

SHARING CHRIST WITH CONFIDENCE – WEEK 4

RESPONDING TO OBJECTIONS



A Few Important Reminders...

- The Truth of the Gospel is powerful
- The Holy Spirit is working on the hearts of men/women and actively trying to draw them. They may be resisting Him, but God's Word indicates that the Holy Spirit is actively pursuing the lost.
 - **1 Tim. 2:4** "God wants all men to be saved."
 - **2 Peter 3:9** "God is patient, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance."
 - **John 12:32** "When I am lifted up, I will draw all men toward me."
- Your own **personal testimony** can't be argued with - it's **your** story!
 - What God has done in your life!

A Few Important Reminders...

- **We must always be conduits of His Love for others!**
 - People may contest your content, but don't ever let your lack of love and kindness be a reason why someone **won't** believe!
 - We must be motivated by Christ's love in us, "For Christ's love compels us." (2 Cor. 5:14)
- People may be offended with Truth, but let's not offend them with a judgmental spirit.
- **It's always ok to respond with,** *"That's a great question. Would you be ok if I did some research and got back to you?"*

WHY THIS MATTERS

Objections can be likened to

- Hurdles
- Obstacles

Don't dismiss someone's honest objections. People sometimes have good reasons why they don't believe - or at least they are 'good reasons' to them!

- We must learn to **LISTEN** first and **RESPOND** with compassion and a desire to understand, rather than with know-it-all arrogance!!



Four Categories of Objections

- **Atheistic | Intellectual | Emotional | Indifference**
- **NOTE:** There are probably other categories you can think of
 - Mention Apologetics Class from last year.
 - We will never be fully equipped, but some preparation will at least help remove some of the fears that may hold us back.
- **DISCLAIMER:** **NONE** of this will be exhaustive!!
- The goal tonight is to simply alert you about some of the objections you may encounter and to inspire your preparation.

INTELLECTUAL OBJECTIONS

“I don’t believe the bible is God’s Word.”

- It’s just a book of fairy tales
- Has too many errors & contradictions
- Written by man - may have worthy stories and helpful truths, but not from God
- What about other ‘sacred’ texts?
- There are things in the bible, that if true, I’m not interested in your God. (ex. OT wars, genocide, slaves, etc.)
- We don’t need ancient folklore to help us live today.

PREPARING FOR INTELLECTUAL OBJECTIONS

- Do some of your own homework on the origins of Scripture.
 - It will bolster your own confidence in God's Word first
 - It will prepare you with a few helpful responses if questions arise
- Apologetics Class – Week 5: ***The Reliability of Scripture***
- Wesley Huff's YouTube series: ***Can I Trust the Bible?***
- Use your time in the car to listen to podcasts that equip your mind in this area!
- Read a book on the topic – email me and I'll send you a list!!
- Be a student of the Word – ensure that someone won't misquote it

RESPONDING TO INTELLECTUAL OBJECTIONS

- A few **Minimal Facts** can be very helpful!
 - ***Did you know*** there are 5,300 ancient handwritten copies of the NT?
 - ***Did you know*** the Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered in 1947, confirmed the accuracy and unchanging nature of the OT?
 - ***Did you know*** that compared to other classical ancient texts (Homer, Plato), which enjoy the benefit of NOT being challenged, the biblical texts are far more strongly attested and verified.
- Bring focus to the Person of Jesus whenever possible!

RESPONDING TO INTELLECTUAL OBJECTIONS

*“Textual critics of almost all theological stripes agree that we can reconstruct somewhere upwards of 97 percent of the New Testament text beyond a shadow of reasonable doubt. And it is certainly the case that no Christian belief or doctrine depends solely on a textually disputed passage. All these factors set the New Testament books off from every other known work from the ancient world in terms of our ability to have confidence **that we know what the original authors wrote.**”*

– Douglas Groothuis, Christian Philosopher & Apologist

ATHEISTIC OBJECTIONS

Science as a reason for their atheism

- Don't believe in a creator
- Origins of the Universe
- Space, time, matter, energy (reject all things non-material)
 - Anti-supernatural mindset. "You believe in magic!"
- Don't believe in an afterlife
- Evolution is a proven fact – theory vs. scientific fact
- There's just no evidence that God exists
- What about aliens and UFOs? 😊

ATHEISTIC OBJECTIONS

Science as a reason for their atheism. (there's more!)

- I just didn't grow up in a 'religious' home, so I don't believe.
- You only believe because you *did* grow up in a religious home.
- If there exists an all-powerful **and** all-loving God, why is there suffering and evil?
- Hasn't **religion** caused more bloodshed through the years than all other wars?
- Do you really believe all the stories of the bible, like Noah's Ark?

PREPARING FOR ATHEISTIC OBJECTIONS

How can I prepare for the myriad of questions and objections that I might encounter?

- Equip yourself!
- Apologetics Class – Weeks 2 & 3:
 - Learning to Challenge Atheistic worldviews
 - The case for a Creator **without** using the bible! (Paul in Acts. 17)
- Use your time in the car to listen to podcasts that equip your mind in this area!
 - Under the Hood, Wesley Huff, Bema Podcast
 - Anyone have any other suggestions?

PREPARING FOR ATHEISTIC OBJECTIONS

How can I prepare for the myriad of questions and objections that I might encounter?

- Read a book on the topic – email me and I'll send you a list!!
 - **Reliable Authors to Read:** Lee Strobel, William Lane Craig, Alex McFarland, Frank Turek, Paul Copan, Norm Geissler, J. Warner Wallace, Josh McDowell
- Be a student of the Word – ensure that someone won't misquote, misuse, misapply or twist God's Word to use it against Him.

RESPONDING FOR ATHEISTIC OBJECTIONS

How should I **RESPOND** to these kinds of objections?

- Your best responses will be birthed in your own preparation.
- Start with humility!! “That’s a really good point! Can I look into it and get back to you?”
- Learn how to bring the conversation back to 2 core questions:
 - **We know we exist, so how do YOU think we got here?**
 - **Jesus existed, so who do YOU think he was?**

EMOTIONAL OBJECTIONS

- In their classic 2007 work *unChristian* David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons noted 6 primary mindsets that turn people off from Christianity:

- Hypocritical
- Get Saved!
- Antihomosexual
- Sheltered
- Too Political
- Judgmental

Notice that none of these are rooted in logical objections to the claims of Christianity, but rather are emotional responses to how Christians are perceived that cause people to be uninterested in what we have to say!

EMOTIONAL OBJECTIONS

Objections that are rooted in emotion *more than* logic.

- This is not to say that these objections are baseless or illogical, just that they are generally rooted in how a person ‘feels’ about a topic that motivates their unwillingness to be open to the Christian message.
- They have ‘Church Hurt’
 - Some/many have been hurt by the church, by clergy, by people who call themselves Christians, by ‘Christian’ family members, etc.
 - How could a loving God allow this to happen to me, or to my loved one?
 - My ‘Christian’ family member was hateful and judgmental, so I want nothing to do with Christianity.

EMOTIONAL OBJECTIONS

Objections that are rooted in emotion *more than* logic.

- I don't like that the church judges people in the LGBTQ+ community
 - I am part of that community
 - I have a loved one who is part of that community
- How can a Loving God send 'good' people to Hell? Only for horrible people!
- Why does your Loving God allow so much suffering and evil in the world?
- I don't like that Christians say that Jesus is the *ONLY* way to heaven. What about all the other well-meaning religious people in the world. Are they *ALL* wrong and thus *ALL* going to Hell??
 - Far too exclusive!

RESPONDING FOR EMOTIONAL OBJECTIONS

What's the best way to respond to Emotional Objections?

- Not emotionally!! 😊
- I think we concede ground if we allow ourselves to escalate into an ***emotionally charged*** discussion over these topics.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom with how to respond, and grace to respond appropriately.
- Show genuine concern for whatever hurt they've incurred.
- Help bring light to the fact that people should not confuse human failures with a perfectly loving heavenly Father.

INDIFFERENCE OBJECTIONS

- My life is just fine, why do I need religion? (Teddy W)
- Life is so busy with work, kids, sports, etc. I just don't have time for church and feel no need.
- This category may represent MANY of the people you encounter. They believe in a God and assume that since they haven't murdered anyone, what's the big deal. He'll let me in.

RESPONDING FOR INDIFFERENCE OBJECTIONS

What's the best way to **RESPOND** to **INDIFFERENCE**?

- You may be indifferent, but haven't you ever considered the possibility of eternity??
- What do you imagine happens after you die?
- On a scale of 1 – 10, if there is a heaven, how certain are you that God would let you in? Invite them to explain their answer. This can present an excellent opportunity to clarify the claims of the Gospel, and that a person can **KNOW** that they are going to heaven!!

CLOSING REMARKS

Thank you for joining us in this class!!!

- I hope that you feel better equipped, even if just in small ways.
- Less fear, more confidence
- This is not the end, but just another beginning, where we all decide to be better equipped to 'Always give a reason for the hope that we have.'
- Pray for a fresh burden for lost people!!
- Pray every day for God to lead you to someone who needs to hear
- Start a list of people to start praying for.