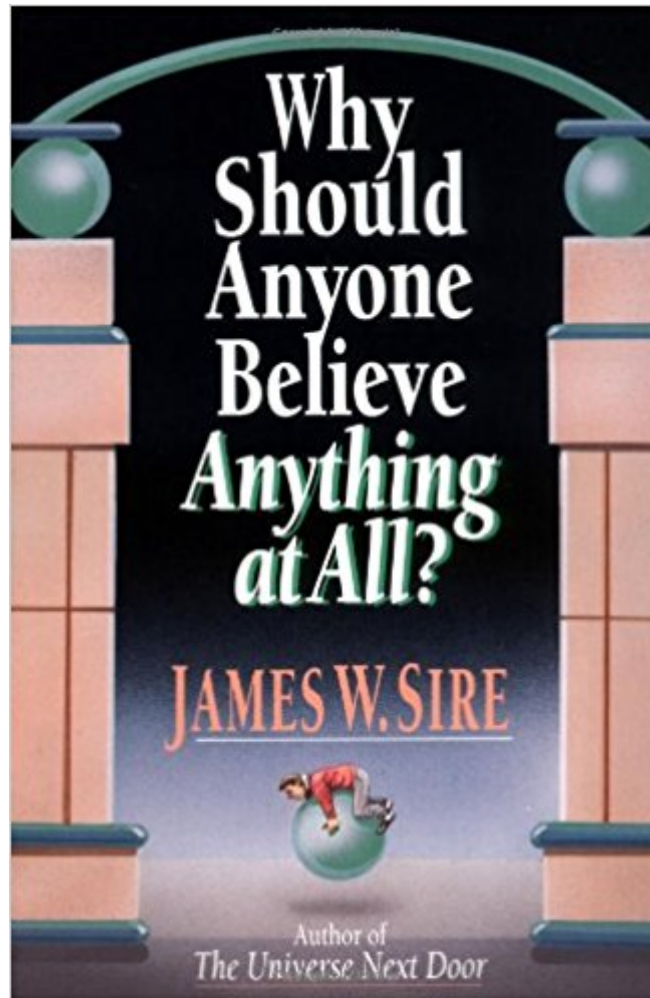




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Why Should Anyone Believe Anything At All?



Synopsis

A Christianity Today 1995 Books of the Year Finalist! Believing. Most of us take it for granted. We just do it--whether it's trusting that the sun will come up tomorrow, that the lunch we are about to eat is not poisoned or that our religious beliefs are not ill-founded. But why should we believe any of these things? Why should anyone believe anything at all? With insight and humor, James W. Sire examines the reasons people give for believing what they do and suggests what are truly satisfying and compelling reasons for belief. He then turns to the question of a specific belief--namely, belief that the Christian faith is true. Sire tackles both the best reason for belief in Christianity (the identity of Jesus) and the chief reason against it (the problem of evil). And he responds to these issues personally and philosophically. Here is a book to challenge the skeptic and reassure the doubter in us all.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Sooooooo many people believe things for the wrong reasons-including Christians. This book is an attempt to correct that sad state of affairs and the title question embodies the heart of much of Postmodernism. I suspect that the reader who gave the book only three stars because of the second part of the book on Why Believe Christianity came to the book with Modernist/Evidentialist presuppositions and was disappointed because there were no deductive arguments for the existence of God, no design arguments, nothing of the sort. It focuses instead on the Person of Christ (Imagine that! What a novel idea in Christian apologetics). If you like Kreeft-style apologetics more than Craig-style apologetics, you'll appreciate this section more than the three-star reviewer.

The fundamental issue in Christianity is Who was Jesus? Sire addresses that question well. Still, even if this book was limited to the first half, directly addressed by the title, it would be well-worth the price. Get this book, read it, and put it into practice (along with his book *Habit's of the Mind*). Then recommend it like crazy to your friends. This book is not being read enough and is in danger of going out of print. That would be such a shame because this book addresses one of the fundamental issues facing Postmodern Culture. This book could be more important than you think. People who believe things for the wrong reasons typically don't have much conviction and aren't good at persuading others. This book will help you filter your beliefs and achieve greater intellectual integrity.

This is an old book at this point, but still incredibly insightful. People believe all sorts of things, even disbelieving they believe. And for everything that they believe they have a reason for believing it. Very rarely is this a mere objective approach to truth. In this book James Sire probes all the various factors that go into the reasons people believe what they believe, including such things as culture, and education. It's been a long times since the polls have been taken and college kids interviewed, yet the conversation of the book is absolutely essential for those who want to talk to others about Christianity. The second half of the book deals specifically with why one should believe in Christianity.

I think one of the best books that Sire has written. And I would recommend them all, particularly "Naming the Elephant" and "Habits of the Mind". The first half of the book is not as heavy-weight as his other books, but it does contain what I consider some of the better articulation of principles of intellectually held beliefs. Sire is close to an American version of C.S. Lewis, from my reading. The second half of the book was lighter reading. It is usually amazing that college age students -- whom Sire quotes often in the first half -- can hit the ideological nail on the head so well about the nature of beliefs.

The first half of this book is somewhat of a dry and lackluster catalogue of Mr. Sire's memoirs of his seminars. The information presented though is neither clarified nor evaluated. Much of this book has been written before in his other books, particularly his *Universe Next Door* - which I highly recommend. I felt as though much of this book was simply rehashed, and added no further weight or evidence. To be fair, beginning with his chapter on Evil, this book took a positive turn and now began to address with zeal and clarity some of life's most pondered issues. In his last chapters you will find

evidence for a necessary God. I would buy this book and skip to the end...

James Sire analyzes belief very well. If anyone read this with an open mind it would change their perspective on the world.

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