

Evangelizing to Atheists

Objectives

- ❖ To discuss atheism as a reliance on human understanding as opposed to God's way.
- ❖ To reflect on our own lives and consider areas in which we are, in practice, could be like atheists.
- ❖ To be encouraged to live a consecrated, holy life which will entice those around us.

References

- ❖ Probe Ministries- Atheists and Their Fathers
<http://www.probe.org/history/history/atheists-and-their-fathers.html>
- ❖ "Is There a God" by Marilyn Adamson
<http://everystudent.com/features/isthere.html>
- ❖ Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis
- ❖ Common Ground: An Introduction to Eastern Christianity for the American Christian by Jordan Bajis

Scriptural Verse

"He has made everything beautiful in its own time. Also, He has put eternity in their hearts- except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end."
(Ecclesiastes 3:11)

Lesson Guidelines

- ❖ If you went to the most remote, hottest place on earth and had to describe ice cream to someone how would you do it?
- ❖ It is not until we have tried it that we can testify to the taste of it. Once we have tested it- tasted it as it were and seen that it is good, we can describe it and recommend it to others.
- ❖ That is much the same dilemma in which we find ourselves when trying to explain God to an atheist. How? How does one explain in a convincing way, the goodness of God? Although we can't fully explain Him, we can and are called to invite others to experience Him!
- ❖ By definition, atheism means denying the existence of God. The word comes from the Greek *atheos* which means without God. If one is without God then he is by HIMSELF and relies on his own way and understanding.
- ❖ Some characteristics of atheists could include:
 - Moral-kind, generous, compassionate
 - Immoral – hedonistic
 - Intelligent- independent thinkers- use science/rationality to explain things
 - Easily influenced by the group
 - Militant in their denial of God
 - Amused by the "weak, pathetic, non-thinking, uneducated" who need God as a crutch for their lives
 - Wounded

- Poor relationship with their father
- Death of father at crucial time in life
- Reaction to hypocrisy
- Abuse
- Deceived by the spirit of the age-rationalism

Regardless of how we see atheists around us, God has something bold to say about those who go their own way: “The fool has said in his heart, “There is no God” They are corrupt, They have done abominable works, There is none who does good”

(Psalm 14:1)

❖ Surely, God understands the influences that brought someone to this place but He also knows some other things: “He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end” (**Ecclesiastes 3:11**), meaning we all have a tug or longing to know Him. Also, St. Paul said: “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse” (**Romans 1:18-20**).

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- ❖ But God desires all to be saved as it is written: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me” (**Revelation 3:20**). Jeremiah also expressed that and said: “Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart .I will be found by you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive” (**Jeremiah 29:12-14**)
- ❖ That’s great, but what is our role? Are we to dazzle them with evidence of how God does exist?
- ❖ Our primary job is to consider ourselves and determine whether there is any atheism lurking in our own hearts. How could that be? After all, we are Sunday School attending, Baptized, Church going Believers. But let’s remember atheism means relying on OUR understanding rather than God’s.
- ❖ Go through Daniel 6
- ❖ We are to live lives wholly consecrated to God because we believe in Him and so we can experience Him more fully and thus be able to witness to others about Him.

Conclusion

Our lives are supposed to attract others to the reality of God so others will desire to know Him too. We are supposed to be the aroma of God. So that like the Queen of Sheba, those around us can say: 1 Kings 10:5-7

Activities/Discussion Points

1. Give examples of how we rely on our own understanding?
2. What things hinder us from evangelizing to others?
3. What are the most effective ways of attracting others to the Lord Jesus Christ?