Book Reviews

many as ten or twelve. After discussing each issue with a series of points, Copan reviews the contents of each chapter with a list of summary statements. Each chapter then concludes with a brief bibliography for further reading. Notes are organized by chapter at the end of the book.

In the introduction, Copan summarizes a threefold strategy for defending and dealing with objections to the Christian worldview. First, we need to help people understand that we cannot escape from the objectivity of truth and the reality to which truth claims correspond. Second, if people see that truth and reality are inescapable, then we can deal with the next level, the level of worldviews. If theism is the best option among competing worldviews, then the third stage is to determine which theistic option is the most viable. It is at this stage that we can begin to deal with Christian apologetics.

It is the author's hope, as stated in the introduction, that the material in this book will encourage Christians in general, but particularly Christian students in high schools and universities (and their parents) who regularly face skeptical challenges to their faith. While some of Copan's arguments may be difficult for high school students to follow, college students and other adult Christians should find this book to be very helpful. Not only does it provide answers to a number of challenging issues and questions, it also provides the reader with a helpful strategy for dealing with those who raise questions about Christian beliefs. According to Copan, we must not only be prepared with wise and informed answers. We must also be prepared to listen and to ask probing questions (as Jesus often did). This approach can help believers discover where an unbeliever is coming from. It can also help unbelievers to understand the inadequacies of their own worldviews. Anyone who wants to be better prepared to defend the Christian faith will benefit from reading this book.

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HEALTH & MEDICINE


Deyo and Patrick are faculty members at the University of Washington in Seattle and are among highly-cited researchers in the social sciences designated by Thompson ISI. Deyo co-edited Evidence-Based Clinical Medicine (1999). Patrick is a member of the Institute of Medicine and founding president of the International Society for Quality of Life Research. He co-authored Health Status and Health Policy (1993).

The authors point out that there are many unnecessary medical procedures which create additional risk and cost. They hope to generate discussion about the health care policy and practice in the United States and to encourage changes in doctors' practice, patients' behavior, corporate marketing, media news coverage, and government regulations.

This book has four parts. Part one, "Can there be too much of a good thing?" gives reasons why Americans want new medical treatments. New treatments are a major reason that the health-care cost is increasing in the US, and many new treatments are unnecessary and sometimes harmful. Part two, "How do things really work?" explains the strategies used by drug companies, the media, doctors, hospitals, and advocacy groups to push us into the current mess. Drug manufacturers comprise the most profitable industry in the US, and between 1997 and 2001, research spending on drugs rose 59%, while investments in drug advertising rose 145%.

Part three, "Useless, harmful, or marginal," provides examples where popular treatments caused unnecessary disability and/or dollar costs. Examples given include calcium-channel blockers to treat high blood pressure, the drugs encaacinide and flecainide to prevent cardiac arrest, and pulmonary artery catheters used in intensive care settings. One recent research suggested that complications and deaths from prescription drugs in the US cost more than $177 billion a year, whereas Americans spent an estimated $184 billion on drugs in 2003. Part four, "Crossing the threshold," gives recommendations to doctors, insurers, researchers, decision makers, government officials, and consumers to do their part in solving the problem.

This book describes the problem and proposes solutions. It emphasizes the importance of evidence-based clinical medicine and gives many examples of false, but accepted, medical advances. It recommends important changes to correct the current health care problem in the US. Systematic scientific investigation flourished in seventeenth-century Christian Europe, because it was closely related to the medieval Christian world view. Scientific and careful examination of nature and data is consistent with a Christian diligent study of Scripture since nature and the Bible are two books given by God.

To study nature, scientists carry out laboratory experiments or natural observations. Controlled experiments in the laboratory can provide unbiased data and reach more reliable conclusions than just natural observations. In the mid-twentieth century, controlled clinical experiment methodology was first introduced into medicine, and it revolutionized the discovery of new medical advances. The increase in human life-span and decrease of death rates due to cancer and AIDS are the results of new methods of clinical experimentation.

For the readers of PSCE, the scientific approach can be applied to the study of Scripture. Many theories, based purely on scholarly conjectures, have been proposed about different aspects of the Bible. The recent popular book, The Da Vinci Code was written as fiction, and some people are willing to accept it as a historical book. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, scholars have proposed various theories to deny the truth contained in the Bible. The results have harmed the church. The mistakes made in the medical field from lack of collecting unbiased data can be duplicated in the field of Christianity and result in falsehoods. Christians should therefore be more discerning regarding so-called advances in the areas of medicine and of biblical knowledge.

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