



ALL SAINTS

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Defending the Faith: Presuppositional
Apologetics for the Person in the Pew
Week 4

June 25, 2023

Matt Fender

Overview

- Apologetics is the art of defending the faith.
- It is often associated with evangelism.
- We are going to talk briefly about why we should study apologetics, the types of apologetics, and then look in more detail at one apologetic method in particular.

In a Nutshell

“We don’t conclude God, we start with God. And we show them that if you don’t start with God, your worldview is absurd.” Sye Ten Bruggencate

https://youtu.be/aQKjUzotw_Y

Review: The Authority of Scripture

- How do I know Jesus died for my sins?
- How do I know he was raised from the dead?
- Because the Bible says so.
- This requires me to accept the authority of the Bible.
- It requires me to believe the whole Bible.
- And I believe the Bible is true because of the witness of the Holy Spirit.

Review: The Authority of Scripture

- So, at the core of our class on presuppositional apologetics, we must understand the nature of each person's ultimate authority.
- For the Christian, the ultimate authority is and must be the Bible.
- For the unbeliever, it is ultimately himself.
 - This is true even if he purports to hold to some false transcendental authority.

Review: Worldviews

- A worldview is a network of presuppositions which are not tested by natural science and in terms of which all experience is related and interpreted.
- The worldview of your opponent is the key to defending the faith. We are learning to expose that worldview, point out its inconsistencies, and contrast it with the Christian worldview.

Review: Worldviews

- The three main areas of philosophy that make up a worldview (whether you admit it or not), are metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics.
- In the Christian worldview, God's revelation of himself to us by his Word, and specifically in the Bible, gives us the basis to answer all of these questions.

Review: The Christian Worldview

- Christianity provides answers to the big questions of life.
- It provides a complete worldview.
- It gives us a robust **metaphysics**: God created the World, our purpose is to glorify and enjoy him, and history is moving toward the second coming of Christ and the new heavens and the new Earth.

Review: The Christian Worldview

- Christianity gives us a robust **epistemology**: we can know that God is real and how to relate to him because the Bible is true.
- We can rely on our senses and our reason because the Bible is true.
- We can gain knowledge about the world around us because we can trust our senses and our memories because the Bible is true.

Review: The Christian Worldview

- Christianity gives us a comprehensive system of **ethics**.
- The Bible is true. God's moral law is binding on all people at all times.
- The WLC gives us a robust exposition of it.
- We can derive additional ethical principles from God's law through our reason and experience.

Review: Secular Materialism

- Secular materialism necessarily lacks a robust metaphysics. It necessarily cannot answer the big questions about origins and meaning.
- Because these cannot be answered apart from transcendental authority.

Review: Secular Materialism

- Secular materialism must assume its epistemology.
- It simply assumes that reason and information gained from our senses can be trusted.

Review: Secular Materialism

- Secular materialism has no basis whatsoever for its system of ethics. Ethics and morality are merely asserted. They are necessarily ,matters of opinion.
- There is no answer to the fundamental question of why one person should be obliged to comply with another's moral or ethical standards.
- This cannot be answered without God or something like God.

Review: Secular Materialism

- Typically, the materialist might assert that man's purpose is to be happy.
- Pursuing your own happiness apart from worshipping and serving God is a hopeless and futile exercise.
- There is simply no meaning to be found apart from God.

Review: The Christian Worldview

- Remember that the Christian worldview has presuppositions too. But ours are consistent, and our basic presupposition is that the Bible says so.
- We should freely admit this.

Review: TAG

- The central idea of the class is the transcendental argument for God (“TAG”).
- This is both easy and powerful once you understand it.
- Everyone can use the TAG effectively.

Review: TAG

- Remember: Presuppositional apologetics seeks to defend the faith by exposing the presuppositions of the unbeliever, contrasting them with those of the Christian, and demonstrating the irrationality and absurdity of the unbeliever's position.
- One powerful way to do this is via the **Transcendental Argument for God (TAG)**.

Review: TAG

- How does the TAG work?
- “A transcendental argument begins with any item of experience or belief whatsoever and proceeds, by critical analysis, to ask **what conditions (or what other beliefs) would need to be true in order for that original experience or belief to make sense, be meaningful, or be intelligible to us.**” Bahnsen, Van Til’s Apologetic 501-02.

Review: TAG

- How does the TAG work?
- In other words:
 - What is something you **believe**?
 - How do you **know**?
- This will work with any knowledge.
- But it is not intuitive to most people when you ask them how they know most facts e.g. existence of the chair they are sitting in.

Review: Arguing From Morality

- In this class, we are focusing on one type of TAG, reasoning from **morality**.
- This approach will work with **almost anyone** who is honest. The person you are speaking with does not need to be particularly philosophically-minded or erudite.
- Everyone has basic ideas about **right** and **wrong**.

Review: Arguing From Morality

- Some basic points:
- Without God, or some kind of transcendental **authority**, there is no objective **standard** of **morality**.
- All other approaches are either hopelessly inconsistent, or beg the basic question of by whose authority?
- In other words: “Says who?”

Review: Arguing From Morality

- Part of the inconsistency we seek to expose is that all people have **moral instincts**.
- Nobody walks around seriously contending that everyone is free to do whatever he wants.
- This is because the **law of God** is written on the **hearts** of the reprobate as well as the believer.

Review: Arguing From Morality

- “I don’t believe in absolute morality. It’s about what’s right and wrong ‘for me.’ You have your morality, and I have mine.”
- “Don’t try to impose your morality on me.”
- This is absurd.
- **If there are any moral truths at all, they are necessarily universal.**
- Otherwise they are meaningless.

Review: Arguing From Morality

- “You can’t legislate morality.”
- This is even more absurd.
- The law largely consists of moral maxims given the force of the state.
- e.g. punishment for murder, rape, robbery, larceny, child pornography, racial discrimination in hiring, etc.
- Note that the proponents of such a maxim are usually advocate for legislating some version of their own morality.

Review: Arguing From Morality

- “You can’t legislate morality.”
- What this usually really means it this: “I don’t want there to be laws that prohibit me from engaging in sexual conduct that violates the law of God.”

Review: Arguing From Morality

- For anyone you are talking to, there is some moral belief he holds dear. Even if it is as basic as a rule against murder, theft, or rape.
- Whatever it is, identify something, then ask what the basis of that belief is.
- Perhaps find common ground with the Christian worldview and explain that your moral views are based on the law of God as set forth in the scriptures.

Arguing From Morality

- Example: “Laws that prohibit gender affirming care for children are immoral.”
- “What led you to that conclusion?”
- “What moral rule do you believe in that makes you say that?”
- “What is the authority for that rule?”
- “How do you know?”

Review: Arguing From Morality

- Without transcendental authority, all moral statements are matters of **opinion**.
- The statement “Stealing is wrong” is no more meaningful than “I don’t like theft” without some outside authority to appeal to.
- Otherwise, why do you get to impose your anti-theft opinion on me?

Proverbs 26:4-5

4 Answer not a fool according to his folly,
lest you be like him yourself.

5 Answer a fool according to his folly,
lest he be wise in his own eyes.



Rhea

@TheTweetOfRhea



The existence of God is non debatable. God has never existed and never will.

12:02 PM · Nov 22, 2022 · Twitter for Android

25 Retweets **12** Quote Tweets **239** Likes



Tweet



chaeiry   @itschaeiry · Jun 13



Religion is a mental illness.

You were either groomed as a kid into it, or persuaded at a low and vulnerable time in your life.

There are no sane, happy people who freely choose to become devoutly religious.



1,982



908



1,201



2.4M



Featherless Biped 



@Only2022aa

Your problem is with the clergies. Religion is just a belief. It's how you interpret them that matters.

They contain wisdoms to cherry pick, if we try to understand their intent instead of being told how to think.

What is written by man, should be deciphered by man.
(man=human)

9:49 PM · Jun 13, 2023 · **3,684** Views



Countering Christianity

@FatherFurnace69

Follow

Replying to [@consciousphilos](#)

John 14:28 and 20:17 contradict the idea that Jesus is God though.

6:24 AM · 24 Jun 23 · **30** Views



John 14:28

28 You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I will come to you.' If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.

John 20:17

17 Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”



Imtiaz Mahmood ✓

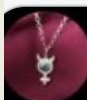
@ImtiazMadmood

We know that Jesus Christ was a fictional character created by the Council of Nicaea in the year 325 AD and modelled after Julius Caesar to pacify the poor in the Roman Empire.



sagga_369

People don't need to be saved or rescued. People need knowledge of their own power and how to access it.



Darwin @DLgodlessbitch · May 7

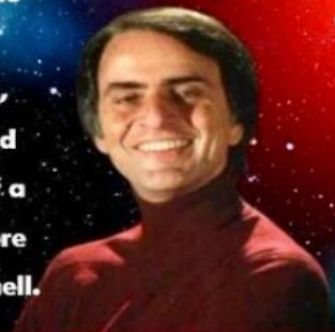
WTAF is wrong with these religions?

ACCORDING TO CHRISTIAN BELIEF



This man, Jeffrey Dahmer, murdered 17 people, converts to Christianity while in prison and is now in heaven with god.

This man, Carl Sagan, astronomer, planetary scientist, cosmologist, astrophysicist, astrobiologist, educator and author, rejects the notion of a Christian god and is therefore now burning for eternity in hell.



OF ALL THE ABSURDITIES OFFERED UP BY RELIGION, NONE EXEMPLIFIES A BETTER EXAMPLE OF INSANITY THAN THE WILLFULL ACCEPTENCE OF THIS BELIEF.

31 187 716 11.4K Tip



napacab @napacab · May 7

That's the reason why I chose hell instead of heaven because the interesting and accomplished people or at least most of them would be down there.

2 6 138 Tip



Queer Capybara 

@capyqueer

Replying to [@CrusaderAlly](#) and [@OrcusNoir](#)

No but kids should have an anti-theist revolutionary education and all religious buildings and monuments should be nationalized or destroyed

8:54 AM · 13 Feb 23 · **60.5K** Views

2 Retweets **83** Quotes **30** Likes

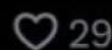
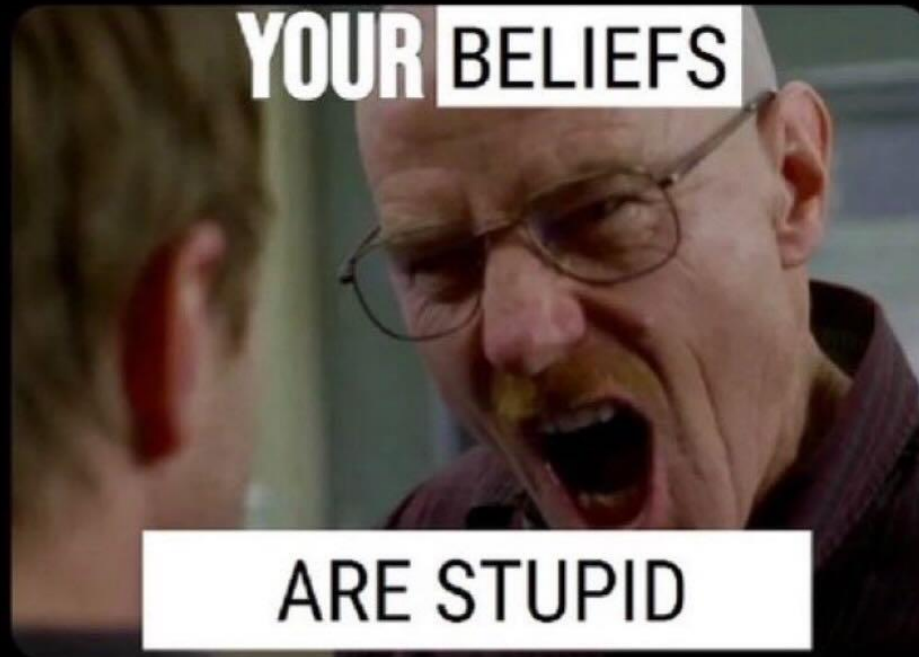




hue and cry over kronstadt @SaveB... · 3d

facts:

- Jesus was not resurrected
- miracles are not real
- your prayers are not being listened to
- you have doubts about your own faith in god and you heavily repress them
- religious indoctrination is a social scourge
- organized religion is disappearing faster and faster



THE STORY OF PASSOVER



Where an allknowing God needed help
to kill the right babies.

The end.



FuturePeace411

@EthanPace16

Replying to [@niccblak](#) and [@meacheww](#)

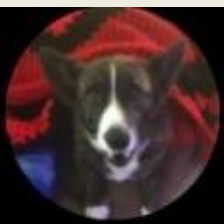
That religion and specifically the abrahamic religions are cons? Yes.

Its called logic.

4:58 PM · 13 Apr 23 · **20** Views

1 Like





Steven(Cube)(he/him)

@CubeSteve



Replying to [@BlackWingedOne](#) [@YourManJCDenton](#) and 3 others

Gospels? Anonymous.

Tacitus? Hearsay.

Josephus? Forgery.

There is no evidence Jesus (either Biblical or Historical) was ever a real person.

11:33 PM · Mar 6, 2023 · **15** Views



tj @tj10001110101 · 45m



Replying to [@DrFrankTurek](#)

There's no such thing as sin, the sinful nature, original sin, ... Sin is a fictional concept designed to make people feel weak. The Bible is nothing more than a collection of campfire stories and legends passed down for generations before people finally wrote them down.





Dave Langer

@davelanger2k

Replying to [@ChristianDexy](#) and [@GodlessLiz](#)

All morality is subjective. Even if you believe your morality comes from a god, gods morality is still that gods subjective opinion.

10:45 PM · 26 Jan 23 · **322** Views

1 Retweet **9** Likes

God does not exist

I've always been an atheist as I was born into an atheist family and thank ~~to~~ for that, but in recent years I've got further to the point where I even get annoyed/sometimes angry when people mention their belief in god and I think they are stupid. Especially when I combat them and they say I'm "lost". Idk if I'm justified in this hatred. You could say I'm not but I don't really care. Just thought I'd give my thoughts.



86



47



Share



Award



Outlaw11091 11h


Religion causes harm. Granting a-moral people an excuse to lie about being normal. Like, "Oh, I could kill you, but then I'd go to Hell."

That's not the reason you shouldn't murder someone. If you need a sky wizard to tell you that, then there's something wrong with you.

Further, a lot of religions allow sinners in if they 'just accept' x God. Imagine all the death row inmates that got their last rites. They're all going to heaven, too.

Like I said in another post, I look forward to the void.



AlanaEvans...  @alanaeva... · Nov 7 ...

Replying to @TaylorRMarshall @ShefferHeffer and @elonmusk

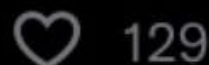
Ban Religion on Twitter. @elonmusk



10



9



129



Scott Cranny @ScottCranny · Nov 7 ...

Replying to @alanaevansxxx
@TaylorRMarshall and 2 others

Religion 1 of the 3 biggest evils in the world that makes some people become so pompous & righteous that they think they have the right to judge others as they believe what they're doing is the "right" way or "god" way.



Tony Soprano

@OhhGabagool

Replying to [@AtheistsL](#) and [@gas_drinking2](#)

Yet Christians still can't prove the existence of god.

Your entire religion is built upon a woman cheating on her husband, and claiming it was a gift from god.

Think about it.

12:41 PM · 30 Nov 22 · [Twitter for Android](#)



Abraham Piper

@abrahampiper

An argument means having premises that lead to a conclusion, right?

If you offer premises that lead to the conclusion of god, then you've made god contingent.

Uh-oh.

5:57 PM · 29 Nov 22 · [Twitter for iPhone](#)

2 Retweets **6** Quote Tweets **129** Likes



Beat the Cult

@BeatTheCult

The Bible tells a story of two sisters who couldn't find husbands to impregnate them, so they got their father drunk and had sex with him instead.

12:54 PM · 23 Nov 22 · [Twitter for iPhone](#)

308 Retweets **61** Quote Tweets **2,112** Likes



HUNTER AVALLONE

@HunterAA6



God hasn't made himself known in any provable way

To be a Christian faith is necessary

Faith is unjustified belief

Clinging to unjustified belief is irrational

Therefore, to be a Christian means to be inherently irrational



sid



@lilbabygandhi



Therapy has stripped religion of any remaining utility. Stop finding God and start finding a therapist to help you grapple with the despair that arises from being alive.

7:05 PM · 3/25/22 · [Twitter for iPhone](#)

21 Retweets **187** Quote Tweets **273** Likes

