

PROCLAMATION

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NOTE: If you do not share our Christian convictions and worldview, we do not ask or expect you to support AIIA financially.

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Dear AIIA family, friends, and readers —

One day this past Summer two ladies from Texas walked into the Study Center. After I had explained to them who we are and what we do, **one lady asked me how we're funded.** I explained that our support comes almost entirely from Christian individuals and churches who believe in what we're doing.

If you're reading this paper and you **do not share our Christian worldview**, we certainly do **not** ask or expect you to support AIIA financially.

If you **do** share our Christian worldview and draw some benefit from this paper **but are not in a position to support this work right now**, that's also fine. We're glad that you're reading along and hope that you will pray for us.

But **if you are a Christian and you already support AIIA financially** (regularly or periodically), I want to thank you. I'm sometimes reluctant to say "thank you" because it might imply that you're doing what you do for **our** sake rather than primarily for the **cause of Christ** here in the spiritually-needy Northeast. So by saying "thank you," please understand that I'm intending to say it **on behalf** of the One whose truth we are defending — and because in supporting God's work you also happen to be enabling us to live where we love living and do what we love doing. Not everyone is so blessed.



I personally came to meaningful faith in Jesus because I was able to find intellectually credible answers to my questions about life and reality. After examining a variety of worldviews and philosophies **I came to conclude that there was more and better evidence for Christianity than for any other belief system in the world.** So apologetics has always been close to my heart — and today I think that I probably love doing apologetics as much as Tom Brady loves playing football. I almost never dread coming to work and — even at age 68, even though my work at times gets tedious, even in spite of Maine's long cold Winter, and even with my physical limitations and health issues — I can't imagine doing anything else. So your support of God's work through AIIA also blesses us personally.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER THIS QUESTION?

Suppose someone says, "Today the concept of sin sounds corny and outdated. Wouldn't it be preferable to just refer to certain acts as 'unhelpful behavior' rather than to use the term sin?" We encourage you to **write our your own best answer** to that question before flipping this paper over and reading ours.

More evidence in defense and confirmation of the Christian faith!

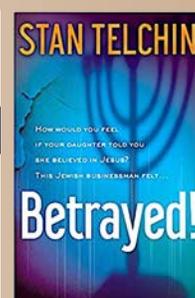
ON THE AGENDA FOR AIIA'S FAITH MATTERS! On November 2, 2019 our topic will be **The God Delusion**. We'll be reviewing a DVD video featuring a classic debate between John Lennox and Richard Dawkins. On **December 7** we plan to review a small booklet by Lee Strobel entitled *The Case for Christmas* — with a free copy of the booklet offered to the first ten family units who walk in the door for this event. **NOTE:** Check AIIA's website at AIIAInstitute.org for our **Faith Matters cancellation policy** during Winter months, and for a complete listing of our 2019–2020 schedule — including details, dates, times, and topics of future **Faith Matters** events.

HERE'S HOW WE'D ANSWER THE FEATURED QUESTION IN THIS ISSUE OF THE PROCLAMATION.

Suppose someone says, "Today the concept of sin sounds corny and outdated. Wouldn't it be preferable to refer to certain acts as 'unhelpful behavior' rather than to use the term sin?" **ANSWER:** What **should** be preferable is to call disobedience exactly what God calls it — and **God calls it sin** (1 John 3:4-8)! In the model for prayer that Jesus gave to His disciples, He referred to sin as "trespasses" or "debts." **Sin is any act, thought, or state that trespasses the holiness of God.** We are all born in sin (Psalm 51:5). Every one of us are by nature morally **in debt** to God (Colossians 2:13-14). **Sin is a condition, not just certain bad acts.** We sin because we are sinful (Romans 3:10-12). We need to admit that. It will not help for us to whitewash the truth or to try to make our moral failure and rebelliousness sound more acceptable. Sin is not just 'unhelpful behavior' or a 'lack of love.' **Sin is actually an offensive challenge or opposition to God's law and character.** Sin separates us from God (Isaiah 59:2). Some worldviews claim the exact opposite — that sin is no more than just *mistakenly* believing that we are ever truly separated from God for any reason. But such views flatly contradict Scripture. **The Bible calls on us to confess our sin as sin.** Then God can forgive us (1 John 1:9). Jesus was pierced on the cross for our sins. Read the spine-tingling account of that event in **Isaiah 53**, written 700 years B.C.! Then repent and call on Christ for salvation.

APOLOGETICS RESOURCES REVIEWED • NOTE THESE ITEMS!

UNLIKELY CONVERTS by Randy Newman, © 2019 Kregel. **Randy Newman** was one of the plenary speakers at AIIA's **Why Jesus? 2016** conference event in Bangor, Maine, just over three years ago. In this newly published text, Newman offers a number of principles for effective evangelism today, as well as a helpful smattering of resource materials, quotes, and illustrations on the subject. The author's sense of humor often comes through in this collection of "Improbable Stories About Faith." And then, also, there is **BETRAYED** by Stan Telchin, © 2007 Chosen Books — a moving story of **apologetics in action**, in real life, *changing* a life. If you are Jewish, you especially owe it to yourself to read this true candid account of new hope in Christ!



WITMER FAMILY REPORT | An album and diary of one family's effort to anchor the business of life in the bedrock of truth.

The photo below was taken in August during our family's wonderful three days together in Virginia. This year **Andrew & Maureen** hosted us in their home, at nearby **Hotel Madison**, and on the campus of **James Madison University** where Andrew teaches. **See full-sized photo with comprehensive name captions on AIIA's website.** It was great to visit, laugh, play, eat, and share evening vespers together. But then, so quickly, it was all over.

September and October rolled in with the smell of wood smoke, the tart taste of apple cider, and **beautiful foliage** everywhere. If Humpty Dumpty thinks that he had a great Fall, he ought to to spend next Autumn in Maine.

In mid-September I spent two days in the hospital for **cardiac ablation surgery** — hopefully ending my long struggle with **afib**. One day on the phone before surgery, a nurse, unaware of my paralysis, said cheerfully, "Don't worry, Mr. Witmer, we'll have you up and walking the very next day." I said, "Great—that sounds good to me."

