

“I did not come with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2:1-2).

Bible Worship Used by Men to Cover Evil

Akaid Diaz sent us a challenge to respond to “The Essentials of Christianity,” a document published by the Christian Research Institute. We replied to this document and published our response ([False Christianity Unmasked](#)). CRI was sent a copy of our reply to Akaid; they responded as follows, in green text. Our response follows in plain text.

CRI: Dear Victor,

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

We appreciate your interest in the ministry of CRI and your confidence in our ability to offer discerning evaluations of groups, individuals, and other topics of vital interest to Christians.

Paul: Victor didn’t write you the letter quoting your “essentials of true Christianity.” That was Akaid Diaz. Victor (Hafichuk) and Paul (Cohen) have written replies to your published statement, one of which your organization was carbon copied. For now we’ll answer your response, followed by some additional comments on various matters from your site.

CRI: Your friend’s objection to our affirmation of the Bible as an essential doctrine of historic Christianity....

We don’t reject the Bible as inspired by God and the Record of Essential Truth, though we do strenuously reject the worship of it according to the carnal “historic Christianity” of your fathers, which you follow. You can’t distinguish between the two because you’re walking in the flesh, blinded by your idolatry of the Bible. Our point is that without the Spirit of God revealing and teaching the truths contained in the Scriptures, the Bible is a misunderstood and misused book, as Peter points out:

“And think of the long-suffering of our Lord as salvation, as also our beloved brother Paul wrote to you, according to the wisdom given to him; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them concerning these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the unlearned and unsettled pervert, as also they do the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction” (2 Peter 3:15-16).

Furthermore, affirming the Bible as inspired of God is far more than an “essential doctrine of historic Christianity.” It is **Truth**. To you Christ is historical. You think to examine Him and conclude what you will by your intellect and fleshly notions and inclinations. To us, His saints, Christ is God, alive, with us, and speaking to us. He has given us to understand and rightly divide the Word of God, which you can’t do, being disconnected from Him.

CRI: ...and the [objection to the Bible being the] ultimate source of authority for the Christian...is unfounded and self-refuting.

Paul: The Bible itself declares Who is the foundation of all authority - the Lord Jesus Christ. This we have proven from Scripture and holy reason, none of which you’ve answered here. You simply demonstrate the truth of what we’ve said of you, that you’re Bible worshippers who have no use for what its Author actually says. All you care for is the alleged authority it confers on you. You set the Bible up as the “ultimate authority” as a cover under which to do your own thing, with what appears to be impunity (God isn’t mocked, however, you reap as you sow).

“Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil” (Ecclesiastes 8:11 MKJV).

You speak of the Bible as the “ultimate authority” because you can manipulate a book as you please, without fear of judgment from it, as opposed to being held accountable by **the** Ultimate Authority and Judge, Christ Himself. You can’t manipulate or use Him, or put words into His Mouth.

CRI: The Bible declares itself to be God’s Word and the final authority for the Christian (2 Tim. 3:16-17; James 2:19-25; Acts 17:11). Although he can claim that Jesus is the ultimate authority, the Alpha and the Omega, the express image of God, how does he know for certain that these claims are true?

Paul: How revealing your question is! If you had been truly converted to the Lord, and born of His Spirit, you’d know the truth because you know **Him!** But you’re of those who are born of the will of the flesh, of men.

“But as many as received Him, He gave to them authority to become the children of God, to those who believe on His name, who were born, not of bloods, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but were born of God” (John 1:12-13).

“And they were astonished at His doctrine. For He taught them as one who had **authority**, and not like the scribes” (Mark 1:22).

You are as the scribes of whom the Lord spoke, who also used the Bible as their authority. Jesus comes in the authority of God, and **is** the authority of God. He quotes the Bible as confirmation of the Truth, which testifies of Him. You don’t know Him,

and therefore “do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God” (Mark 12:24).

The Scripture references you gave show your ignorance of Him, and preference for idols that can’t speak to, or rebuke, you. Here are your Scriptures, and I’ll show you why:

CRI Scripture: “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Paul: The apostle Paul was referring to what they had for Scripture in their day, what is commonly called the Old Testament today. The majority of those who believed in the authority of Scripture in the Lord’s day didn’t receive Him, the Author of Scripture, when He appeared to them in the flesh (just as you reject Him presently).

Acknowledging the authority of Scripture isn’t enough, not nearly. You must acknowledge the Ultimate Authority, which is Christ, and His application of Scripture. His is the only Name given under Heaven whereby men must be saved.

You people pay Him lip service, but you show yourselves worshippers of strange gods in all your ways and words. For more evidence of this, read [The True Marks of a Cult](#).

CRI Scripture: “You believe that there is one God; you do well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But will you know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Do you see how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which says, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. You see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?” (James 2:19-25)

Paul: This quote gives no such description of Scripture as the “ultimate authority,” not even remotely. In fact, it talks about those who walked with God by faith, who didn’t have the Bible available in their time!

CRI Scripture: “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11).

Paul: This last quote says that the Bereans received the Word with all readiness of mind. The Word of God they received was that which Paul and Silas *preached* to them. Men sent of God spoke the Word of God to them, which, being mixed with faith, was believed, and caused these Bereans to search the Scriptures to see more by faith.

Unlike you people, they believed the servants of God who preached Christ to them. You don't believe us, because you don't believe Him. If **you** search the Scriptures, it's because you're doing the same as those whom Christ rebuked in John (5:39-40). You think you have life in the Bible, but the life is in Him; you don't come to Him to receive life.

CRI: Without the special revelation of God revealed in Scriptures, there would be no way of knowing with any certainty any of the doctrines being discussed (e.g., the Trinity, the humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ, salvation by grace, and the church).

Paul: Aren't you people entirely carnal in your thinking? How foolish are your statements, which you speak so proudly and pompously! Since when has revelation of God come by a book, and not by His Spirit? Which one of the fathers received their knowledge of God from a book? If you're children of the fathers, why do you rely on a book to believe?

You worship a book because you aren't children of faith; you're children of the flesh and the Devil. You're adversaries of Christ in all your ways. You're impudent, stubborn, proud, and resist the Holy Spirit as did your fathers.

The doctrine of the trinity is a pagan one, not at all Scriptural. Men teach it, not God. He hates it, with a passion. Read [The Asininity of the Trinity](#).

And you don't know anything about the humanity or the Divinity of Jesus Christ, not knowing Him at all, except after the image you make of Him in your corrupt minds. You don't know grace or salvation. What you call grace is iniquity, a lawlessness that brings death and shame rather than salvation and life.

You're of men's churches (of many names), not God's (of One Name). Therefore, all these doctrines you claim to know from Scripture are perverted from the truth, and you are damned by putting your faith in them. Better that you were cold and never read the Bible, than to pervert it and teach your perversions to many, bringing much blood on your heads.

There's hell to pay for your ways.

CRI: By rejecting the Scriptures as the ultimate authority, your friend makes absurd all his references to the Bible in support of his teaching. After all, if the Bible has no authority, they why cite it as an authority that lends support for a spiritual teaching. All your friend is left with is his own opinion and nothing more.

Paul: By rejecting Jesus Christ as the Ultimate Authority, you make a mockery of the Bible, misinterpreting and misapplying its words, as all unstable and unlearned pretenders do. We never said the Bible had **NO** authority. You are liars. If not intentionally lying, you're careless and quick to make false accusations without inquiry. Here is what I **did** say (in my letter to Akaid):

“Nowhere has it been said in the Bible, that the Bible is the ultimate source for knowledge about God.

Is it profitable for reproof, doctrine, correction, and instruction in righteousness? Yes indeed. But the testimony of the Bible points to the Lord Himself as the Ultimate Source.”

“Are the Scriptures all true, and applicable to our lives? Yes. Anyone who doesn’t think so will find out differently.”

“The Bible confirms the truth, and teaches truth....”

CRI: For more information about the inspiration and authority of Scripture, please see enclosures DB011 and DI060.

Paul: If you had read our letter carefully, you would see that we never questioned or disputed the inspiration and authority of Scripture. What we did say was that you folks have the cart in front of the horse. Can you see Paul the apostle using your handouts? Was he there to preach the Bible, or Christ? You make proselytes of your knowledge, not of Christ. Is your knowledge all wrong? No. But even if it were 100% correct, you are uncircumcised in heart, serving mammon, and teaching sacrilege.

CRI: Although it would be impossible to give a full-orbed discussion of all the objections raised by your friend concerning the essential doctrines, a couple of great lay resources wherein you can find concise explanations of these doctrines are Know What You Believe (B265/\$10 + shipping), by Paul Little, and Know the Truth (B102/\$16 + shipping), by Bruce Milne.

Paul: Impossible for you because you have no substance. So because you don’t know what you’re talking about, you send me to your *store* to *buy* the truth (which it isn’t)! This is a disgrace to the Name of Christ, causing others who see your ways to blaspheme His Name. Repent, because He doesn’t hold you guiltless for taking His Name in vain.

CRI: If you wish to look deeper into contrasting issues concerning essential Christian doctrines and other relevant topics, we recommend the following systematic theology books....

Paul: What else can you do? You don’t know Christ. Are you too proud to admit you’re wrong or don’t know, and too lazy to bother finding out? You put the heavy load on others. Unless there’s money in it, you aren’t going to mess with it. God knows your hearts, and isn’t fooled.

This is the end of the letter. Paul answers the CRI webpage:

CRI: And this ministry is committed to truth no matter what. We're willing to take criticism from cults, skeptics, or even misguided Christians who want to "soften" or obscure the need for sound doctrine.

Paul: What about rebuke from Christ for your hypocritical and mammon-serving ways? Are you willing to hear that and repent?

CRI: When you believe that God has indeed spoken, and that He has made plain what He has said, then the only decision that remains is this: "Am I going to live out and make known His truth? Am I willing to do it?"

You may rest assured that CRI will always answer "Yes!" to this question. And that your financial investment in this ministry will therefore be put to the highest use. Indeed, if you haven't yet renewed your support for CRI for 2005, I'm asking you to do so. Your partnership in "picking up the gauntlet" on behalf of our Lord gives us moral encouragement as well as resources.

Paul: You say you're going to live out His truth and serve Him, and the next thing we know, you have your hand stuck out. You serve your bellies, not God. You make merchandise of God, seeking money from men in His Name. In your hands the Bible is anything but the "ultimate authority" from God. What comes forth from you is the ultimate travesty of truth, justice, mercy, love, and service to God.

CRI: With the release of his new book, *The Last Disciple*, a novel co-authored with Sigmund Brouwer, Hank reveals significant aspects of his highly anticipated 15-year study of the Bible's teaching on the end times. In a spellbinding story of faith and fulfillment of prophecy, Hank and Sigmund initiate a series of novels in which they explore the lives of Christians who struggle to survive and spread the gospel during the climactic turbulence of "the last days." Readers discover the "code" of Revelation as they begin to see it through the eyes of the persecuted believers to whom it was written.

Paul: Of course for you, persecution of believers is a work of fiction. This suits your purposes fine, as you see there's money to be made by selling a voyeuristic fantasy to those like yourself who don't know the cross of Christ (and will never come to know it by *your* example and teaching). You profit by catering to people who are spiritually sick, feeding their addiction for titillating entertainment based on carnal speculation of Holy Scripture.

And you have the nerve to condemn us because we say the Bible isn't the "ultimate authority"?! There you are, corrupting God's Holy words with your filthy imaginings and selling it for profit to those who are dying because they have no one to tell them the truth. How can you escape the damnation of Hell? You condemn us because we don't worship at your altar, while you offer every vile thing on it in the name of your god, mammon. Hypocrites!

You've been confronted on your evils before, but now you'll not walk away wiping your mouths as if you do no evil. The Lord is finished winking at the evils you do, and all will know it presently. Your time is finished. In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ we condemn your "ministry."

Paul Cohen
Victor Hafichuk

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