



6 | 5 Tools for Dealing With Atheism.



Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. - 2 Peter 3:3-4

1.) Understand our Biblical Responsibility to the Atheist

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: - 1 Peter 3:15

a. *Sanctifying the Lord God in our hearts* implies that we have set Christ apart as our *First Principle*. Our goal is to turn every conversation back to Christ in as efficient a manner as is possible. Our power is in the message of Christ as found in the Word of God.

b. *We are to prepare ourselves to give every man an answer*, but that does not imply that we provide answers to *all* his questions. Rather, it means that we are to provide an answer for the hope which is *within us*.

c. *Our answers are to be delivered in meekness and in fear*. On the one hand, we do not answer with arrogance or smug intolerance. On the other hand, we do not answer carelessly. We have been commissioned by a holy God to minister holy truth in a sober and wise way.

2.) Understand How the Atheist Will Try to Engage.

Like the creation based worshiper, the atheist has rejected *the knowledge of God*. He has done so willingly and intentionally, though he may have buried the awareness that he has done so under layers of rationalism. Atheists are rarely won to Christ as the result of a single conversation, but they can be won to Christ.

Atheists see themselves as neutral seekers of the truth, as being articulate, empirical, and logical. Moreover, they see themselves as having been freed from the oppression of religion. Atheists *are* articulate, empirical, and logical, in terms of the wisdom of this world. The cross of Christ is foolishness unto them.

Consider a typical encounter with an atheist. Because he lives in this “rational” world we may expect rational arguments from him. These arguments generally fall into the familiar categories of so-called *moral* objections, *scientific* objections, and *biblical* objections. The atheist will likely season his culinary offering with a choice selection of inflammatory words from his pantry. You will hear terms like fundamentalist, dogma or dogmatic, intolerant, and, the present favorite, judgmentalism. He *thinks* he understands you and has pigeon-holed your kind long ago. In addition, *though he is not likely to bring it up immediately*, he most often has a personal, vested, and emotional reason for rejecting God.

The new witness for Christ who is experiencing his first encounter may be intimidated by the rhetoric, but that will wear off quickly. Both the objections and the rhetoric are worn and clichéd and have been answered ten ways past Sunday by an army of serious contenders for the faith. These are easily dealt with, and we will provide some starting points later. Do keep in mind that your atheist friend is unlikely to come up with anything new. Help is all around you.

The important thing to remember is your *focus*. While the witness may be required to answer some of these objections for the sake of gaining credibility, he should *not* let the atheist assign the terms of the discussion. To do so is to answer a fool according to his own folly, (Proverbs 26:4). So, how then, do we engage the atheist?

3.) Understand Our Lord's Examples When Witnessing in General

Observe our Lord's wisdom in His own witnessing encounters. Nicodemus was no atheist, but his story in John 3 does showcase the wisdom of Christ when dealing with men. Was Nicodemus coming to Christ with a rational question? Were his opening words designed to set the terms of a discussion or to raise a question or even a challenge? We'll never know this side of heaven. This we do know, our Lord Jesus *took control of the conversation*, and very much in the same manner Paul would later do at Mars Hill (Acts 17). He bypassed the "presenting issue" which the philosophers posited and drove straight to the subject of spiritual realities. When our Lord spoke to the woman at the well (John 4) He bypassed the "presenting issues," (gender issues, issues of descent, and worship issues) and drove relentlessly to the spiritual need at hand. When challenged with a specific question He answered truthfully and briefly, and then returned to His objective. He was not diverted.

When dealing with Atheists we *can* learn much by observing them

and by listening to their presenting arguments and sound bytes.

After all, we're not omniscient as Christ is. However, a wise servant of Christ will move past these as quickly as the listener will allow, in order to shift the discussion to *the true spiritual battle ground*.

And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.
- 2 Timothy 2:24-26

4.) Understand the Bible's Examples When Engaging Last Day Scoffers.

It may surprise some folks to know just how much of the Bible is devoted to apologetics, or giving an answer. Again, it is not nearly as important for us to understand all the nuances of atheism as it is to understand just how the Bible engages such people. When instructing us apologetically there are three biblical arenas we are expected to know.

1. The Bible argues first from the character and nature of God.

Because God (as revealed in Christ) is our First Principle, we dare not begin anywhere else. Please carefully review item 1. in Sec. II, 5, Five Things About Creator Worship. Read 1. The Definition of Creator Based Worship.

2. The Bible also uses Bible prophecy as an apologetic. The book of Isaiah provides one of our most concentrated apologetic studies in God's Word. Chapters 40 through 50 are geared heavily toward idolaters (polytheists), but they weigh significantly against the atheist as well. Not only does God insist that He alone is God while making repeated and unequivocal claims to His authority by right of creation, He throws down another heavy gauntlet, one which no atheist has successfully picked up. Speaking of those false teachers and idol worshipers He says:

Let them bring them forth, and shew us what shall happen: let them shew the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together. - Isaiah 41:22-23 [Underline mine]

The prophetic framework of scripture is beyond refute and it can be demonstrated from any version of the Bible, ancient or new. Hundreds of prophecies, working together, and culminating in the plan and program of a single Person, the Lord Jesus Christ, are *empirically* undeniable. Nor are we merely talking about single isolated events. We are talking about great themes with multiple threads coming together in a great crescendo!

A faithful witness will want to immerse himself in the arguments of Isaiah 40-50. They are God's own apologetics!

3. The Bible also uses creation and the flood. For starters, the effective witness will want to master 2 Peter 3. Verse 3 warns us that last day scoffers will come, walking after their own lusts. An atheist is a last day scoffer (Grk origin: a trifling child or mocking boy). The atheist speaks with authority concerning things which he knows little or nothing about! Notice the nature of their attack. Since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation (Vs. 4). This matches the scientific argument of uniformitarianism and snidely suggests that the judgment of God which believers have declared has not and will never come! Verse 5 and the following verses tell us the fact that these atheists are *willingly* ignorant (or agnostic) of the true facts. The geological evidence of the creation and the flood lie all around them.

The point is that creation evangelism and creation apologetic are legitimate tools for use in defending the faith to the atheist, and they are available from many sources! This leads us to our last tool.

5.) Understand How to Locate and Use Biblical Resources

Here are some starting points:

- Reread Sec. II, 1 Understanding Our Role as a Witness
- Purchase a Defender's Study Bible from the ICR.org online store.

Sec II 6 Five Things Tools for Dealing with Atheism

- Choose from a wide range of Answers In Genesis Creation videos and show them to your family. Get your pastor to make recommendations. <https://answersingenesis.org>
- Need lots of short answers for short objections? Read [Demolishing Supposed Bible Contradictions](#) by Ken Ham.
- Need to provide your high schoolers with an easy read that changes the way they answer objectors? Get [Meet the Skeptic](#) by Bill Foster, published by Master Books.
- Consider taking your family to one of several creation science museums.
- Have a particular question from an atheist you can't answer? Someone has already answered it. Just put it in your search engine and prepare to be surprised!

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. - Jude 3