

If Christians Only Knew Why Their Stubborn Friends Don't Want to Listen

TIP: Agree with them whenever their gripe is valid.

1. I'd have to admit my Mom is be wrong.
2. The words "born again" just stick in my throat. I don't want to describe myself as "born again."
3. Ignorance is bliss. It was Mark Twain who said, "*Most people are bothered by the parts of the Bible that they don't understand, but the passages that bother me are the parts I do understand.*" Some people want to stay at a semi-informed level. It is easier.
4. I've:

* heard a compelling speaker,	* read a book,	* took a college course,
* saw a movie,	* watched Nova on PBS TV,	* lost a debate
* heard a preacher [<i>positive or negative</i>],	* married a heretic,	* consulted my stars
* put a lot of weight on some looney	* read an advice column	* gone to a shrink

 - * "figured it out" based on a fallacious maxim,
 - * naturally gravitated to anything which challenges the status quo
 - * interpreted a Bible verse all by my little old self,
 - * crumbled under sarcasm for holding a biblical view of something
 - * forgot to check the source of some fact but embraced it anyway.
5. *From a national survey on college campuses:*
 - [#1] "I want moral and sexual freedom."
 - [#2] Pride, "I just want to think for myself."
6. I'm unaware that I have not pushed my personal opinions to the ultimate logical conclusions.
7. It is possible that I hold an erroneous conviction.
8. I hold incorrect presuppositions about:

morals,	truth,	the nature of man,
the nature of God,	the purpose of the Bible.	
9. I've never spent enough time truly examining the evidence, but I'm not going to admit it to you. No way.
10. I'm turned off by Christians who consider me ignorant if I ask honest questions, orexpress sincere doubt about several fundamentals of the Christian faith:

macro-evolution	billions of years	insistence about their narrow view of inspiration
miracles	the pope	the resurrection of Christ
eternal security	wars in the OT	David's repulsive imprecatory Psalms
sins of famous saints	original sin from Adam	perpetual virginity of Mary

 and finally but especially - my desire to look intellectual.
11. Peer pressure.
12. My wicked mother was a greater stumbling block than lots of wicked fathers.
13. I lacked a loving home.
14. I've already swallowed [*through constant exposure*] a philosophy with no absolute truths. Sitcoms solidified my bias.
15. I already understand the cost of discipleship. It's too big a price. I'd rather be comfortable in my mediocrity.
16. I need to weigh this decision for a bit. I procrastinate on all things uncomfortable.
17. I never change my mind publicly on any topic until I ruminate on it in private—and it isn't going to start today.
18. It's too simple.
19. I've made a commitment to an alternative "religion" even if it's wrong. My mind is made up, don't confuse me with the facts.
20. I have overcrowded my life with a great many worthwhile endeavors:

medicine [<i>saving the world</i>]	philanthropy	PTA mom
hospice volunteering	March of Dimes	rescue missions [<i>Good Will, Salvation Army</i>]
disaster relief	discovering vaccines	foster kids
Sunday School teaching	church volunteerism	building clinics overseas
Habitat for Humanity	Toys for Tots	micro-finance in 3rd world

 I hold fund raisers for: *politics, American Lung Assoc, clean up the swamp, city beautification, anti-graffiti*
 I'm employing hundreds of marginal workers saving the whales [*unwanted babies, forests, clean water for 3rd world, battered women, AA, concussion victims*]
 * **God ought to be pleased with my unselfishness.**
21. I'm consumed by:

leisure,	my kids' college tuition,
personal health,	plus planning for retirement.
22. Christianity is not "testable."
23. Life should be based on empirical evidence, not on feeling, especially religious, moral, or nebulous feelings.
24. Christians have the same needs as pagans [*as well as the same record of failure*].

25. I already tried the God-thing when I was twenty.
26. Is it possible that there is only one correct religion? I don't think so.
27. I don't want to bet my happiness, heaven, and friendships on a community of people who hate:
homosexuals, divorced moms, Muslims, all the other religions of the world.
28. Christians can kill 40 million innocent civilians in World War II, but you don't want Palestinians to rule their
3,000 year old homeland. Doesn't the Bible say, "Thou shalt not kill" and "God hates hands that shed
innocent blood"?
29. If the miracles in the Bible are real, how come nobody's doing them today?
30. Plain old indifference.
31. I want to honor my parents. If I believe in what you're selling, my family will kick me out, or I'll lose my kids.
32. I don't think I can keep up the lifestyle, and I don't want to fail.
33. "I won't give up my girlfriend.
34. I'm honestly confused by so many sincere people.
35. I'm still angry over how Christian's behaved toward my family,
36. There are too many things in the Bible that don't seem fair.
37. Fear of death. It makes me frozen to the past. I'm not going to let go of the past
unless I'm positive of the future.
38. I don't want to hurt those I love and whose beliefs I admire.
39. I've done so many foolish things,
believed stupid things before
got suckered into so many groups
joined too many churches [*for fallen for dumb religions*].
I'm scared I'll believe anything. I'm not smart enough to recognize a con-game.
40. Jesus, the leader, doesn't look like the kind of man I'd admire. Maybe Rambo.
41. Compassion is for sissies.
42. Fear of the unknown.
43. "I'd become a Christian if I ever met one." Gandhi
44. I measure everybody's beliefs against my standards. *My opinion is probably as good as your God's.*
45. I don't trust you. I don't even know you. Anybody can make false sound true.
46. I had a bad experience with money and the church.
47. Bitterness against God: death, sickness, mean dad, poverty.
48. I'm too bad. You'll dump me as everyone else did.
49. I can't condemn my Jewish friend.
50. Blinded by eloquence.
51. I am god. He can't condemn me.
52. Christians only love their own group
53. My self-image is all I have left. I'm pretty beat up. I'll say "yes" to anything you want me to, if you'll just
leave me alone afterwards.
54. Everyone listens with a different pair of ears.
55. "I'm lucky in everything else. I think I'll be lucky about heaven, too. *After all, I am the center of my universe.*"
56. I don't think hard about much and you're trying to get me to think about a lot of important stuff. I just live for
the moment, taking just one day at a time. I'm just here and relatively happy. Bye!
57. Medical doctors and anthropologists say that witchdoctors' cures work 90% of the time [*it's true*]. Why should I
believe the miracles in the Bible are anything special?
58. Just as many good people get sick as bad people. What's the point of being good?
59. "Why Do Bad Things Happen to Good People" written by an unsaved Jewish rabbi.
60. I don't want to be a Baptist. Baptists are just Pentecostals who know how to read.

6 More TIPS

1. **Ask** searching questions to hear why they have some serious objections to the Gospel. Don't argue [*yet*] about
the weaknesses of their belief system.
2. **Explain** that not all sources are reliable. Dishonesty is not a crime, but don't believe everything.
3. **Remind** them that a good excuse is still just an excuse.
4. **Suggest** that their objection might sound ludicrous if applied to some other things.
5. **Encourage** them to find the areas where they can agree with the Bible and do some heavy lifting to evaluate
the specific annoying areas of Christian beliefs. Many people have trusted in Christ as Savior, while still
skeptical.
6. **Ask** them what it would take to depend upon Jesus Christ as the One who paid for their sin.