

What prompted you to write I'm Fine With God...It's Christians I Can't Stand?

Reading the newspaper and channel surfing on TV. Hardly a day goes by without some news story about the eccentric behavior of a Christian, and the cable channels are populated by outrageous activity in the name of Christ. It might be a newspaper article about a Christian pediatrician who refused to treat a child because the mother had a tattoo in violation of a verse in Deuteronomy, or a televangelist who is asking for donations and promises that God will give back to the donor “millions and billions of dollars.” (We aren’t making this stuff up.)

Along with many other Christians, we are embarrassed by the behavior of the lunatic fringe in our faith. They make the rest of us look bad, and more importantly, they give Christ a bad name. We believe it is time for Christians to publicly admit that a lot of goofy stuff happens under the banner of Christianity. Once that has been acknowledged, we might have a better chance of establishing an honest dialogue with nonbelievers about our beliefs.

Who are the readers you envision for this book?

First of all, we hope Christians will read the book. We think there are a lot of people of faith out there who are just as frustrated as we are with the offensive attitudes and actions of people who claim to believe in God but act in a manner that contradicts His character. But it’s not enough to blame the “black sheep” in the Christian family. All of us who call ourselves Christians have to take responsibility for our actions and live in a manner that truly reflect who God really is.

Second, we hope that honest seekers will read the book. One of the points we make is that a person who truly wants to know God should not be distracted by the idiotic behaviors of some Christians. Just as Christians should take responsibility for their actions that reflect poorly on God, non-Christians have to take responsibility for their attitude towards God. Blaming someone who doesn’t truly represent God is not a good reason for rejecting Him.

You point out many problems with modern-day Christians. What's your call to action--both for Christ-followers and for nonbelievers?

While most Christians are not guilty of the outlandish and offensive behavior of some, we all need to be sensitive to how our words and actions may be perceived by nonbelievers. So, for the Christ-followers, we attempt in our book to give a biblical basis for how we should live in the culture as salt and light without projecting an image of being the 21st century Pharisees.

For the non-believers, we want them to realize that the behavior that they find repulsive in some Christians is not the approach that Christ advocated. We want them to evaluate Christ on the basis of what He said and did, not on the basis of bizarre behavior done by some under His name.

The basis message of our book is this: To our Christian brothers and sisters we say, “let’s learn to laugh at ourselves, and let’s learn from what we’re laughing at.” And to those outside our Christian family we say, “Much of your criticism against us is well-deserved. But don’t blame God. He agrees with you.”