



Serving the **T**ruth in a **L**ove **S**andwich

Worldviews in Collision

Asking Them Hard Questions

1st Peter 3:15 "But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence."

This series of courses is about answering difficult questions about Christianity. As disciples of Jesus Christ we have a responsibility to be prepared to defend our faith. In this course we are going to take the initiative and ask questions of the unbeliever. Everyone has a worldview. Whether or not we realize it, we all have certain presuppositions and biases that affect the way we view all of life and reality. A worldview is like a set of lenses through which we perceive the world around us. Our worldview is formed by our education, our upbringing, the culture we live in, the books we read, the media and movies we absorb, etc. For many people their worldview is simply something they have absorbed from their surrounding cultural influences. They have never thought about what they believe and wouldn't be able to give a rational defense of their beliefs to others.

Apologetics is what we have been studying in these courses. Apologetics means making a defense. Sometimes the best defense is a good offense. I believe if they question our faith, we can respond by asking questions of our own. Our idea is that no view of the nature of things can stand up to scrutiny except the Christian Worldview, because it is the only one that is the truth. We need to take the offensive without being offensive.

Most of the atheist questions and associated dialogs in these courses came from a several month-long conversation with about three dozen atheists I found on the internet in 2007. I have been alert ever since for something new from the atheist camp, but I have not seen anything. Please let me know if you know of some new kind of attack other than endless attempts to find non-existent contradictions in the Bible.

LESSONS

1 – God Gives Meaning to Life

2 – The Spiritual World

3 – Existence of Ethics

4 – Existence of the Universe

5 – Law Implies Lawgiver

6 – Bonus Lesson – Skeptics' Attacks

Suggested methodology for each lesson:

1. Fellowship (Save most of this for the end of class.)
2. Take prayer requests (Try to keep it from becoming a competition to see who has the most or the worst.)
3. Pray (The idea here is to leave our troubles with God so we can give His word our attention with a clear mind.)
4. Read the lesson's text (if any) aloud from the Bible. (... or a few verses at a time as you answer the questions.)
5. Answer and *briefly* discuss the "fill in the blank" questions. (Let those who prefer to listen, listen. My answers on the next page are just one opinion; you may have a better answer if it is based on Scripture.)
6. On the thought questions everyone should take a few minutes to pray over them and jot down their own thoughts before the discussion. **This will give the Holy Spirit a time to speak.**
7. Discuss your answers. (Never force anyone to share theirs. As with the other questions, my answer is just one more opinion; you may have a better answer.)
8. Close in prayer (It is best to call on others to pray, but try to get their permission ahead of time.)
9. Fellowship (Leave this as open ended as possible for the time and place you meet.)

The amount of time each lesson might take varies widely with this course. It depends on the number of students and how engaged they are in the process. You might finish several lessons in a single meeting or struggle to finish one. There are several "extra" questions with the first five lessons that should enhance the discussion if needed. These are questions I asked atheists and got no answer.

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Other free Bible courses are available at <http://www.LoveBibleStudy.com>

Additional Reading

These lessons are designed for small groups or individuals to use without reference to other materials besides the Bible. However, a lot more could be gained if those involved would do some additional reading between class meetings. (See <http://lovebiblestudy.com/CC/Library.htm>)

We plan to provide specific recommendations with each course at <http://lovebiblestudy.com/TLS/Adjunct/> We also hope to be making specific chapter recommendations from various Christian books that have helped us in our understanding of apologetics, but are not entirely about the topic of the course. Such as these books which would make good companions for this entire series of courses.

Mere Christianity by C. S. Lewis

I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist by Norman L. Geisler and Frank Turek

The Case for ... series of books by Lee Strobel

Cold Case Christianity, God's Crime Scene, and Forensic Faith – 3 books by J. Warner Wallace

This particular course was developed after reading this book:

Tactics; a Game Plan for Discussing Your Christian Convictions by Greg Koukl

Lesson 1 – God Gives Meaning to Life

Read these scriptures and answer the associated question:

(1A) Psalm 37:4 What will God give us if we delight in Him? _____

(1B) Ecclesiastes 3:11 What has He set in our heart? _____

(1C) Jeremiah 29:11 What does He plan for us? _____

(1D) Matthew 16:24-25 What will we find if we die for His sake? _____

(1E) John 10:10 What kind of life does He want us to have? _____

(1F) John 14:6 Who is Jesus? _____

(1G) Revelation 21:3-4 _____

Christian Question: We thirst and there is water. We hunger and there is food. We desire meaning in life and there is God. How could a desire come into existence for which there is nothing to fulfill it?

(1H) What are some of the ways you think an unbeliever might answer this question?

Think & Pray _____

(1I) How would you respond to the answers an unbeliever is most likely to use?

Think & Pray _____

RIDIN' SHOTGUN

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

- JOHN 10:10 NIV

Bonus Practice Exercise: [1j] *How would you respond to this attack?* "God is Evil: Hosea 13:16 'Samaria has rebelled against God. They shall fall by the sword, their little ones shall be dashed to pieces, their expectant mothers shall be ripped open.' So, if you are a practicing believer, is this the God you hold sacred in your heart? Yes or no? Would you dutifully obey and rip expectant mothers open and dash their little ones to pieces? How would you respond if God ordered others to do this to your family? Is this the god you worship?"

----- SOME POSSIBLE ANSWERS -----

(Your answers do not have to match exactly.)

Lesson 1 – God Gives Meaning to Life

(1A) Psalm 37:4 What will God give us if we delight in Him? The desires of our heart

(1B) Ecclesiastes 3:11 What has He set in our heart? Eternity

(1C) Jeremiah 29:11 What does He plan for us? A future and a hope

(1D) Matthew 16:24-25 What will we find if we die for His sake? Life

(1E) John 10:10 What kind of life does He want us to have? An abundant life

(1F) John 14:6 Who is Jesus? The way, the truth and the life

(1G) Revelation 21:3-4 What will He wipe away? Every tear from our eyes

(1H&I) *Atheist's Actual Response:* "A god does not add meaning to life. An eternity spent singing psalms in heaven is the most meaningless future I can imagine. The argument from desires is absurd. Human life is filled with desires with no viable satisfaction." How would you answer his response?

My Actual Answer: (To the first response above.) The Atheist "asserts my argument is absurd but offers no evidence that it is. He asserts a god does not add meaning to life, when I know from personal experience that He does. My life was so difficult I was in a suicidal depression until I gave my life to Jesus Christ. Decades later my life is even more difficult and I rejoice in the Lord. I have never suggested that eternity will be spent singing psalms in heaven, but" the Atheist "insists on inviting his straw men to every discussion we have. He asserts that 'human life is filled with desires with no viable satisfaction,' but he offers not a single example of one." How could I have wrapped this truth in a love sandwich?

Suppose that instead he had responded something like this:

Atheist: "I don't need God to give my life meaning. I have a family and a rewarding profession." How would you answer this response?

Christian: "What about people that have neither a family or a rewarding profession, or perhaps even a job? Are you suggesting they are meaningless?"

Other questions I have asked atheists but without a rational response:

[1k] *Question:* 1 Has anyone ever heard a story like this one? "I was a drifting drunk and drug addict. I lost every loving relationship I had in my life. Then I became an atheist and it turned my life around." I don't think so.

[1l] *Question:* I know a man whose only hope is that maybe instead of being executed in the electric chair, he will be allowed to live in prison the rest of his life. What should I say to him? Please advise me. How would atheism help him?

[1m] *Question:* I met a man in jail this week. All that remained of his dreams were painful memories. What should I have said to him? How would atheism help him?

[1n] *Question:* I met a widow recently, who is dying of cancer. Her only living relatives are three young children. What should I have said to her? How would atheism help her?

Lesson 2 – The Spiritual World

Read these scriptures and answer the associated question:

(2A) Gen 28:12 Where was the top of the ladder? _____

(2B) 2 Kings 6:15-17 What kind of chariots did they see? _____

(2C) Isaiah 66:1 What is the Lord's throne? _____

(2D) Daniel 10:13 Who helped the angel in his struggle? _____

(2E) Matt 10:28 Who should we fear? _____

(2F) John 17:14 Of what is Jesus *not* a part? _____

(2G) Acts 7:48–49 Where does the Most High not dwell? _____

(2H) Eph 6:12 Where are the spiritual forces of wickedness? _____

(2I) Rev 10:1-3 What was on his head? _____

Christian Question: "Why is there almost universal belief in the spiritual world?"

(2J) What are some of the ways you think an unbeliever might answer this question?

Think & Pray _____

(2K) How would you respond to the answers an unbeliever is most likely to use?

Think & Pray _____



----- SOME POSSIBLE ANSWERS -----

(Your answers do not have to match exactly.)

Lesson 2 – The Spiritual World

- (2A) Gen 28:12 Where was the top of the ladder? Heaven
- (2B) 2 Kings 6:15-17 What kind of chariots did they see? Chariots of fire
- (2C) Isaiah 66:1 What is the Lord's throne? Heaven
- (2D) Daniel 10:13 Who helped the angel in his struggle? Michael
- (2E) Matt 10:28 Who should we fear? Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell
- (2F) John 17:14 Of what is Jesus *not* a part? The world
- (2G) Acts 7:48–49 Where does the Most High not dwell? Houses made with hands
- (2H) Eph 6:12 Where are the spiritual forces of wickedness? Heavenly places
- (2I) Rev 10:1-3 What was on his head? A rainbow

(2J&K)

Atheist's Actual Response: "Touché. Consider this one: Why are spiritual beliefs currently disappearing in the more civilized societies?"

My Actual Answer: "I am not aware of spiritual beliefs disappearing in the more civilized societies. I am not really sure what you mean by "civilized." In the United States and Western Europe Christianity is losing ground to Moslems, Hindus, and a variety of pagan cults. In China, Russia, Central and Eastern Europe, and most of the so-called third world, Christianity is on the rise. The Moslem countries are remaining solidly Moslem, although there are some signs they be weakening. What are you talking about?"

Instead of side-stepping the question he might have said something like this:

Atheist: "Just because someone believes in something superstitious, like a rabbit's foot bringing luck, does not mean that the rabbit's foot actually has any power."

Christian: "Yes, you cannot determine truth by counting noses, but I think you missed the point of my question. In well educated societies where knowledge of the scientific method is well known spirituality is growing. Doesn't that make you wonder?"

Other questions I have asked atheists but without a rational response:

[2l] *Question:* I met a woman the other day who could not stop weeping for hours at a time. What should I have said to her? How could atheism help her?

[2m] *Question:* If the Bible was just written by ordinary men please explain the fulfilled prophecy in it?

[2n] *Question:* The hospital where I volunteer is opening a new section. They call it a hospice. People go there to die. Usually they are enduring long, lingering, painful, deaths. I may get the chance to speak with them as well. If I do, what should I say to them? Please advise me. How can atheism help?

[2o] *Question:* If you were standing up in front of a bunch of men who are incarcerated, waiting to stand trial for serious felonies, what could you tell them that would help them? I speak to them every week. Please, advise me. (One atheist tried to suggest they just confess and save us all the cost of a trial. I found his presumption of their guilt before a trial very offensive.)

Bonus Practice Exercise:

[2p] *How would you respond to this attack?* "It is arrogant, intolerant, and offensive for you to insist the Bible is God's word." (This particular atheist has a website of his own totally dedicated to attacking the Bible.)

Lesson 3 – Existence of Ethics

Read these scriptures and answer the associated question:

(3A) Judges 17:6 What did people do? _____

(3B) 1 Kings 3:9 What did Solomon pray for? _____

(3C) Psalm 34:14 Depart from what? _____

(3D) Proverbs 15:3 Who sees when evil is done? _____

(3E) Proverbs 16:25 The way that *seems* right ends how? _____

(3F) Isaiah 5:20 Woe to those who call evil what? _____

(3G) John 8:32 What sets us free? _____

(3H) 2 Corinthians 13:7 How do we avoid wrong and do right? _____

(3I) 1 Peter 3:17 Regardless of the consequences it is always better to do what? _____

(3J) Hebrews 5:14 What have they trained their senses to do? _____

(3K) 3 John 1:11 The one who does evil has *not* seen who? _____

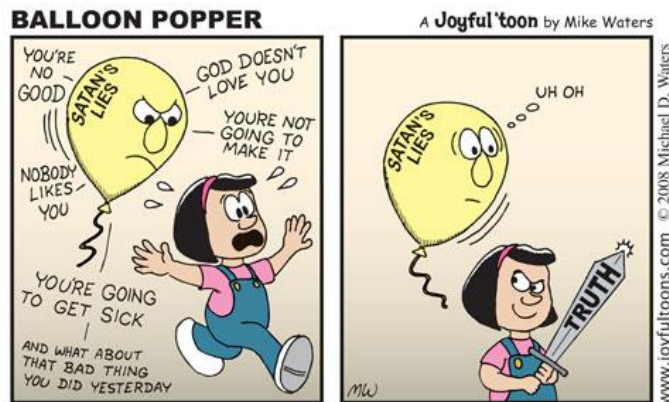
Christian Question: "On what basis can we make sound ethical decisions and convince our children to do the same?"

(3L) What are some of the ways you think an unbeliever might answer this question?

Think & Pray _____

(3M) How would you respond to the answers an unbeliever is most likely to use?

Think & Pray _____



To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."
- JOHN 8:31,32 NIV

----- SOME POSSIBLE ANSWERS -----
(Your answers do not have to match exactly.)

Lesson 3 – Existence of Ethics

- (3A) Judges 17:6 What did people do? Whatever seemed right in their own eyes
(3B) 1 Kings 3:9 What did Solomon pray for? Wisdom to discern good and evil
(3C) Psalm 34:14 Depart from what? Evil
(3D) Proverbs 15:3 Who sees when evil is done? The eyes of the Lord
(3E) Proverbs 16:25 The way that *seems* right ends how? In death (See also Prov 14:12)
(3F) Isaiah 5:20 Woe to those who call evil what? Good
(3G) John 8:32 What sets us free? The truth
(3H) 2 Corinthians 13:7 How do we avoid wrong and do right? Pray for God's help
(3I) 1 Peter 3:17 Regardless of the consequences it is always better to do what? Right
(3J) Hebrews 5:14 What have they trained their senses to do? Discern good and evil
(3K) 3 John 1:11 The one who does evil has *not* seen who? God

(3L&M)

Atheist's Actual Response: "Ethical decisions are based on goals. (Which goal you want to achieve is up to you; that's what freedom is for.) The most efficient way to reach a goal without producing adverse consequences that might later render the goal useless turns out to be the best choice. This seems like something Machiavelli would endorse, but a convincing case can be made that absolute selfishness often yields counterproductive results. When educating children, show them what works and what doesn't. Practical example is the best teacher." How would you respond to this?

My Actual Answer: "On what rational basis can you possibly claim that 'ethical decisions are based on goals?' Yes, Machiavelli would indeed be quite comfortable with your ethics, or lack thereof. I would be very interested in hearing you make the case that 'absolute selfishness often yields counterproductive results.' I thought ethics was part of what you used to choose your goals. Here we have the 'what works' idea being offered again. When it came up before, you never could give me any criteria to use in determining whether it was working or not."

Another response often heard is:

Atheist: "Ethics are simply the norms of the cultural around you. If you expose your children to the best your culture has to offer, they will adopt the same norms."

Christian: "So you would have been one of those people in Nazi Germany who turned a blind eye to the concentration camps. Or maybe you would have joined the SS. That was considered normal too. How could we possibly prosecute anyone for war crimes if ethics are based on what seems normal to the people around you?"

Probably not a very loving answer, but I find ethical relativism like this repugnant, and have a difficult time not letting my contempt show when I run into people who support it.

Other questions I have asked atheists but without a rational response:

[3n] *Question:* I minister in a jail and a mental hospital. A decade or two ago I would not have been allowed in those places. The administrations let us come, not because they believe a word of what we preach, in fact, I think they do not. They let us come because, as a practical matter, it helps them better manage patients and inmates. How do you explain that?

[3n] *Question:* If the universe is evil, how is it you even know what is good? Your awareness of evil is evidence for the existence of God, isn't it?

Bonus Practice Exercise:

[3o] *How would you respond to this attack?* "God likes to bully people: Isaiah 66:2-4 "God said: 'The one I approve is the lowly, afflicted man who trembles at my word. Merely slaughtering an ox is like slaying a man; sacrificing a lamb like breaking a dog's neck.'" The Biblical God requires you to fear and tremble. That obviously makes God happy. Sometimes this God of yours just comes across as an egocentric little Ego who wants to play the part of a fearful monster. This God rules through jealousy, wrath, murder, fear and intimidation. Some believers are so fearful of the Biblical God that they call their fear love. That's first-degree dyslexia."

Lesson 4 – Existence of the Universe

Read these scriptures and answer the associated question:

(4A) Gen 1:1 What did God create? _____

(4B) Gen 1:2 Who was present at creation? _____

(4C) Gen 1:26 Are the pronouns singular (one Person) or plural (multiple Persons)? _____

(4D) Gen 2:4 Who made the earth and the heavens? _____

(4E) Isaiah 45:11-12 Who made the earth, and created man upon it. _____

(4F) Psalm 19:1-6 What do the heavens declare? _____

(4G) Mark 13:19 Who made the world? _____

(4H) John 1:3 What came into being or existence through the Word? _____

(4I) Eph 3:9 Who created all things? _____

(4J) Heb 11:3 how was the universe created? _____

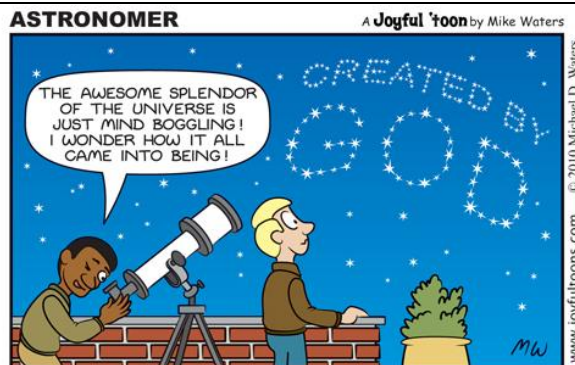
Christian Question: "If the Cosmological Argument (There must be a first cause.) does not demonstrate God, how do you account for the universe?"

(4K) What are some of the ways you think an unbeliever might answer this question?

Think & Pray _____

(4L) How would you respond to the answers an unbeliever is most likely to use?

Think & Pray _____



The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. — PSALM 19:1-2 NIV

----- SOME POSSIBLE ANSWERS -----

(Your answers do not have to match exactly.)

Lesson 4 – Existence of the Universe

- (4A) Gen 1:1 What did God create? The heavens and the earth
(4B) Genesis 1:2 Who was present at creation? The Spirit
(4C) Genesis 1:26 Are the pronouns singular (one Person) or plural (multiple Persons)? Plural
(4D) Genesis 2:4 Who made the earth and the heavens? the Lord God
(4E) Isaiah 45:11-12 Who made the earth, and created man upon it. The Lord
(4F) Psalms 19:1-6 What do the heavens declare? the glory of God
(4G) Mark 13:19 Who made the world? God
(4H) John 1:3 What came into being or existence through the Word? Everything
(4I) Ephesians 3:9 Who created all things? God
(4J) Hebrews 11:3 how was the universe created? by God's command
(4K) *Atheist's Actual Response:* "The cosmological argument is no help. You would still be left with the task of explaining where God came from. Rather than answering the question, it only brings it back one step and leaves it at that. The cosmological argument is not an explanation, but an evasion of the problem. How do I account for the universe? I wish I knew. Do you?" How would you respond to this?
(4L) *My Actual Answer:* "I understand the universe to be the creation of God. I am pleased to see you admit ignorance about something. That means you might still be open to learning something, all other evidence being to the contrary." Clearly, I could have been nicer.

This might be better: "The cosmological argument states that there must be something outside the universe of causes and effects that caused the first effect. God does not need a cause. He is the uncaused first cause of everything." Then I think I would ask him what evidence would convince him of God's existence.

Other questions I have asked atheists but without a rational response:

[4m] *Question:* You claim you denounce the Bible publicly in order to help people. I still do not understand what motivates atheists to want to help people. Why are you discussing this with me at all? What do you hope to gain by it? What I do not understand is why you care what I believe? What possible difference could it make to you? As I mentioned earlier, I agree with your basic proposition about how damaging "religious" organizations can be in some cases, but I think you are throwing the baby out with the bath water.

[4n] *Question:* If you were standing up in front of a bunch of people who were being cared for in an institution because they had exhibited potentially harmful behaviors, such as attempted suicide or drug addiction, what could you tell them that would help them? I speak to them every week. Please, advise me.

[4o] *Question:* You accuse the early church of removing and adding things to the Bible. We have the same Bible they did in the first century. They would have had to change thousands of copies. How would such a thing be possible?

Bonus Practice Exercise:

[4p] *How would you respond to this attack?* Why didn't Adam and Eve find it strange that a serpent was talking to them?

Lesson 5– Law Implies Lawgiver

Read these scriptures and answer the associated question:

- (5A) Exodus 20:1-17. What is this passage called? _____
- (5B) Deut 6:1-2 If they kept His statutes and commandments what happened? _____
- (5C) Joshua 24:24 What did the people promise to obey? _____
- (5D) Psalm 119:9 How can a young man keep his way pure? _____
- (5E) Matt 7:12. This verse, (A.K.A. the Golden Rule) is called what 2 things? _____
- (5F) Mark 12:28-31. Who are the two we are supposed to love? _____
- (5G) John 3:36 What happens to the one who does not obey the Son? _____
- (5H) Acts 5:29 They decided to obey Who instead of men? _____

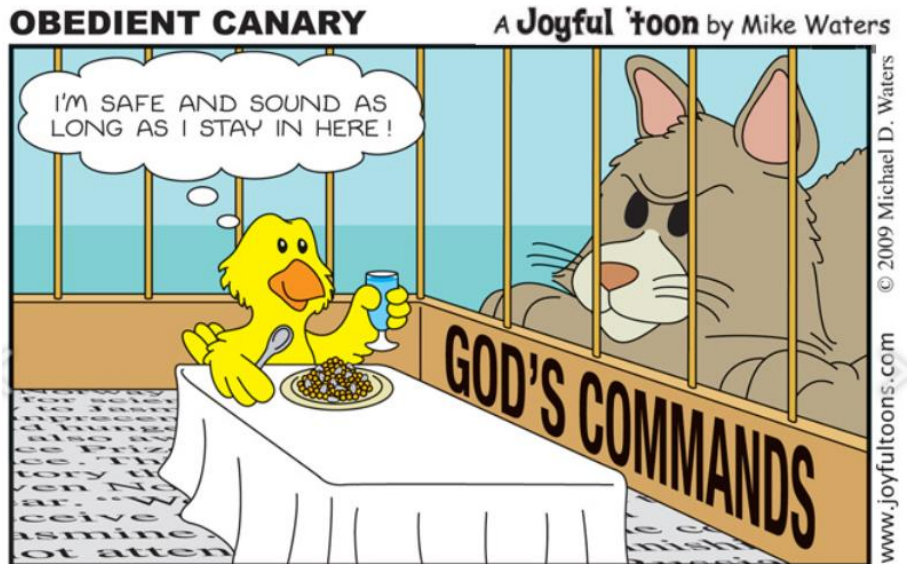
Christian Question: "If the moral law does not imply a law giver, where did the idea come from that there is such a thing as morals?"

(5I) What are some of the ways you think an unbeliever might answer this question?

Think & Pray _____

(5J) How would you respond to the answers an unbeliever is most likely to use?

Think & Pray



Follow my decrees and be careful to obey my laws, and you will live safely in the land. Then the land will yield its fruit, and you will eat your fill and live there in safety. — LEVITICUS 25:18-19 NIV

----- SOME POSSIBLE ANSWERS -----

(Your answers do not have to match exactly.)

Lesson 5– Law Implies Lawgiver

- (5A) Exodus 20:1-17. What is this passage called? The Ten Commandments
- (5B) Deut 6:1-2 If they kept His statutes and commandments what happened? They lived longer
- (5C) Joshua 24:24 What did the people promise to obey? The Lord's voice
- (5D) Psalm 119:9 How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it by God's word
- (5E) Matt 7:12. This verse, (A.K.A. the Golden Rule) is called what 2 things? Law & Prophets
- (5F) Mark 12:28-31. Who are the two we are supposed to love? God and our neighbors
- (5G) John 3:36 What happens to the one who does not obey the Son? Does not see life
- (5H) Acts 5:29 They decided to obey Who instead of men? God

(5I&J)

Atheist's Actual Response: "The requirements of our survival as a group of thinking individuals, all with different and conflicting interests, moved us to make increasingly more complicated agreements (from taboos to decalogues to codes to decrees to constitutions) so we don't bash each other's head over what to have for dinner."

My Actual Answer: You offered a theory explaining the development of morals over time. That was not the question. The question was where did the idea of morals originate?"

Another answer I have heard goes something like this:

Atheist: "The powerful invented the idea or morals to make it easier to control the weak."

Christian: "What makes you think this? Even if it is true, it doesn't seem to have worked. Every time a tyrant becomes too much of a bully people band together and get rid of him. Sometimes it takes a while. As the founding fathers said "all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.'" – Declaration of Independence."

Other questions I have asked atheists but without a rational response:

[5k] *Question:* "If Jesus is wrong about being the only way, we cannot call him a prophet or wise man, or perhaps even a good man. Are you saying Jesus was stupid?"

[5L] *Questions:* You say a good God cannot exist because evil exists. So, which is it? Is He evil or not existent?

- (a) If the former then, without God, what is your basis for deciding what is evil, and what is not?
- (b) If the latter, what is your evidence that He does not exist?

[5m] *Question:* You say because there are ways to construe the Bible to mean contradictory things it can not be believed. There are ways to construe the Bible so that it can be understood as non-contradictory. Why don't you believe it?

Bonus Practice Exercise:

[5n] *How would you respond to this attack?* "There no absolute laws that would apply for all people, places and times in the universe. Give me just one example of a law or rule that applies in all situations."

Lesson 6 – Bonus Lesson – Additional Skeptics Attacks

(6A) – **Textual Problem** *Atheist's Attack*: If the Bible was God's word, then why would it have so many really obvious textual problems? Matthew 17:21 doesn't even exist in some old versions. That is just one of *thousands* of problems. A perfect God had nothing to do with the Bible.

Think & Pray _____

(6B) – **Odd Congregation** *Atheist Attack*: Jesus wants us to preach to animals - Mark 16:15 “Jesus said: ‘Preach the gospel to every creature...’” What? Jesus said for you to preach the gospel to fleas, maggots, cats, and Great White Sharks, too? Are they not "creatures"? Does Jesus' order qualify to be a lie?

Think & Pray _____

(6C) – **Swords** *Atheist Attack*: Matthew contradicts himself: Matt. 10:34 "I came not to send peace but a sword" contradicts Matt. 26:52 "Put up again thy sword into its place: for all that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

Think & Pray _____

(6D) – **Role of Women** *Atheist Attack*: "Christianity is all about keeping women out of leadership roles in the church. Until the last few years when they were pressured into it by society, women were not allowed to lead in churches. In backward denominations and churches, they still cannot."

Think & Pray _____

(6E) – **Homosexuality** *Atheist Attack*: "Why do you hate homosexuals? I thought Christians were supposed to love people."

Think & Pray _____

----- SOME POSSIBLE ANSWERS -----

(Your answers do not have to match exactly.)

(6A) – **Textual Problem** "Yes, textual problems are real. It is only a mistake if it was not what He had in mind. How do you know the textual 'problems' are not what He expected to happen to a Bible in human hands?"

(6B) – **Odd Congregation** "If you read it in context you realize it means preach to creatures that have the ability to believe something. As far as I know, only human beings qualify."

(6C) – **Swords** "In Matt 10:34 sword is a figure of speech. In Matt 26:52 sword is meant literally."

(6D) – **Role of Women** "The role of women in church or anywhere has more to do with personal preference and culture than Christian doctrine. In this respect Christian churches often mirror their surrounding society. Christianity has done more to elevate the status of women to a position of respect than anything else in history.

"The Bible certainly does not suggest a subordinate role for women. In Luke 24 and Matthew 28 it is women who first proclaim the resurrection of Christ to the assembly of believers. In Luke 11:27-28 Jesus is preaching a sermon to a gathering of disciples when a woman interrupts to praise him. Jesus answers what she said without the hint of rebuke for having spoken. In John 4 the Samaritan woman speaks to Jesus in the gathering of the disciples and then goes and proclaims his messiahship to her entire city. In Revelation 2:18-29 a woman preacher is rebuked for the content of her message not for having preached. 1 Corinthians 11:5 and 13 suggest that women are supposed to pray and prophesy. There were several prophetesses in the Old Testament as well. Miriam in Exodus 15:20, Deborah in Judges 4:4, Huldah in 2 Kings 22:14 and 2 Chronicles 34:22, Noadiah in Nehemiah 6:14, and an unnamed prophetess in Isaiah 8:3. In no case is there any hint that any of these women were operating outside the will of God by preaching or leading God's people.

"Anyway, real Christian leadership is about giving a good example. It is not about having authority over others. (See 1st Peter 5:3) Nobody can keep a woman from being a good example, if that is what she is minded to do." (You don't have to agree with me about this, but you better have a clear understanding about what you believe and why, before you get in a conversation with a lost person about this topic.)

(6E) – **Homosexuality** He is probably basing this on some pretty hateful people who fly the Christian flag, but forget the part about loving others. His error is thinking this kind of attitude applies to all Christians.

"I don't hate anyone. Why would you think such a thing? Please don't lump me in with people who claim to be Christian and then act hatefully. The Bible teaches that homosexuality is wrong, along with any other life style that puts your genitals first, like adultery and fornication. (1st Corinthians 6:9, 1st Timothy 1:10) Since homosexuality is not something I'm tempted to do, I really don't think about it very much. Gossip is a far worse sin. (Romans 1:29, 2nd Corinthians 12:20, 1st Timothy 3:11) Homosexuality usually only destroys the people doing it, although it frequently harms family members. Gossip destroys families and churches." (You don't have to agree with me about this, but you better have a clear understanding about what you believe and why, before you get in a conversation with a lost person about this topic.)