



**By**

**Mark McGee**



The full title of Dr. Stephen Davis' book is *Rational Faith: A Philosopher's Defense of Christianity* (Veritas Books, IVP, 2016).

I enjoyed reading it on several levels, one of them being that Dr. Davis is a Christian professor who has taught at secular colleges most of his adult life. His words are those of someone who knows from first-hand experience how the secular world views Christians and Christianity.

“The bottom line is that today in American secular colleges and universities Christian students (as well as Christian professors) often have a difficult time. In many ways the university gives them the impression that their religious beliefs are outmoded, superstitious and naive, and that their ethical views are old fashioned, oppressive and enslaving. The secular world thinks that Christians are inflexibly dogmatic about their beliefs and major in condemning other people.” Introduction, pp 10-11

I appreciate Dr. Davis' choice of what issues to address in his book because they address so well what happens on secular campuses every day –

- Is there any such thing as objective truth?
- Why believe in God?
- Is the Bible's picture of Jesus reliable?
- Was Jesus raised from the dead?
- Does evolution disprove Christianity?
- Can cognitive science explain religion?
- Is Christianity unique among the religions of the world?
- Do evil and suffering show that God does not exist?
- Can people be happy apart from God?

As you look at the topics, and the order the author presents them, we see the primary types of problems secularists have with Christianity. For example, in the first chapter about objective truth, Dr. Davis looks at the realist theories of truth, relativism on truth, and Jesus as the truth. He moves from objective truth to belief in God and Jesus Christ and shares personal stories about how he has shared these truths with students and professors on campus.

I appreciate the way Dr. Davis summed up the chapter about objective truth –

“I think there is no higher calling in life than to teach people the truth of God’s teachings. Truth is the heart of what Christian academics do.” Chapter 1, p 28

I did not agree with Dr. Davis’ arguments on every topic (e.g. evolution), but I appreciated his kindness in presenting his perspectives. That is an important aspect of campus ministry (as well as all types of ministry).

Dr. Davis wrote that he aimed his book at two types of people: Christian academics and students, both undergraduate and graduate students, “who are Christians or are considering Christianity, and who also wonder about the issues discussed here.” (Introduction, p 11)

If you are a college professor, college student, high school student, parent, grandparent, pastor or youth worker, I highly recommend *Rational Faith* for you and your family to read and use as a resource in ministry.

Here is some information about Dr. Davis' book from the publisher, IVP Books.

## Publisher: About the Book

Why believe in God?

If God exists, why doesn't he eliminate suffering and evil? Does evolution disprove Christianity? Can religion be explained by cognitive science?

People have grappled for ages with these kinds of questions. And many in today's academic world find Christian belief untenable. But renowned philosopher Stephen Davis argues that belief in God is indeed a rational and intellectually sound endeavor. Drawing on a lifetime of rigorous reflection and critical thinking, he explores perennial and contemporary challenges to Christian faith. Davis appraises objections fairly and openly, offering thoughtful approaches to common intellectual problems.

Real questions warrant reasonable responses. Examine for yourself the rationality of the Christian faith.

## Reviews & Endorsements

“In this book, Stephen Davis offers a clear and cogent case for the reasonableness of Christian faith. In a relatively short book, Davis manages to treat just about every issue that an honest person concerned about Christian faith might want to ask, ranging from reasons to believe in God and Jesus as God’s Son to problems connected to science, religious diversity and uniqueness, and evil. Davis is fair to the critics of Christianity and careful not to claim more than his arguments warrant. This is a book that will be helpful to both believers and unbelievers. The tone is personal and down-to-earth; the reader comes away with a sense of having had an enjoyable, stimulating, and possibly life-changing conversation.” C. Stephen Evans, professor of philosophy and humanities, Baylor University, professorial fellow, Australian Catholic University



“With characteristic clarity, rigor, and accessibility, Stephen Davis presents a compelling defense of the Christian faith. While taking a fresh look at traditional arguments, *Rational Faith* also addresses cutting-edge topics in apologetics such as the implications of evolutionary and psychological accounts of the origin of religious belief. This is a valuable resource for Christian believers and skeptics alike.” Michael J. Murray, senior visiting scholar, Franklin Marshall College

“[Davis] offers objective evidence for belief in God’s existence and makes the case for God’s existence as the basis of morality. He covers these complex topics with clear, orderly arguments and with charity. . . . Recommend *Rational Faith* especially to college students, high school seniors, and other customers who want to better understand, share, or defend their faith.” Daniel Johnson, Christian Market, December 2016

## The Author

Stephen T. Davis (PhD, Claremont Graduate University) is the Russell K. Pitzer Professor of Philosophy at Claremont McKenna College. He specializes in the philosophy of religion and Christian thought, and he is the author or editor of over fifteen books including *Encountering Evil*, *Christian Philosophical Theology*, and *Disputed Issues*. He has also written more than seventy academic articles and reviews. In 2015, he was honored with the festschrift *Christian Philosophy of Religion: Essays in Honor of Stephen T. Davis*.

*Rational Faith: A Philosopher's Defense of Christianity*, IVP Veritas Books, 2016, Stephen T. Davis, 191 pages

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