't real. And if you believe in it, go ahead. If you believe in it and you're weak enough that you need that, then go ahead. And so my concept was there's just some people that aren't very strong, can't endure very well. And so they need to trust in some other things.

PreacherRichD: And Bobby, you said that, I mean, you went through a troubled, troubled life with addiction and everything else, but you kept surviving. So was that part of it where I don't have to believe in a God because I'm still alive. And if you knew what I went through, I shouldn't be alive.

Bobby: So ,it's about how strong I am. And circumstances maybe came at the right time, but other than there may be a God, how long did it take you before you said there probably is a God because I've survived? Yeah, that's exactly it. I mean, it was, I moved up here to the house and when I was 30 years old and I had the, where you prayed for me and I felt God instantly and then it all fell into place after that was, I could start to see like, oh, I wasn't surviving myself. There was something looking out for me because there's just

PreacherRichD: I don't wanna interrupt you, but again, to let people know we're in two different states and can't see each other. Are you saying that until that alter call, you really hadn't looked at, there was a power that was watching over you at all?

Bobby: Yeah, never. I mean, not that I can remember. I absolutely, most people I know and from my past, all my family and all my friends I grew up with, they've all died. They've all do the drugs and alcohol. I mean, honestly, probably 90% of them. And so it was, there's just no way there could be a God to like bring this much. I mean, we're just all out here fending for ourselves and-

PreacherRichD: And you just happen to do a better job. You do a better job fending for yourself than others.

Bobby: Yeah, that's the way I always thought, yeah.

PreacherRichD: So what does that say about how you thought about yourself?

Bobby: Yeah, it's kind of a weird paradox.

PreacherRichD: It's a paradox, it's oxymoron, right?

Bobby: Right. I really thought that I was a really, really tough individual because I went through all the stuff that I went through and it's like, I'm still here. And so, but like deep down, I knew I was nothing like that. You know, I just, I, it's like, I always knew, but like I could put on a show and that's where my strength came from was, you know, it was false, it was created. And the worst part about it was like, I knew that I was creating it. Cause I knew I was, I knew how I was in my own skin. I was afraid and I knew I was afraid.

Bobby: And they talk about, you know, if you ever talk with like real, like not death row inmates, but people who've done 20, 25 years in prison and after they get out and they do these, these kinds of interviews and they say, oh, I was terrified my entire stint. Like I was afraid every day, every time I fought, every time I got in a fight, I was, I was absolutely terrified and that's why I did that. So there's a sense of just like false bravado, you know, and then, you know, it's easy because of, because of certain things I could come out like, and I had proof because it's like, oh, I survived this and I survived that. And I went through this and I went through that and I'm still here and I'm still moving along. And so there was like evidence to support that, but certainly not the feeling.

PreacherRichD: Cause we've talked before and the feeling is to feel worthless, to feel you have no value, to want to, you know, take your life. If you want to take your life, it probably means you don't have a lot of confidence, okay? That you can beat through this if you're going to take your life. And so some are listening here, they're at a place where they're not desperate, life is going good for them, everything is going, they're not drug addicts and not alcoholics. Life is going great, you know, great marriage, all this stuff and so I don't need that crutch and I'm going to address that in a moment.

PreacherRichD: But then there's others that if they're really honest with themselves that they're getting kind of tired of pulling up the bootstraps, cinching the belt, biting the bullet type of life. And I would argue that was part of what your life was. That was your life. I'm going to pull up the bootstraps, I'm going to cinch the belt, I'm going to bite the bullet and I'm going to get through this. Would that be accurate?

Bobby: Yeah, for sure.

PreacherRichD: Does that get old?

Bobby: It's very tiresome. I mean, yeah, it got so old that it just wore me down so much where I just, I couldn't do it anymore, you know? And that's, I just, yeah, I couldn't do it anymore.

PreacherRichD: And I would say that's where some surrender came in. And then what we're going to talk about is people say it's a crutch and I'll be the first. Yeah, it's a great crutch to have, I will tell you. Life is a lot easier with that crutch than it was without that crutch.

PreacherRichD: So we'll cover that in a moment. But just to my own story. So I grew up as an atheist. I was an asthmatic, very skinny, small, could not fight, only been one fight in my life, physical fight. I felt wimpy, I felt like, you know, I wasn't a, quote, man when I was a kid. And the way I won is with my mouth. And sometimes my mouth still to this day, sadly, gets me in trouble. But I won by my mouth.

PreacherRichD: I could win by an argument, I could win by logic and intelligence. I could tear you apart verbally. If I was feeling threatened or whatever, I just found a way to deal with it. And out of that, that means they're big guys, they could be bullies, whatever, and they didn't deal with me. And so that created a lot of confidence in me. And so my concept was, as long as I can stay on top with my brains and my intelligence, I can beat anything and everything.

PreacherRichD: And there was a, I would say that both of us were narcissists if you pushed it on the definition. Because the bottom line, both of us are saying, we don't need anybody else, we can do everything ourselves. And it's about survival. And we find our ways, and people listening, everybody finds their ways to survive.

PreacherRichD: You know, my other survival technique, I didn't do the alcohols and drugs. What I was was a workaholic. And so my way of surviving life is to move up to the top. Because you know what, if you're at the top, you're the boss instead of somebody else being your boss. You're in control instead of somebody else being in control. And I absolutely had to be in control of my life because if I lost control, somebody else is gonna have control over me. And I would say there was a part of me, I certainly don't want some power out there in an invisible world having control over me. And I'm sure that was probably part of what was there. So I would say both of us had our different ways of dealing with life.

PreacherRichD: And again, we would say, yeah, that God thing's a crutch, that Jesus thing's a crutch, I don't need that stuff. But ultimately, both of us are at a place where we say the greatest thing that's happened in life is to come know Jesus, our Lord and Savior. The greatest thing in our life is when we're honoring him, serving him.

PreacherRichD: When we're following the principles of the Bible, our life is better. When we don't follow the principles of the Bible, our life is worse. Would you say, Bobby, if it's a crutch, it's a great crutch to have?

Bobby: Well, it's kind of funny. And just the idea that it's considered a crutch, I mean, there are times where I would have thought that. But it's like when you're on the other side and it's just become a complete strength. And it's so funny, if somebody would ever say that, because obviously they wouldn't know, but it's like they're out there trying to cover like a massive wound with a Band-Aid and then they're just walking off and bleeding all over the place for the next year and they just can't stop the bleeding. Meanwhile, like this quote unquote crutch is like solved it in no time and we've moved on to bigger and better things. So it's kind of funny to think about like a crutch.

PreacherRichD: Yeah, I would say that's a great way of putting it. And you think about it, if you got this big hole that's there and if you don't deal with it right, this big wound, invariably you get a scar and that scar is there for the rest of your life. And so how many people trying to do it on their own have gotten wounded and have scars and you can see their scars by the words they speak, the actions, the way they behave, the way they live life. And reality is, is if that wound is all open up and it's all pus and they're walking around with a wound with puss on it and they think they're okay because they got some kind of Band-Aid on it and we can go through the wounds and the things of life and there's no scars, there's no evidence that it even happened. In fact, there's evidence that people say, wow, how in the world could you go through that? And it's because we didn't do it on our own strength. And so though, and like you say, if you haven't experienced it, it just sounds like lip service. It doesn't sound like it can be true.

Bobby: It sounds like lunacy if I'm being honest.

PreacherRichD: Huh?

Bobby: I said it sounds like lunacy to be honest if I'm being honest, like.

PreacherRichD: Yeah, yeah, doesn't it sound like lunacy? There's something out there somewhere and you're trusting this thing out there somewhere that we have no proof of and then you're telling me that the Bible says that all things work together for good for those who love God are in call or according to His purpose and somebody says, there's no way all things work together for good, no way. Some things are gonna destroy your life and you're gonna be miserable. If this happened to you, you would be miserable the rest of your life and then we can say, well, this, this and this has happened to me and guess what? It's worked out for good. And that all sounds crazy because I would say without the experience of God, it is crazy.

Bobby: Right. I had a recent conversation with somebody and they asked me how I got sober and how I stay sober and I said, oh, it's all God and I can't do this on my own and I mean, that wasn't the exact, that's basically how it went, just to cut a long conversation short. They kind of scoffed at it and just thought like, wow, like and then they literally thought like I was crazy and it's just so funny because it's, you know, it's, you just feel bad because it's like, man, you're like, I just, it kind of breaks my heart because it's, if you think about it, like their life would be so much better if they had God's love and it's not that they were really suffering, but you know, just to kind of like laugh at that.

It was just interesting how two people could have such a different perspective and one, they didn't understand addiction, but also, I mean, just obvious, like they truly didn't have a God or understand a God and, you know, they wanted to credit stuff that happens, you know, just as coincidence or, but yeah, it was just a, it was a kind of eyeopening and I just thought, it's just, you just don't even have any idea, you know, you just don't have a clue, which is sad.

PreacherRichD: And like you said is that they obviously didn't have a clue about addiction because if you had a clue of addiction and they had a clue of really what you went through, they would have at least a little bit more openness to say, well, just maybe there was something more than him because what he was living, the life he's living, I don't know how a human being can get themselves out of that mess. And the truth is, most don't get himself out of the mess. Most die from addiction. I mean, 80% is one of the statistics out there will die from addiction unless there's some kind of intervention that is done. And then you get into the 12 steps and AA and 12 steps, celebrate, recover, all the 12 step programs and it's acknowledged that there's a power greater than yourself. And then to turn your life over to that power greater than yourself. Why is it the second and third step is, if it's 12 steps, why isn't those two and three? There must be a reason why those are two or three. You probably can't do the others without getting the two and three taken care of.

Bobby: That's exactly the point.

PreacherRichD: And isn't that why you see people not make it in a lot of 12 step programs because they're trying to do the rest of the steps and they haven't got two and three taken care of, which is, you know, acknowledge there's a power greater than yourself and turn your life over to that power.

Bobby: Yeah, it's very interesting because it's, I mean, and that's why I struggle. And I mean, it's still, I mean, new situations come up for me and it still can be confusing at times because I can take back that power at any given minute when all of a sudden a new trouble arises. And then my first thought is like, oh, I know I'll go fix it. And then I go run and jump into that. And then I realized, oh, I was doing it on my own. Like didn't even consult God. And so, yeah, that's the hard part.

Bobby: But it takes a relationship in order to, you know, and that's what's hard to get when you're new. Your instincts scream like, I mean, if you've been running the show and doing it yourself and you've been such a survivor for 30, 40, 20 years, then you think you've got this. And then, so the idea of turning it over to something bigger is really, it's so foreign. And because when every ounce of your body screams, you can do this, like do it your way. You know how to do it. And you all of a sudden got to do something very different.

So it's a very interesting process to watch. And most people, you know, I find in my experience, nine out of 10 people, maybe more, maybe it's something like 16, 17 out of 20 don't do it.

PreacherRichD: And in the midst of that, some would say, yeah, you've just gotten brainwashed. You've just gotten manipulated somehow to believe that. And your thing is just not reality. And so the question I'd ask you, do you have any doubt there's a God?

Bobby: I have zero doubt. There's no doubt in my mind whatsoever. Yeah, as a guy who still struggles. As a guy who doesn't see God do what he would like him to do at times.

PreacherRichD: And so, yeah, you say there is, because nobody, whoever's listening to us, if they have not quote grabbed the crutch, if they haven't grabbed it, they have no idea what we're talking about and never will. Never will, never will. And I always think that somehow we're deceived. But what happens is invariably, there are those who have that mindset and God brings things into their life to bring them to a place that that's all they have. That they won't make it, they will not survive. They won't live another second without grabbing a higher power to enter into life.

And of course, we believe that higher power is Jesus Christ, that he died on the cross for our sins and rose from the grave so that we could actually live in victory over sin and that we could take the promises that God has for us. So what I wanna do is so that people don't think we're talking about, and you've already shared some of your own personal story. I don't want people to think that what we're talking about is you end up accepting Jesus, you believe in God, you accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior, that everything is fine, no more problems, no more troubles, it's all so good because it's a fairy tale, right? A fairy tale ends well.

The truth of the matter is that there are things that we go through as Christians and I would argue, I have gotten more, I can say this for my life. Since I became a Christian, and that was in, I'm 70 years old, I became a Christian around 20, can't remember now, 23, something like that. My life is much harder as a Christian than it is as a non-Christian. I wasn't involved in alcohol and drugs, I was very smart, intelligent, I moved up in the corporate world, could do everything that I wanted to do and then I become a Christian and then all hell broke loose about a year after that. All of a sudden, I find out that I have a lot of anger in me, I find out that I, well, this is interesting. So I'm the most confident person there is, I become a Christian, get involved in ministry, a couple years, go to Bible college and then all of a sudden, a couple years after being a Christian, I start living a life of a suicidal life. Now that isn't much of a testimony and out of that, I can say at that time, if it wasn't for God, I would not have survived by those suicidal thoughts but I would say the reason God wasn't showing up like I wanted to is because he had to do some things in my life and he had to do some molding and shaping and because I was such a strong, it's all about me person, he had to really break me to get me to a place to lean on him and I would say Bobby, probably maybe for me and you, part of it was difference because I didn't have the struggles you've had once you came to the Lord as far as that consistency with the Lord, even in my worst moments, I've been very faithful and consistent to the Lord, I might always do things right, fall short and all that but it's never really been quite a big struggle for me but I think it's because God took me so low that I know he took me so low so that I had to hit my own bottom, drugs were your bottom, my bottom was a different bottom that I had to hit, he'd always remind me, it's not about me, it's about him and that my strength really is him and I've had to have those reminders along the way.

PreacherRichD: I wanna say and so then I go to quote the crutch again that people call a crutch, the reason I say it's not a crutch because if it is a crutch, it's not a very good one because we still reach dark moments so if it was just a crutch, if it was just some formula,

then the formula can work all the time, it's not a formula, it's a relationship. Here's the key, if you have a crutch, it means you have a broken leg and you need that crutch to walk. We can walk without being in a relationship with God but when we have that intimacy with God, man, that walk is so different. I don't see me trusting in God is the crutch because honestly, there's times I don't feel his presence whatsoever, I don't feel his strength. In Psalm 73: 26, it says my flesh and my heart fail me but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. I can tell you sometimes my flesh and my heart fail me and it doesn't feel like God is the strength of my heart but at the end of the day, what do I always come to? God is the strength, he is my strength and so the reality is he's there all the time with me and I need him there with me all the time.

The walk in the fullness that he has for me and life is just better when I'm leaning upon him instead of me. I would say if you wanna do things on your own, go ahead. If you don't need a higher power than you, if you're okay with you and that's working out fine for you, then keep doing that, see how that works for you. It may work for you and we'll close in a moment why it don't work in eternity but I would argue for most people, we read it in the news, how many people have anything and everything and then things collapse on them and they take their life or they give up or divorce happens, soon as there's a child and a family passes away and then the couple fight against each other and then they get divorced after the loss of a child when they should be staying together, supporting each other because I would just say that in life itself, life is just gonna throw you some things that you cannot handle and so here's why some people say they don't need a crutch because alcohol is their crutch because drugs are their crutch, because their work is their crutch, because sex is their crutch, because food is their crutch. So when they say I don't need a crutch, they're actually lying. They're not being honest to themselves or to others. Does that make sense? Bobby, just kind of sum up on Jesus, God, the Bible is a crutch. We're thankful that we have God in our life. We're thankful that Jesus is our Lord and Savior. We're thankful that we have the Holy Spirit in our life, right?

Bobby: Very thankful.

PreacherRichD: If that's a crutch, we'll take it and we'll use it and we wanna use it all the time, not some of the time. We get in trouble when we're trying to not use it, when we're trying to do it on our own and we would say that unless you taste it, you don't know it's good. I love peaches. Some people have never tried a peach because it has a fuzzy, fuzzy surface to it and they have no idea what it tastes like inside and I would say that some people have an image of what God is like, but they've never seen what God's truly like. They have an image of who he is, but they have no idea who he is and so they've never been able to experience him in his life and I would just share with those who are listening is what's the worst that can happen?

PreacherRichD: Bobby, you said this in the last podcast. You wanna say it again? What's the worst that can happen if you jump in and try God all the way? What's the worst that can happen?

Bobby: It doesn't work, no foul.

PreacherRichD: Yeah, no foul. I would just say that in spite of everything we said, how great it is to have God in our life and how he helps us, gives us the strength to go through, we can go through, that we can talk about the struggles, the troubles, and be real about them.

We don't have to be fake. We don't have to talk Christianese and say it's all smooth and great. We can be real and say, hey, life is the pits of times, but I still love God and I still believe God is real and he's still there and he is my strength even when I don't feel like it.

All that stuff is important, but the bottom line, there is a crutch. The crutch is that you cannot get to heaven and have eternal life where there's peace, where there is no more war, there's no more sickness, there's no more disease, there's no more anger. There's nothing but love. That the only way you're gonna get to heaven is through, quote, the crutch Jesus. That the only way you can get to heaven is for Jesus Christ to be your Lord and Savior. And that only way that happens is to do what the second, third steps of the 12 steps are is you're gonna have to acknowledge that there's a power greater than you and turn yourself over to that power.

And if you're determined to get to heaven by your good works, you're gonna fail miserably. If you're gonna try to get to heaven by someone you know because Aunt Susie knows Jesus, you're not gonna get to heaven. If you think you're gonna get to heaven by how much you've donated and supported some ministry, that's not gonna get you to heaven.

The only way you're gonna get to heaven is with Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. And amazingly, some people make this so hard but it's so simple and here's all it is. I'm a sinner. I fall short. I make a lot of bad choices. I make a lot of mistakes.

I might be a good person overall but there's a lot more bad than good in my life. And when we just come to a place to say I'm a broken human being and I confess I'm a broken human being and I need a Savior to deliver me from me being a broken human being, I no longer wanna be a broken human being. I wanna repent. I wanna turn away from it. So whatever it is that has you all bound up is you just say this has got me bound up. I wanna get set free from this.

I know that the only way I can get free from this is I need a Savior. And if you will do that and accept Christ as your Lord and Savior and he needs to be Lord, not just your Savior. He needs to be in control, not you. You can start out with him as Savior but you won't last long unless he takes charge. And he needs to be in charge of your life and that means 24/7. But that needs to be our heart and our desire. And if that's your heart and desire to say I'm just messed up and I need a Savior and I wanna take control. I'm not doing so good at this. Then an amazing thing happens is that God's spirit will enter into your life, into your heart and there'll be a transformation that takes place and you'll have no doubt. It may take a while before you know what's going on but you'll have no doubt that you truly are born again. There'll be a... Bobby can confess, he's confessed it already. Every time we talk he shared that there'll be no question in your mind that something has taken place in you and that is God entering into your life and bringing a transformation in your life. And then your life can change but you don't accept Jesus so that you can have a good life. You accept Jesus because you're a sinner that needs a Savior and out of that God can bring a good life or he may let you have a bad life. He may allow you to be suffering, that you're persecuted. He

calls you to go into Iran and die for Jesus but it won't matter because you'll have eternal life and that's what's important. So I just challenge you, come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

Well, Bobby, thank you for being on the air. Thank you for all the things that you shared. Thank you for your vulnerability. I think one of the reasons you and I connect so well is because you're willing to be on a radio show and just spill your guts and somehow you don't care whatever people think. So I think your identity must be in Christ too.

Bobby: That's the only reason why I don't care. Before, because I mean, that's just one thing. That's another struggle, right? Is I used to really, really, really care. I mean, I couldn't even walk out of the house without like ironing my clothes. Like it was just crazy how much I cared about all the stuff that's perfect strangers that I'll never see again, what they thought. And then, you know, I have a relationship with Jesus and I just like, wow, that's just so insignificant because my heart, my walk, he just doesn't care. It's more important to, I'm being led to go and try to help or try to talk or try to whatever it is, you know, just have a discussion, have an open discussion where, yeah, if you want to judge me, that's fine, but I have God on my side and I'm okay with that. That's all right.

PreacherRichD: Yeah.

Bobby: Pretty amazing. It's just such a better way to live, such a, give me that crutch all day long because God, I'm so grateful, so, so grateful. Wow, that I got a God that loves me, it's amazing.

PreacherRichD: And we're hoping that someone listens to this that had that argument and that there'll no longer be an argument to not know Jesus or just pick up the Bible and read it. There's no longer see it as a crutch or a fairytale story, but that actually these guys are talking as if this is real and they're talking as if this could be for me too. And yeah, we are, we're saying it can be for you too.

PreacherRichD: But thank you all for tuning in. Hopefully this is of help to you, hope it's an encouragement to you. I hope it gets you thinking.

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