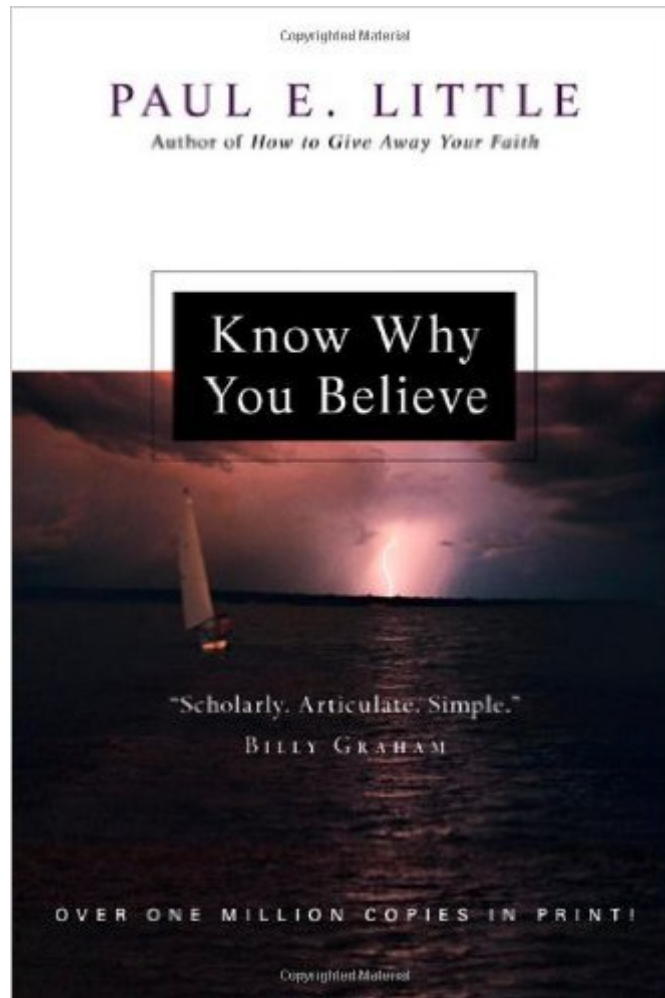


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# Know Why You Believe



## Synopsis

One of the top 50 books that have shaped evangelicals (Christianity Today, 2006) "After 2,000 years, no question is going to bring Christianity crashing." Do science and Scripture conflict? Are miracles possible? Is Christian experience real? Why does God allow suffering and evil? These are just a few of the twelve most common intellectual challenges to faith that Paul E. Little encountered during his twenty-five years of speaking and teaching in the university. These questions need solid answers, and that's what a million people have already found in this clear and reasonable response to the toughest questions posed to Christian belief. Sprinkling in a few "sure-fire jokes" and other humorous illustrations, Little uses these questions to jog readers' thinking and help them examine their present worldviews, ranging from scientific determinism to rabid existentialism. By thinking through the most common challenges to Christian faith, believers will be prepared to answer others out of the wellspring of their own certainty. This edition, revised and updated by Marie Little in consultation with experts in science and archaeology, provides twenty-first-century information and offers solid ground for those who are willing to search for truth. Including a study guide for individuals or groups, *Know Why You Believe* is the classic answerbook on Christian faith.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Having read several books on apologetics myself, I found Little's book quite good. His presentation is easy to follow and the beginner will find it very manageable. It is a short book that new Christians or Christians approaching apologetics (the rational defence of Christianity) for the first time, will find useful. Little's methodology is good as well. His dispels presuppositions that a priori prevent one

from even considering Christianity. Little also has some ability to come up with memorable epigrams (though he is not as good at this as G.K. Chesterton and C.S. Lewis are, in my opinion). Little covers the following questions: Is Christianity Rational? Is There a God? Is Christ God? Did Christ Rise from the Dead? Is the Bible God's Word? Are the Bible Documents Reliable? Does Archaeology Verify Scripture? Are Miracles Possible? Do Science & Scripture Agree? Why Does God Allow Suffering & Evil? Does Christianity Differ from Other World Religions? Is Christian Experience Valid? In a book that is only 171 pages in length (excluding study questions), Little covers each topic quite quickly. Thankfully, he includes a "For Further Reading," section at the end of every chapter. Little's section on Science & Scripture was good as well (as one might expect, he covers the issue of origins). Little is careful to define terms (i.e. micro-evolution vs. macro-evolution) and I think he wisely notes that science is constantly changing (whereas the Bible is static), so one must be cautious not to absolutely weld contemporary scientific theories to the Bible. The section on Christianity and other religions was mediocre. However, most Christian apologetic materials that read have suffered from the same problem. The standard approaches usually starts with a few thoughts on the nature of truth (especially the logical law of non-contradiction), then assert and prove the deity of Christ and then assume all other religions fall. While I see that this approach definitely works, I think it would be helpful to interact with other religions and analyze them at a deep level. Anyway, I am demanding too much from a popular level book here. Little discussed (in 3-5 paragraphs each!) Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam and pointed some of their beliefs and the difficulties associated with them. The nature of Christian experience is not a philosophical issue in the same way that the issue of miracles are, so the question must be approached differently. Little's explanation that Christian experience is based on historical facts (the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ) provides the context for understanding Christian experience. Little ends with a challenge to personally commit oneself to Christianity. The extensive study questions (about 10 per chapter) at the end of the book may be useful if one wanted to use the book as a study tool for a Bible Study group or something similar. I would recommend this book as an introduction to the defence of Christianity or as a short review for old hands. However, the experienced reader may want deeper works to digest. Two good books for more advanced study: Reasonable Faith by William Lane Craig and Scaling the Secular City by J.P. Moreland.

For the Christian who is scared of "apologetics" because he thinks it means he has to "apologize," here's a book that doesn't get too technical but has plenty of good information about the defense of the faith. So often Christians don't have adequate answers to give to those who ask of them, as 1

Peter 3:15-16 commands, and so a book like this that is so readable and understandable can provide some ammunition the next time the skeptic questions the faith. Included at the end of each chapter are questions that can be used in a group or individual study.

My wife asked me to read this book to see if it was any good- so I did. Like most reviewers, I enjoyed this book despite its simplicity. It is pretty short, easy to follow, and worth the time spent reading it. I was somewhat familiar with certain sections of the book, but enjoyed the pragmatic way that Paul Little presents the Christian view to the reader. The context for the book is that Paul Little wanted to provide answers to the 12 most common questions he received when discussing Christianity on college campuses. He fulfills his purpose, and provides many references, and additional materials to research if you want to go deeper into any particular subject. You will most likely not be interested in all 12 topics discussed, but it makes sense that most Christians should have some familiarity with these questions, and the basic answers provided in this book. I recommend this book to anyone looking for a quick introduction to apologetics, or different ways to answer the questions that may arise as you share your faith with others.

This book was written in simple language, so it's easy to read. It is full of support from Bible verses and outside sources (archaeology, famous quotes, etc.). Paul E. Little is reminiscent of C.S. Lewis because both of them show that you don't have to sacrifice science and rationality for Christianity. I've read a couple other apologetics books (The Case for Christ and Basic Christianity), and they don't come close!

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