

Being a

**WITNESS**

to an Atheistic Humanist

## Understanding ATHEISM

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Despite protests to the contrary by its faithful adherents, atheism is a form of religion. In 1961, the Supreme Court in the United States described “secular humanism” as a religion and said that a religion need not be based on a belief in the existence of a supreme being.

Those who are now known as “new atheists” have an unwavering faith that there is no evidence for the existence of God, and their numbers are quickly growing. Some even meet regularly for fellowship, where among other things they talk about their belief that God doesn’t exist.

Atheism and humanism are similar, but different. Atheism by itself is merely lack of belief in a deity. Humanism is an attempt at developing an ethical framework without reference to a deity.

Humanism does not require atheism, though it helps, since humanists hold that those who rely on any supernatural claims/deities for their guides have a hard time truly thinking for themselves.

Though they consider themselves intellectual, the Bible calls the professing atheist a “fool” (see Psalm 14:1). This is because he knows intuitively that God exists, but he suppresses the truth in willful ignorance (see Romans 1:18-25).

# Understanding THEIR BELIEFS

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## CONCEPT OF GOD

Atheists/Humanists are typically atheistic and believe that traditional theism, the belief in a personal God who cares about humanity, is unproven and outdated.

## SOURCE OF WRITTEN REVELATION

The Humanist Manifesto I and II. Atheists/Humanists are evolutionists.

## JESUS CHRIST

Atheists/Humanists do not believe in the Atonement. "This sort of symbolic blood-sacrifice is an intellectualized version of a primitive scheme for expiation of guilt. As long as humans have lived in societies they have often sought to invent such schemes. Guilt is such a painful and disorientating emotion that society cannot function if it is allowed free reign." (Edwards, "Life...")

## SIN

Atheists/Humanists do not believe that man is sinful. "Imagine how shocked a friend of mine was when I told her my view of "God's moral standards." I said, "If there were such a god, and these were indeed his idea moral principles, I would be intolerant. After all, God is entitled to his own opinions!" (Edwards).

## SALVATION

Atheists/Humanists believe that man must save himself, and that believing in a Savior is harmful to people. "No deity will save us; we must save ourselves." (Humanist Manifesto II, 1973)

## AFTERLIFE

"Promises of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are both illusionary and harmful. They distract humans from present concerns, from self-actualization, and from

rectifying social injustices... There is no credible evidence that life survives the death of the body.” (Humanist Manifesto II, 1973)

## Referencing BIBLICAL PASSAGES

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GENESIS 1

God created the earth; it did not evolve.

EXODUS 20:3-17

Man is sinful in the sight of God.

PSALM 14:1

Only a fool does not believe in God.

LUKE 12:54-56

This gives examples of people who can understand science, yet not the ways of God.

LUKE 23:24

Christ's death, burial, and resurrection

JOHN 14:6

Christ is the only way of salvation – man cannot save himself.

## Being a WITNESS

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HEBREWS 1:3

Christ is the Atonement for man's sin.

HEBREWS 9:27

After death comes judgment before God.

Though it's the "foolish" preaching of the simple Gospel message that ultimately saves, if people have already dismissed the Bible as truth, or simply profess non-belief in God, then integrating apologetics with the Good News can be a powerful way to witness. A simple conversational framework for witnessing to an Atheist/Humanist is the "3 Cs".

### CREATION

Hebrews 11:6 says; "And without faith it's impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him." One way that God has made His existence plain to everyone in the world is through His creation. When witnessing to an Atheist, you can first ask, "If you were to look at the outward structure of the one of the great Egyptian pyramids, would

you conclude it was created by an intelligent designer or come into existence by chance?" Most would agree that it was intelligently designed. You can continue by saying, "Even if you thought there was a way the stone blocks mechanistically piled themselves into position, if you were to look at the internal passages of the pyramid and see hieroglyphics (a language) painted on the wall, wouldn't this be absolute confirmation in your mind that someone sophisticated created these structures?" After receiving the inevitable "yes", point out, "Well when I look at you externally it seems obvious that you were designed by someone, and internally you have the most sophisticated language system ever imagined in the form of DNA! Do you think from the evidence it's possible that there is a God?"

## CONSCIENCE

You can follow up the previous point with the observation that, "the same God who created you also gave you an internal moral compass to confirm that He exists – it's called your conscience." God has written His Law on the hearts of all people and given us all a conscience whereby we know it's wrong when we lie, steal, blaspheme, etc. but we do it anyway. That's why we can use the Ten Commandments (the Law), to objectively show people (even Atheists) how they have sinned against a holy and just God and are deserving of His wrath. This also helps them understand why God sent His Son Jesus to be the perfect, sinless sacrifice for their sins.

## CROSS

After confirming that God has revealed Himself to all people through His creation and our consciences, you can now point to the cross of Christ as God's demonstration of His love for sinners and the satisfaction of His justice. Explain that Jesus Christ, who is both God and man, paid for their sins taking them and God's wrath against that sinner upon Himself. He shed His blood and died on the cross in their place and then He rose from the grave defeating sin and death, just as the Scriptures foretold that He would. This is the Good News of the Gospel!

As you share your faith, encourage your hearer to not take your word for it. They need to investigate the truth for themselves. At this point, you can offer them a Bible of their own and ask them to read the book of John over the next week and consider these questions:

1. Who is Jesus, based on His own words?
2. If He's telling the truth, what am I going to do about it?

Remember, God's Word is "living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword" (Heb. 4:12). It has the ability to cut through all the resistance and objections that the unbeliever has built up in their heart so they might see the truth about Jesus. Commit to praying for your hearer as they read, that the Holy Spirit would open their eyes and bring life to their hearts.

## Additional RESOURCES

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### PRINT

*The School of Biblical Evangelism* by  
Kirk Cameron and Ray Comfort

(Available at the Harvest London Resource  
Centre and online at [livingwaterscanada.com](http://livingwaterscanada.com))

### WEB

[www.carm.org/atheism](http://www.carm.org/atheism)

For more information on evangelism training  
with The Cross Current, visit:

[www.thecrosscurrent.com](http://www.thecrosscurrent.com)

## About THE CROSS CURRENT

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The Cross Current is a local missions ministry and outreach broadcast bringing glory to God's Name by unifying His Church in His Gospel and helping pastors equip all Christians under their care to be Christ's witnesses everyday, everywhere, to everyone, as one body serving in accordance with the various gifts He has given each.



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