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Answering Specific Objections

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Answering Specific Objections

I'm an Atheist

An atheist believes that nothing × nobody = everything.

Sam Chan recommends Tim Keller's book *Making Sense of God* because it focuses on the reasons we need to believe in the existence of God.

Anthony Flew, probably the most respected atheist of the last 100 years, changed from atheism after studying DNA and said, "I now believe that the universe was brought into existence by an infinite Intelligence. I believe that this universe's intricate laws manifest what scientists have called the Mind of God."

Norman Geisler's book *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* wrote, "If there is no God, why is there something rather than nothing at all?"

Years ago, I was canvassing a neighborhood for a new church plant. I knocked on the door of a home and introduced myself. The man at the front door stated, "We're atheists. We don't believe in God. Just make God appear right now on the front lawn, and I'll believe. Go ahead, make Him appear!" I replied, "The universe is 15 billion light years in all directions, and you're a dot in the universe. Is it possible that God could exist outside your realm of experience?" And he said yes. Then I said, "You're not an atheist. You'd be an agnostic, and there are two kinds of agnostics. One says, 'I don't know, and I don't care.' The other one says, 'I don't know, but I'm willing to find out.' Which one are you?" He said, "I don't know, but I'm willing to find out." I noticed that his countenance had dropped from one of arrogance to one of astonishment and humility. I began to share the gospel with him, but his common-law wife (the neighbors at the next door I knocked on told me they weren't married) behind the door yelled, "Honey, it's dinner time," so I was unable to finish sharing the gospel with him. I gave him a tract, and I often wonder to this day if he ever pondered what I shared with him and if later on he came to Christ.

William Craig, an American philosopher and Christian apologist, has five powerful arguments for God and Christianity. I'll use the acronym CAUSE.

C—CAUSE: Whatever begins to exist has a cause. The universe began to exist; therefore, the universe has a cause. Either no one created something out of nothing, or someone created something out of nothing. If you can't believe that nothing caused something, then you don't have enough faith to be an atheist.

A—ACCURACY: Design of the universe defies coincidence and shows there is an Intelligent Designer. Every design had a designer. The universe is highly complex in its design. Stephen Hawking wrote, "If the rate of expansion one second after the big bang had been smaller by even one part in a hundred thousand million million, the universe would have re-collapsed before it ever reached its present size." The universe had a Designer.

U—UNIVERSAL MORALITY is evidence that there is a God. There must be a God to account for the sense of right and wrong that is universal to humankind.

S—SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE is that God can be known by those who seek Him. Your personal testimony is proof that God can be known and exists.

E—EMPTY TOMB and eyewitness accounts. Many atheists such as Josh McDowell, Lee Strobel, Simon Greenleaf, Frank Morison, and others became Christians by studying the resurrection of Christ. Read or watch "[Did Jesus Rise from the Dead?](#)".

What About Those Who Have Never Heard about Jesus?

A guy named Mark mentioned to me that he had asked several people a question that no one could answer. Here was his question: "What about those who have never heard the gospel before? God won't send them to hell, will he?" I could tell by the expression on his face after I answered his question that he had never heard the answer before. His ignorance, which was really arrogance, was self-imposed. He didn't want to believe. He wanted to continue in his sinful lifestyle.

This question calls into question the justice and fairness of God. There are books, videos, and articles on this question, but the way I answer this question is by using the acrostic **JUSTICE**.

J—GOD IS JUST: *Whatever God does, He does fairly and with perfect justice. Genesis 18:25 (NKJV) says, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" People in general want justice. We all want justice, and when history comes to an end, everyone will see how perfect God's justice is.*

U—GOD’S LOVE IS UNCONDITIONAL and infinite. First John 4:8, says, “God is love.” He “desires all men to be saved” (1 Timothy 2:4). God longs for people to come to repentance and to return to Him. He wants heaven to be populated. “He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9 NIV).

S—GOD HAS SHOWN all men that He exists by **creation** (Romans 1:19-20; Psalm 19:1-4) and by **conscience** (Romans 2:14-15; 1:19; John 1:9). Every person born into this world knows that there is a God by external means (creation) and by internal witness (their conscience). Every culture has a belief in gods or God. But what do people do with this knowledge that God exists? Most people suppress the truth of God (Romans 1:18-19).

T—TRANSGRESSED TERMS: Every person has sinned before a holy God in thought, word, and deed (Romans 3:23; James 2:10; Romans 3:10-12; James 4:17; Isaiah 64:6). They have also violated the moral standard written in their hearts, which is why their conscience bothers them when they violate that moral law. All stand guilty before the holy God of the universe.

I—INITIATE (CALL UPON) GOD: The Bible tells us that if a person wholeheartedly seeks God, they will find him. “You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13). Before Jesus came to earth, Abraham, Rahab, and others in the Old Testament put their faith in the one true God and His provision for their sins (Genesis 15:6; Joshua 2:9-11). God will move heaven and earth to see that a person comes to know God if they will earnestly seek Him.

In Dreams and Visions: Is Jesus Awakening the Muslim World? Tom Doyle shows how many Muslims are coming to Christ through spectacular dreams. The wise men in Matthew 2:1-12 followed the light God gave them (the star) and brought them to the Christ child. In Acts 10, Peter and Cornelius both had dreams, and Cornelius’ whole household came to Christ.

C—JESUS IS THE CATEGORICAL CURE: Jesus is the only way to salvation (John 14:6; Acts 4:12). People before Christ put their faith in a Messiah who would ultimately die for their sins. We look back to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ as having paid for our sins on the cross.

E—EXPECT EXAMINATION: *When you witness to a person who has clearly heard the gospel, the God of the universe will not ask them, “What about those who have never heard?” Rather, the Lord will show them the many ways He has tried to get their attention and will ask them, “What have you done with my Son, Jesus, who died for you and has paid the full price for your sins?”*

Is Jesus Christ God?

Jesus never acquiesced to the idea that He was simply a great moral teacher.

Jesus Claimed to Be God

Many times, Jesus claimed to be God, the Creator of the universe. He said to Philip, “Whoever has seen Me, has seen the Father” (John 14:9 ESV).

Jesus claimed to be the great “I AM” (John 8:58), which infuriated the Jewish leaders of His day, and they sought to kill Him “because you, a mere man, have made yourself God” (John 10:33). His power over nature, disease, and death (Mark 4:41; John 9:1- 41) proved He was God.

Jesus Predicted His Resurrection from the Dead

No other great religious leader dared to predict that he would rise from the dead (John 2:19; John 11:25-26).

Examining the Alternatives

- **Liar:** How could the greatest moral teacher who ever lived be the greatest deceiver of all time, even among his closest friends?
- **Lunatic:** Psychologists state that Jesus had the most stable personality ever. When Jesus was being crucified, He exhibited great composure and poise, and uttered these words: “Father forgive them for they know not what they are doing” (Luke 23:34).
- **Legend:** The overwhelming evidence from history both by secular historians and Christian scholars is that Jesus was an historical figure of great significance.
- **Lord:** That Jesus is Lord is backed up by His life, incredible teachings, miracles, and resurrection.

Did Jesus Rise from the Dead?

Evidence of Christ's Death. Gregory Koukl in *The Story of Reality* indicates that the vast majority of scholars, including those who are entirely secular, agree that Jesus died on a Roman cross on a Friday, that He was buried in a tomb, and that the tomb was empty on Sunday morning. Numerous witnesses testified that they saw Jesus alive multiple times.

Early Accounts. The earliest creed taken from 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 alludes to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. It has been dated within months of Christ's death.

Empty Tomb. All the enemies of Christ had to do to destroy Christianity was simply to produce the body of Christ, which they never did. Christ's tomb remains empty. Theologian R. C. Sproul said, "Buddha is dead. Mohammad is dead. Moses is dead. Confucius is dead. But . . . Christ is alive."

Eyewitnesses. Besides the four Gospels, there are non-biblical sources that reference the resurrection of Christ (e.g., Tacitus, Pliny the Younger, Josephus, Lucian).

Experience of Christ. Every believer, the moment they receive Christ, are indwelt by Jesus (Colossians 1:27). Jesus says in Revelation 3:20 (ESV), "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door [of their heart], I will come into him and eat with him, and he with me."

Why Do People Suffer?

Greek philosopher Epicurus who lived a few hundred years before Christ proposed this argument:

1. God is all-good and all-powerful.
2. An all-good God would want there to be no evil.
3. An all-powerful God would have the power to eradicate evil.
4. There is evil.
5. Therefore, God is not both all-good and all-powerful.

A good answer to this argument can be found in Lee Strobel's book *The Case for Faith* where he quotes philosopher Peter Kreeft that evil is evidence for God: "If there is no God, where did we get the standard of goodness by which we judge evil

as evil?” God created the possibility of evil. Man’s freedom is the source of evil. God could decree by midnight all evil cease, but by 12:01 a.m., none of us would be left. Someday God will destroy all evil.

In his book *The Case for Christ*, Lee Strobel wrote that God has “demonstrated how the very worst thing that has ever happened in the history of the world ended up resulting in the very best thing that has ever happened in the history of the world” (the death of God on the cross).

Isn’t the Christian Experience Only a Psychological Crutch

Conversions Contrast

Paul Little in *Know Why You Believe* states, “We cannot explain Christian experience on a conditioned reflex basis . . . since thousands reared in Christian homes unfortunately never become Christians. . . . In Christianity, our personal subjective experience is tied into the objective historical fact of the resurrection of Christ.” Some people who were raised in a Christian home later abdicated their faith, whereas many who had no exposure at all to Christ became followers of Christ. Christianity is not based on wish fulfillment; it is based on the objective historical fact that Jesus rose from the dead.

Christ Is Constant

Over 60 generations have shown that Jesus changes lives. We are created for God. St. Augustine said, “You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.”

The ultimate answer to the argument of wish fulfillment or that Christianity is a psychological crutch is that our experience with Christ is that it is based on irrefutable, objective facts—the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. See the video and article [“Did Jesus Rise from the Dead?”](#).

Is the Bible the Word of God?

Here are some of the answers to this question:

Argument from Analogy

God has instituted communication in the natural world. Therefore, it seems probable that communication from God to man would take place.

Argument from the Indestructibility of the Bible

The Bible is the best preserved of all books transmitted from antiquity. The Bible has been preserved despite attempts to destroy it and deny it.

Argument from the Character of the Bible

The contents of the Bible are unsurpassed in its subjects (creation, sin, trinity, etc.). The Bible was written by 40 authors over 1,500 years but clearly the product of one Author (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

Argument from the Influence of the Bible

The Bible has had a scientific, cultural, social, political, and domestic influence. It has answers to the major questions of philosophy such as “Why does evil exist? What is good and right?”

Argument from Fulfilled Prophecy

One-fourth of the Bible is prophetic. Jesus fulfilled over 300 specific prophecies (Psalm 22; Isaiah 52, 53), and the Bible gives a panorama of future events with many prophecies that have already been fulfilled (Matthew 24; Revelation).

Argument from the Claims of Scripture

Over 3,000 times, the Bible declares itself the Word of God and having divine authorship. Aristotle said that a book is innocent until proven guilty.

Argument from the Scientific Accuracy of the Bible

The Bible says that the stars in the heavens are innumerable (Jeremiah 33:22). Scientists in the past thought there were only a few thousand stars in the universe, but recent scientific discoveries reveal millions of galaxies with hundreds of millions of stars. Until the 19th century, physicians bled a patient, hoping that would heal them. But the Bible all along stated that blood is the source of life (Leviticus 17:11). In his book *Scientific Facts in the Bible*, Ray Comfort lists 100 scientific facts.

Won't a Good, Moral Life Get Me to Heaven?

If someone asks this question, ask them if they ever told a lie, stole something, took the Lord's name in vain, looked at someone of the opposite sex in a lustful way, and so on. Every person has broken God's commandments (James 2:10; Matthew 5:48; Romans 3:10, 23).

Acknowledge that you as well as they have sinned, but the difference is that you have found forgiveness in Christ. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

You may be a great swimmer, but none of us could swim to Hawaii. We'd all fall short. People often don't receive Christ because they won't believe, not because they can't believe.

Nicodemus: *In John 3, Nicodemus, a Pharisee and member of the Sanhedrin in Israel, comes to Jesus, who tells him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). Faith in Jesus Christ, the One who paid the penalty of sin, is how a person is born again. It is trusting in Jesus Christ alone, repenting of sin, and receiving Him as your Savior and Lord. None of Nicodemus' good deeds could earn him a place in heaven. By the end of the Gospel of John, Nicodemus appears to have become a disciple of Christ.*

The Thief on the Cross: *The thief on the cross said to Jesus, "Remember me when you come into your Kingdom." Jesus said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). He entered into heaven solely on the mercy and grace of God, just like everyone else who puts their faith in Christ. Jesus paid for our sins at the cross and offers us the free gift of His righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21).*

Why Would a Loving God Send Someone to Hell?

You could reverse this question by asking, "If God is so holy, why would He ever let anyone into heaven?" The Bible is very clear. God says: "I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live" (Ezekiel 33:11). The cross of Christ shows God's desire that people can receive His grace and forgiveness and spend eternity in heaven as opposed to hell.

When people ask how a loving God can send a person to hell, Sam Chan asks them to read with him Jesus's parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31). He then asks them what they like about the story and what it says about hell. He says that people often think the rich man justly deserves to be in hell. C. S. Lewis wrote, "The door of hell is locked on the inside." There are only two kinds of people— those who say to God, "Thy will be done" and those to whom God in the end says, "Thy will be done." All that are in hell ultimately choose it.

The Bible is Full of Errors, and There Are So Many Translations

If someone says, "The Bible is full of errors," ask them to show you one. Chances are they have never read the Bible and can't point to a single so-called error. If they say, "There are so many translations," implying that the Bible can't be trusted, the simple answer is that all translations come from the Hebrew (Old Testament) and Greek (New Testament), and they all say basically the same thing. Ask them, "Do you mind if I share with you what the main theme of the Bible is and how it changed my life?" Then share the gospel and/or your personal testimony with them.

What About Other Religions?

All religions other than Christianity exhort people to reach God by their own efforts with no assurance of eternal life or heaven. They can be summed up in one word— **Do**. Even Mohammad, the founder of Islam, did not know what Allah would do to him after he died (Quran 46:9). If Mohammad had no assurance of salvation, what hope is there for his followers?

Christianity is based on one word— **Done**. Jesus paid for all our sins at the cross (Gal. 2:16). By accepting Jesus and His death on our behalf, we are justified and made righteous before a holy God. Jesus staked His full claims to deity on His resurrection. Today, Jesus's tomb is empty. Buddha, Mohammed, Confucius— their tombs are occupied. Only Jesus claimed to be God incarnate and the only way to heaven. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me" (John 14:6).

I'm Not Ready

Ask someone, "What is the reason you're not ready?" You might ask them, "What would it take to make you ready?" They may say they don't know enough. Review with them the benefits of receiving Christ and share your personal testimony. Offer to meet with them again. If they are interested, they will agree to meet with you. Consider going through the Gospel of John with them.

There Are Too Many Hypocrites in the Church

Agree with them. Say, "There is no perfect church because there are no perfect people." If you were to join a perfect church, it wouldn't be perfect anymore. We're all hypocrites in a way because we all fall short of living up to all of God's commands. The only people who will get to heaven are forgiven people. The only perfect person who ever lived is Jesus. That's why Christ came. He came to die for our sins and offer us forgiveness of all our sins. Would you like to receive the Lord's offer of love and forgiveness for your sins?

I'm a Good Person

Ask, "Have you obeyed all of God's commands?" James 2:10 says, "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all." Some other scriptures to share are Romans 3:10; 3:23; James 4:17; Matthew 5:48; Isaiah 64:6, and the Ten Commandments to show we're all guilty before a holy God. But God offers complete forgiveness, and He paid the full price for all our sins. After sharing these verses with them, ask them if they would like to receive the Lord's offer of forgiveness.

I Tried That, but It Didn't Work for Me

Ask them what they have tried. What church did they go to? Maybe it was a liberal church or a cult. Maybe they got baptized or prayed the prayer to receive Christ but never really understood what they were doing (that happened to me). It's possible they don't really know what it means to be born again. Ask them if they would like to make sure they know God personally and review the gospel with them. Some may have been exposed to a Bible-believing church and the gospel, but now they are living in sin—viewing pornography, taking drugs, and so on. They may have had parents who distorted the gospel by their lives, and now they are in rebellion against

God. Review the gospel with them and share with them the story of the prodigal son—that God, like a perfect, loving Father, is there for them to return to Him like the story Jesus tells in Luke 15.