



A Ready Defense: The Best of Josh McDowell

Josh McDowell , Bill Wilson (Designed by)

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Be prepared "in season and out" with this handy reference book of faith. Timely and biblically based, Josh McDowell's work offers defenses in 60 of the most-challenged areas of faith. All in one easy-to-reference volume, this book will strengthen your commitment and help you stand firm against challenges to the truth.

A Ready Defense: The Best of Josh McDowell Details

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Dan Glover says

Nothing wrong with the material as far as it goes but the presupposition that one can reason an unbeliever into faith if you meet them on the neutral ground of human reason in order to prove the validity, accuracy and truth of Scripture implicitly replaces the authority of Scripture as the Christians foundation with human reason.

Robyn says

The beginning where it uses archaeological evidence to prove the prophesies in the Bible and that the Biblical account is true was my favorite part.

Katrina Patton says

I am already a Christian, so I picked up this book for information, rather than to confirm anything. I find the historical facts and background of the bible very interesting and there is a great amount of time devoted to that in this book.

For people who are not yet Christian, it may not be as satisfying a read as I found it to be. It is a collection of many references and books, and because of this, it does not go into great detail about any one area. It skims over topics and presents the bare minimum of information about each. I don't believe that this book was meant to be used as an in depth study of Christianity, rather, it is a beginning point and as such, it accomplishes its goal. It has a vast amount of other books listed in the reference section that the reader can turn to for more detailed information. It helps the believer find the topics that are of the most interest to themselves so they can study further if they wish to.

I would not recommend this to atheists, who may need more detailed or "balanced" viewpoints. It is a Christian book, and as such, it will seem biased. It does go into some of the criticisms but it is not focused on them exclusively.

I think that new believers, who may not have a strong background of information about the beliefs or history of Christianity will benefit the most from this book.

Corey says

The gold standard when it comes to the defense of the Bible and the Christian faith

Diane says

Christian apologetics and not good or well thought out at that.

I'm sure my father bought this for me thinking this would change my mind. Ummm no.

But I am back to the Church but via scholars like Marcus Borg, Spong and Crossan -- and intelligent Christians like Ross Douthat.

Peggie says

I didn't actually read the whole book, but decided it is better used as a reference book. It fulfills this purpose very thoroughly.

Katie says

I really enjoyed this book. I borrowed it from my sister, and plan to include this one or possibly some of his other books in my library. I can see that this will be a book that I will refer to again and again.

Ciara says

I haven't read this since high school, so my memory is a little hazy. However, I remember that this book played a key role in revealing to me the historicity and veracity of the Bible. I tend to use logic when defending my faith, because historical evidence is not always reliable since, as new discoveries come to light, the record constantly changes. That said, historical evidence can be very useful, and is one of the reasons I believe what I do. So while I use reason with other people, I use history on myself.

Rock Rockwell says

Evidential apologetics. McDowell takes his "Evidence that Demands a Verdict" and simplifies it to one easy volume for anyone to read in whole or part. A good resource tool.

Rachael Marsceau says

I am so not qualified to write a review that would do this book justice, so I'm just going to give you the three smallish things I *didn't* like, because everything else was great.

1. Josh McDowell isn't a KJV-only guy, and while I'm not one of those loudmouth Sword of the Lord types, it does get annoying when huge passages of Scripture are printed out in the book from the NASB. The words

are so different that I find it distracting enough to make me skip reading the whole paragraph.

2. After discussing the occult and satan-worship, McDowell writes a chapter on how to exercise our authority over demons through Jesus Christ's power. He shares multiple instances where he himself allegedly cast out demons, and then shares "how he did it." Besides getting a subtle whiff of arrogance (maybe, maybe not), the whole thing gave me a weird, unsettled feeling. It just felt...off. Maybe because I've not been in third-world nations where demon possession is a thing, or maybe because I've not ever been in the position of casting out demons myself. I don't know. It just left me wondering if everything he was saying was biblical. It merits further study on my part.

3. The last chapter is called "Still Changing Lives," and it shares many shortened versions of celebrities' testimonies. Many of these were the super vague and did not portray an accurate picture of salvation (a conscious decision to surrender to Christ as Savior and Lord). The one that made me actually laugh out loud was Miss America 1973's story of how her newfound peace through having faith in God gave her the courage and strength she needed to win Miss America. Sure, honey. I'm sure Jesus was smiling down on you while you flaunted your ugly one-piece swimsuit for all the world to see. (Not digitally, of course.)

But seriously overall this book was awesome. It's not at all meant to be read straight through, but once I started it, I found it so interesting and educational that I just kept going. My favorite sections were the ones on the origin of the Bible, and detailed descriptions and explanations of all the major world religions and cults. This is a great reference book to keep on the shelf for frequent use.

Patrick Hays says

This book overall good. It's written for a general audience (not a scholarly one) so it can feel very one-sided at times and lacks in-depth analysis of criticisms or counter-claims. The author ensures that the reader feels like all of the information presented here is completely correct and undisputed.

If you weren't already aware of them, I suppose some things will shock you (i.e. the lack of evidence that Pilate existed, Herod took a census, the slaughter of the children in Bethlehem, and others), but they are discussed as if they aren't a problem.

Keep in mind that this is a collection of works, so some of the content is repeated. Cross references to similar ideas appear regularly throughout the work so you can really start at the place you're most interested in.

Essentially, this book has encouraged me want to exam the critical claims against scripture, if only to get a different perspective.

Kristen Davis says

Great introduction to apologetics!

Rudy Dyck says

This one-stop shopping apologetic work for defending the literal, inerrant Bible by Josh McDowell is like eating Watermelon for those trying to defend the Christian faith. It's sweet and very satisfying initially but 30 minutes later you are starving. For me that feeling left about a year later as I read more balanced books.

I was initially very impressed with this book as it was one of the first Christian religious books I read as I was trying to learn more about my faith and exactly why I believe what I do as a Christian. But after having read many more biblical scholars since this I have to get it a 2* review. That may be too high. There really is no middle ground on this book. Either you will love it because you agree with it or if you have a more informed viewpoint you dislike it because of all the information the author chooses to ignore.

This is apologetic work at its worst. He makes his case with all the good points on his side and rarely shows the case for his opponents. He simply doesn't bring up the areas where his arguments are weak. I personally feel the best way to feel comfortable about something is to examine BOTH sides of the argument and then decide how I feel. Josh McDowell withholds 95% of the information on the other side of the fence leaving you to believe everything is so simple and that anyone who doesn't believe as he does must be a fool. I wish it were that simple to be a Christian. It's not.

Royce Ratterman says

Most books are rated related to their usefulness and contributions to my research.

Overall, a good book for the researcher and enthusiast.

Read for personal research

- found this book's contents helpful and inspiring - number rating relates to the book's contribution to my needs.

Hans says

This is more like an encyclopedia, or source of reference, than anything you'd just straight forward read. I was lent it from a friend a while back where I read parts of it, and flip through it in bookstores occasionally. McDowell does a good job of putting together the comprehensive points in the defense of Christian faith. It just gets annoying when people start parroting it...

Coming from an atheist point of view, I say that even though we don't agree with the points made, we need to at least hear them out and understand them before dismissing them. Christians are intelligent folk too, which many of us atheists tend to ignore.
