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Are We Ready to Defend Our Faith?

Eric V. Snow, sermonette, January 8, 2011, Ann Arbor, Michigan, UCG-IA

If we had classmates who told us that there is no God, how would we respond? If your roommate denied that the Bible is true, what would you say back? Suppose our biology teacher or professor pushed the theory of evolution in class: Could we explain what are the problems with Darwinism? How would you respond if you had Muslim or Jewish friends at college who claimed that Jesus didn't die for our sins because the New Testament was historically wrong? Since inevitably others will challenge the truth of our faith, we should prepare in advance for their questions.

S.P.S. Christians should be ready to defend their faith when others question it.

1. Prepare in advance to explain why you believe what you believe.

I Peter 3:15

Especially as you get older and deal with people in the world, it's important to not assume what you believe won't be denied by others. At that moment, your parents or the local minister won't be around to help with an unbeliever's questions.

Also this helps us all to avoid our own doubts. A roommate's doubts about God's love because of all the suffering in the world may mirror our own. Inevitably we will read articles online or watch documentaries on TV that question the truth of the Bible or the creative power of God. The intellectual and cultural elite of our nation and civilization in general assumes that they aren't accountable to the Eternal's words and commands. We have to avoid slowly giving into what we hear from other people or in the media who ridicule Christianity's truth.

There's no reason to be ashamed or embarrassed about our faith. But we can be by friends and teachers at school and college if we don't read booklets or books that explain why we believe God exists, that the Bible is true, and that theory of evolution is false.

Examples: Lee Strobel's "The Case for Christ," Josh McDowell's "More Than a Carpenter," C.S. Lewis, "Miracles" and "Mere Christianity," and Phillip Johnson, "Darwin on Trial."

UCG booklets: "Why Does God Allow Suffering?," "Is the Bible True?," "Life's Ultimate Question: Does God Exist?," and "Creation or Evolution: Does It Really Matter What You Believe?"

www.ucg.org/booklets

Romans 1:18-27

Paul said that the world denies the evidence for God's existence. In the first century, the

ancient Roman Empire was much like trends in America's culture over the past 150 years because of Darwin and skeptical philosophers: A denial of God leads to increased sexual immorality. Charles Darwin, David Hume, Immanuel Kant, Friedrich Nietzsche, Sigmund Freud and Karl Marx rule the world from their graves.

Now I will give two brief specific practical examples of how to defend faith in the Bible and God. It's likely we'll all hear variations on these arguments sooner or later. The first popular error is:

2. To have the absolute truth need not lead to persecution

John 14:5-6

If true, every other religion is wrong.
Tolerance issue: A standard skeptical liberal approach wants to deny absolute truth so that people can get along with each other better. Nice-sounding politically

correct code words like “diversity,” “multiculturalism,” and “pluralism” are obscure this viewpoint. They also confuse “tolerance” and “acceptance”: Gays don’t just want “tolerance,” but they want the end of all public criticism of their promiscuous lifestyle as well. Ironically backfires: People who don’t believe in an absolute moral code inevitably treat each other worse on average.

True Christians are pacifists and shouldn’t be in control of the police powers of governments to punish lawbreakers. The old error of Catholicism in the Middle ages: We have the truth, so let’s violently impose it on others for their own good. This mentality led to the Inquisition and the Crusades.

Now, let’s turn to the next popular argument against our faith:

3. The Bible is true and God exists even though Christians sin.

Romans 2:21-24

Christians should strive to obey God in order to keep others from denying the true faith. The sins of older people can drive younger people from the faith.

Nonetheless, the hypocrisy and sins of Christians don't rip God off His throne in heaven. We should still obey the Sabbath even when members of our families or friends in the Church of God lose their tempers, break promises, get drunk, etc. Prominent minister in the past in our parent organization who kept committing adultery: Didn't refute what he taught in his sermons. Likewise, the sins of traditional Christians in the past don't refute the Bible: Examples the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, the Inquisition, and the Crusades. Otherwise, logically, because the godless Communists slaughtered around 100 million people in the last century, that proves that God exists! Do the sins of atheists prove that God exists and that the Bible is true? The atheists are

in no good historical position to preach tolerance even to the Catholics and Muslims. Tried that, done that.

So in conclusion:

Christians should always be ready to defend their faith rationally. Read books and booklets that explain why it's sensible to believe in God and the Bible. Then if skeptical friends and teachers question us our faith, we will be ready to pass their test.

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