Scary Christianity **[1]**

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I suppose that there are a couple of ways in which Christianity can be scary for an open-minded non-Christian. One is to go to a church and to watch people around you start making weird noises with quivering lips, and fall to the floor and bark like a dog. One probably has a good reason to be scared in such a situation. But that is not the kind of scary that I want to talk about in this post. The type of scary Christianity which I want to reflect on, is one which is a bit paradoxical. On the one hand, it seems almost incomprehensible to the faithful Christian. On the other hand, and perhaps without realising it, it is very familiar.

Recently, I was sharing my faith with someone. This person had come a long way in terms of faith over a decade or so, but was still not embracing Christ as Lord and Saviour. At one point during our conversation, they said something to the effect of "I wish I could believe". There was a wistful look in their eyes, and I realised that they were familiar with the daunting prospect of giving over to faith. While faith would provide meaning and forgiveness, it comes at a cost: forsaking life as they know it. And if you not absolutely convinced and convicted that Jesus is Lord and Saviour, then this will seem like a terrible risk.

For the person who has walked with Christ for a while, it seems silly to hesitate. Yet I am convinced that every believer can relate to the unpleasantness of having your world view challenged. We all have had doubts, and will perhaps still have some. Within that moment, one can be horrified by the prospect of not having any meaning, for there to be no objective morality; to go back searching out the incomprehensible; or to slide back into a meritocracy, where one has to *earn* the favour of a deity, never knowing when one has done enough. These considerations are unpleasant, but need to be faced when there are legitimate doubts.

What I am saying, is that a Christian should understand a reluctant unbeliever's position from a *relative* perspective: what is *perceived* to be known and good is at risk of disappearing.

So, what does a Christian stand to do when witnessing to a reluctant unbeliever? Certainly not badger nor berate: those actions to not show love, but rather frustration and impatience. One needs to continue in love and patience, speaking gently. But most importantly, pray. Pray that God will work in their hearts and bring them to conviction. That should demonstrate your legitimate love for the person whom you cared about enough to share your faith so that they can share in your promised rewards.

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