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Disciples Church

A Firm Foundation

Structure of a Biblical Defense

Week of July 25, 2018

**DISCUSSION GUIDE**

Take the following claims or arguments against Christianity, and practice looking for arbitrariness, inconsistency, and the unjustified use of preconditions of intelligibility. Practice the “don’t answer/answer” procedure from Proverbs 24:4-5 as you look at the argument, and share the problems you find from using the A.I.P. checklist.

It may be best to take one argument at a time and go around the group, asking each person what they might see in the argument. The following arguments were found online by professed atheists and copied to this document.

1. “Most religions say that God is completely good, knows everything, and is all-powerful. But the world is full of wickedness and bad things keep happening. This can only happen if God is unwilling to prevent evil, in which case he is not good or if God doesn't know about evil, in which case he does not know everything or God can't prevent evil, in which case he is not all powerful or some combination of these. And so there is no being that is completely good, knows everything, and is all powerful. And so, there is no God.”

-What is arbitrarily claimed?

-What is inconsistent?

-What within the atheist worldview is inconsistent with the claims they are making about the Christian worldview?

-What preconditions of intelligibility is the atheist borrowing, and how could you show them this problem?

-Using the “don’t answer/answer” procedure, formulate and share your response to this argument with the group.

1. “For most of human history God was the best explanation for the existence and nature of the physical universe. But during the last few centuries, scientists have developed solutions that are much more logical, more consistent, and better supported by evidence. These explain the world so much better than the existence of God. Far from God being a good explanation for the world, it's God that now requires explaining.”

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1. “No intervening spirit watches lovingly over the affairs of nature (though Newton's clock-winding god might have set up the machinery at the beginning of time and then let it run). No vital forces propel evolutionary change. And whatever we think of God, his existence is not manifest in the products of nature.”

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### This is one of the more unusual arguments used to show that God can't exist: “God is perfectly loving, and God knows that human beings would be happier if they were aware of the existence of a loving God, so if such a God existed, he would make sure that everyone knew it. There are lots of people who aren't aware of the existence of a loving God; therefore, such a God does not exist.”

-What is arbitrarily claimed?

-What is inconsistent?

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5. “So here we have anthropological / archaeological evidence of human religious and spiritual beliefs extending back at least 50,000 years as documented by evidence of actual grave goods buried along with humans suggestive of belief in an afterlife, among other lines of evidence. Fast forward now some 45,000 years later on down the track and all of a sudden Mr. Yahweh makes His grand entrance, albeit to a rather small and uneducated audience. ‘So here I am folks, I'm Mr. Big’ [at least in terms of ego]. ‘I'm your One True God and you will have no other gods before Me - or else!’ Further, Mr. Yahweh only gives His big ‘I Exist’ statement to a tiny band of rather primitive goat / sheep herders in just one tiny geographical part of the inhabited world instead of broadcasting His ‘I exist’ to all peoples in all societies in all inhabited geographical areas (including the Americas, Australia and Asia). Of course at that time He made no mention of His soon to be sidekick and Right-Hand Man, Jesus. What utter pure bovine fertilizer derived nonsense! So come on, let's get really real here - this is story-telling, just myths and fairy tales presented for humans by humans and at that time a very select group of humans at that.”

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-What is inconsistent?

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-What preconditions of intelligibility is the atheist borrowing, and how could you show them this problem?

-Using the “don’t answer/answer” procedure, formulate and share your response to this argument with the group.