

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: How to Answer a Skeptic

SERMON REFERENCE: 1 Peter 3:10-17

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1534

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) We live in a day of increasing skepticism, humanism and scientism.
 - i) Christians are often looked upon like we don't have any sound reason for believing what we believe.
- b) The Bible shows us how we are to respond to the skepticism in this day and age in which we live.
- c) 1 Peter 3:10-17
- d) We are told to keep the faith, but we also need to give it away.
 - i) If we have no desire to give it away, then we ought to give it up because what we have is not the real thing.
 - ii) Any person who has been born of the Spirit of God has an innate desire to share his faith with others.
- e) There are two things that must be true before we're ready to share our faith:
 - i) We must be real.
 - (1) 1 Peter 3:13
 - (a) The word "follower" here is the word from which we get our word "zealot."
 - (i) It means that we are to have a full-hearted, burning, compassionate and overflowing love for God.
 - (2) We're to be a zealot for the Lord Jesus.
 - (3) Our faith is to be a full faith.
 - (4) Our faith is to be a fearless faith.
 - (a) 1 Peter 3:13-14
 - (b) Don't let anyone intimidate you because you are a Christian.
 - (c) They may hurt you, but they can't harm you.
 - (i) There is a difference between hurt and harm.
 - (d) Don't be afraid.
 - (5) We should have a firm faith.
 - (a) Enthroned the Lord Jesus Christ in your heart.
 - (b) 1 Peter 3:15
 - ii) We must be ready.
 - (1) 1 Peter 3:15
 - (2) When we start being real, people will start to ask questions about us.
 - (a) When they see something about us that cannot be explained, they will ask us why we believe as we believe and why we act the way we act.
 - (3) Acts 16:23-31
 - (a) The jailor saw the reality of the faith of Paul and Silas, and it caused him to ask them a question.
 - (4) When was the last time anyone asked you to explain your faith because they saw something in you that they could not explain any other way?
 - f) Do you know how to respond to a skeptic?

- g) Today's message will give four basic ideas that we need to remember as we respond to this skeptical age and are asked what the reason is for the hope that we have.
 - i) 1 Peter 3:15

2) FOREGO THE FOLLY OF FOOLS

- a) Not all skeptics are fools, but some skeptics are fools.
 - i) When the Bible uses the word "fool," it is referring to someone who is morally depraved.
 - (1) Psalm 14:1
- b) Don't argue with someone who shows himself to be a fool.
 - i) Tell him what God's Word says, and then go your way.
 - ii) Proverbs 26:4
 - iii) Don't debate with a fool.
 - iv) Witness to him, but don't get into an argument with him.
 - (1) We're to witness to everyone.
- c) Never argue with a fool because someone who may be standing nearby won't be able to tell who's who.
 - i) Proverbs 26:4
 - ii) Matthew 7:6
- d) Matthew 10:14-15
- e) We shouldn't expend time and energy arguing with someone who is morally degenerate, has a hostility toward the truth, is not really an honest doubter, who does not want to learn, and is really not interested.
 - i) 1 Peter 3:16

3) LEARN THE LIMITS OF LOGIC

- a) There is nothing wrong with logic, and it is a valuable tool; but logic can carry you only so far.
- b) 1 Peter 3:15
 - i) "Give an answer."
 - (1) The word for "answer" here is the word from which we get our word "apologetics."
 - (2) It's doesn't mean to give an apology.
 - (3) It means a reason to answer; as one would give in a court of law.
 - ii) We are to reason.
- c) Isaiah 1:18
- d) Logic is not wrong, but it has limits when you are dealing with a skeptic.
 - i) When you come to a chasm that logic can't leap, then faith must fly.
- e) There are, though, some logical reasons that we ought to give to people for why we believe in God.
 - i) The argument for God comes out of creation.
 - (1) Romans 1:19-20
 - (2) It is logical that out of nothing, nothing comes.

- (3) If we have a creation, then we must also have a Creator.
 - (4) Scientists study the universe, but they only study “what;” they never know “why.”
 - (a) God is the “why.”
 - ii) The argument for God comes out of design.
 - (1) We have an infinitely complex creation.
 - (2) When you have a design, logic says that there must also be a designer.
 - (a) When we see a building, we don’t believe that it just simply happened.
 - (i) We believe that there was an architect.
 - (b) If we find a watch out in a field, we don’t believe that it just happened.
 - (i) We believe that there is a watch maker.
 - (3) Creation has a design.
 - (a) The more complex the design, the greater the designer.
 - (4) God is the giver and author of life.
 - iii) The moral law of the universe says that there is a God.
 - (1) Romans 2:14-15
 - (2) There is a moral sense in the universe that cannot be explained apart from a moral God.
 - (3) All men universally believe that the same things are wrong.
 - (a) They believe that it is wrong to murder, to rape, to steal, to lie.
 - (i) There may be exceptions in some societies, but these are universally held beliefs.
 - (4) Moral law tells us that He is a moral God.
 - f) If someone challenges you to prove there is a God, don’t try.
 - i) We cannot prove that there is a God, and they cannot prove that there is no God.
 - (1) As Christians, we have faith that there is a God.
 - (2) Unbelievers have faith that there is no God.
 - g) What we as Christians believe is reasonable, but it goes beyond reason.
 - i) What we believe is rooted in logic, but it goes beyond logic.
- 4) REMEMBER THE RESOURCE OF REVELATION
- a) If we are to know God, then God will have to reveal Himself to us.
 - i) The finite can never understand the infinite unless the infinite explains Himself and reveals Himself to the finite.
 - b) 2 Peter 1:19-21
 - i) “A more sure word of prophecy.”
 - (1) Peter is talking about God’s revealed truth, which is the Bible.
 - c) We have the inspiration of the Word of God.
 - i) 2 Peter 1:20
 - (1) The word “private” in this passage means “of its own.”

- (2) The word “interpretation” here comes from a Greek word meaning “to untie” or “unfold” or “loose.”
- (3) Peter is saying that Scripture is not like any other book.
- ii) 2 Peter 1:21
 - (1) The word for “moved by the Holy Ghost” is a term that was used when the wind would blow upon the sails of a ship, and that ship would be moved along.
 - (a) The writers of the Scriptures had their sails up, and the Holy Spirit of God just carried them along.
 - (i) This is the inspiration of the Scriptures.
- d) We also have illumination.
 - i) We have to be able to understand the Scriptures, and God knows that.
 - ii) 2 Peter 1:19
 - (1) This Scripture that is inspired also illumines.
 - (a) It shines into our hearts.
 - (b) It gives light.
 - (2) The dark place mentioned in this passage is not referring to the kind of dark where you turn out the lights, but it has a meaning of being dirty, filthy or murky.
 - (a) It shines into a dirty, filthy area.
 - (3) “Until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.”
 - (a) This is talking about the sunrise of the soul.
 - (b) The inspired Word of God shines into your heart (that dark place) and reveals the Lord Jesus.
 - iii) The Holy Spirit takes the curtain of our skepticism, pulls it aside, and pins it with a star of hope and floods our hearts with the Gospel light.
- e) We have the confirmation of the Word of God.
 - i) 2 Peter 1:19
 - (1) Simon Peter had just shared in this chapter what he had seen on the Mount of Transfiguration.
 - (a) And he says that he has something more sure than what he saw and heard; it is the Word of God.
 - (b) There is the confirming power of the Word of God.
 - ii) We don’t believe because we’ve seen miracles or because we’ve had experiences.
 - iii) We don’t believe because someone has proven anything to us.
 - iv) God has revealed Himself in the Bible.
- f) We need to tell the skeptic that the Bible is the Word of God.
 - i) The Bible is power, whether the skeptic believes it or not.
 - ii) We need to use the Word of God.
 - (1) Jeremiah 23:29
 - iii) The Word of God still has power, even with an unbeliever.
 - (1) It is a two-bladed sword.
 - (a) It will either cut him in salvation or cut him in judgment.

g) Hebrews 4:12

5) FORTIFY THE FORCE OF FAITH

a) 1 Peter 3:15

i) There is a hope within us.

ii) We need to fortify our faith.

b) We have the witness within us.

c) Psalm 34:8

d) Let Jesus be real to you.

e) Our faith will be as much caught as it will be taught.

6) CONCLUSION

a) As Christians, we need to hold our heads up high in these days in which we live because we have that blessed assurance.

b) Do you have that assurance that you are saved?

c) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.

d) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.

i) Romans 3:23

ii) Romans 10:9-10

iii) Romans 10:13

iv) Acts 16:31

v) John 3:16