

Evangelism #4:

TheGodTest – Side A & One2One Booklet

THEGODTEST – Side A (Atheist or Agnostic)

Rationale

- When you ask the first question of THEGODTEST, if their answer is “no”, then you continue to Side A, Question 2.
- If they do not believe in God, they are likely to want to avoid a discussion with a Christian, especially one that they perceive is out evangelizing. THEGODTEST has proven to be one of the most effective strategies at getting past that initial negative reaction by simply engaging skeptics in a conversation.

Introductory Questions: 1-2

QUESTION 1: DO YOU BELIEVE IN GOD?

- If their answer is "no" or "uncertain", then ask if they would mind answering 9 more questions.
- Flip the test to Side A, for atheist or agnostic. Then proceed with Question 2.

QUESTION 2: WHAT ARE THE MAIN REASONS YOU DO NOT BELIEVE IN (OR ARE UNCERTAIN ABOUT) GOD?

- This question will give you a basic idea of why they do not believe in God.
- In most cases, people start out early in life with some basic belief in God and then slowly abandon it.
- Many times a single issue or doubt grew into an obstacle that obscured their original knowledge of God. You need to be prepared to respond to this common issue.

- **Common Reasons**

Three of the most common reasons for why people do not believe in God are the following:

- **Evidence** - "There is no evidence for the existence of God."

- **Evolution** - "Evolution and science in general have disproven the need for God."
- **Evil** - "Evil and suffering in the world demonstrate the absence of God."

In this part of the God Test you will experience the most negative emotion and reaction.

- **Remember**

- You want to ask the first 8 questions before presenting your answers. If they ask you a question for clarity, then certainly respond. However, you want to ask all of the questions before responding, so you can better understand their worldview and the reasons for their atheism.

Diagnostic Questions: 3-7

The next five questions help you to determine what the listener actually believes. Many people's true beliefs are quite different from their conscious beliefs. Their answers to the questions will also help them to understand the implications of not believing in God.

QUESTION 3: DO YOU FIND ANY ULTIMATE MEANING OR PURPOSE IN THE UNIVERSE?

The need for purpose and meaning resides deep within the human psyche. This question is intended to help a person search for the source of these longings. As they think through this question, you can demonstrate that our only hope of finding our purpose is through knowing our creator. You can also show that the design (purpose) evident in nature demonstrates that God does exist, so we are His creation meant to live for His intended purpose.

- **Response**

- If there is no God then there is no Ultimate meaning or purpose in life. If we came from nothing and are headed for annihilation and nonexistence, then concepts like purpose and meaning are merely tricks to keep us happy by ignoring the truth of our real situation.
- Some respond to this challenge by attempting to create their own meaning and purpose.
- Fortunately, nature itself clearly reveals that purpose is

embedding in the very foundation of our world.

To illustrate, one of the classic arguments for the existence of God is called the Teleological Argument or the argument for purpose and design. It states that nature displays clear evidence for design, since virtually every detail points to intentionality.

- Yet, without God this sense would simply be an illusion, since no objective bases for it would exist. However, modern science has further confirmed over the past century that countless details of nature were clearly designed for the purpose of supporting life.
- Moreover, recent advances in biology have reconfirmed that life itself was the product of an intelligent designer.

QUESTION 4: HOW DO YOU ACCCOUNT FOR THE LAWS OF NATURE?

This question closely relates to the previous one, for people have to assume that either some eternal intelligence created our universe for some divine purpose or some eternal set of laws created everything that exists. Something must just fundamentally exist without cause. By pointing this fact out, you further help a person to see the necessity of recognizing God's existence.

- **Response**

- Some physicists claim that everything could have spontaneously appeared, "out of nothing."
- Yet, they often fail to explain that such a creation event requires the laws of physics to already be in place in the midst of that "nothingness."

- **Remember**

- The atheist position is as much based on faith as ours. The main difference being that ours is far more consistent with reality.
- Do not become too bogged down defending something you are not confident in yourself. Apologetics is not the goal - winning the soul is the goal.

QUESTION 5: DOES EVIL EXIST?

- The problem of evil is by far the most frequent reason that people use to defend why they do not believe in God.
- **Response**
 - Since the atheist believes that God does not exist, then the weight and responsibility for evil falls where it rightly belongs: on human beings.
 - Moreover, without a divine lawgiver, no objective criteria for evil can exist.
 - God gave people the choice to either trust Him or define for themselves how they should live.
 - Their act of rebellion released evil into the world, and that evil permeates society to the very depths of people's hearts
 - As Christians are transformed by God, they can then come together in community to overcome the evil in the world through modeling Jesus' love and power.
 - In contrast, atheism does not take away the pain, just the hope of a better future beyond this life.
- **Remember**
 - Evil is a very emotional issue with people. They are usually focused not on a detached third party issue but a very personal offense at what they or their loved one has experienced.
 - You will almost certainly address this topic when you preach the Gospel: God became man in Christ and suffered for us.

QUESTION 6: WHAT IS THE BASIS FOR YOUR MORALITY?

- One of the most important apologetic principles is called the Moral Argument for the existence of God.
- **Response**
 - The atheist must realize that his or her moral values have no basis without God.

- Atheists often argue that they can be good without God. In truth, they can be respectable parents, members of society, and productive citizens.
- However, the true reason they often act properly is not because they are inherently good without religion but because God created them in His image.
- Moreover, most atheists who live upstanding moral lives were raised in societies strongly influenced by Christian teaching.
- As another common argument, people may rightly mention that Christians have often acted immorally by any reasonable standard. This point is certainly valid.
- However, history has shown when Christians have faithfully served Christ, they have lived markedly upstanding lives, and they have inspired entire societies to live more justly and compassionately,
- **Remember**
 - The critics of religion are not completely wrong in their condemnations. As mentioned, plenty of evil acts and atrocities have been done in the name of God and religion.
 - Here is where you should agree with the skeptic but point out that the problem lies not with religion but with our fallen human nature.
 - Not all religions are the same - 9/11 certainly taught us that fact. The heart of Christ's teaching is love and forgiveness, even of our enemies.

QUESTION 7: DO YOU THINK HUMAN LIFE IS SPECIAL COMPARED TO ANIMAL OR PLANT LIFE?

- This question highlights the fact that we are not simply animals. Regardless of their evolutionary beliefs (which are universally held by atheists), humanity is different from animals or plants.

Here, the conflict of what someone thinks in their head and knows in their heart comes into focus. Helping to expose this inconsistency can create tensions in their atheistic worldview. In addition, since evolution represents the foundation of the secular cosmic narrative, effectively challenging it can cause their entire belief

system to collapse. Then, they could be very willing to seriously consider the Christian faith (see **Biology apologetics**).

- **Response**

God created man in His image with many distinctions which set us apart:

- Transcendent thought (thinking about thinking)
- Moral framework, which can operate against our primal instincts
- Creativity and ingenuity, which can produce advanced technologies
- Complex thought and communication
- Ability to walk upright, hands of high dexterity to handle tools, vocal cords which can produce complex speech
- Interconnected social structures, which can lead to advanced civilizations
- Eternal nature, which is designed for communion with God

- **Remember**

- When talking to an atheist, you have to pick your battles wisely. By asking these questions you have a range of options once your time to speak comes.
- Evolution might be one the most obvious areas of weakness in their skeptical worldview. However, starting a debate on it may be unfruitful, if they have a vested interest in believing it.

Response Questions: 8-10

QUESTION 8: HOW CERTAIN ARE YOU THAT GOD DOES NOT EXIST? (Scale 1-10)

- This question will help you determine the person's commitment to their atheism/unbelief. Any answer less than a 10 (on the scale of 1-10) means that technically they are an agnostic and not an atheist.
- Their response will suggest how open they are to hearing Christian perspective.

- **Remember**

- Once you have a chance to give a response to their answers, you might find them shifting their response to this question.
- Your personal testimony could prove particularly impactful if you were once agnostic or went through a period of serious doubts.

QUESTION 9: HAVE YOU EVER EXPLORED WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT THESE QUESTIONS? (Would you be willing to hear a “theistic” response?)

- This is the question where you are seeking permission to respond to their answers from a Biblical/Theistic worldview. If you have listened to their answers, they will usually allow you an opportunity to respond.

- **Response**

You can structure your response around the major topics brought up in the previous questions:

- **Purpose** - God created/designed the Universe, and us, for a purpose. The evidence for this truth comes from the fine tuning of the Universe, the design evident throughout nature, and the amazing design and complexity of life.
- **Evil** - Science alone cannot tell us the difference between good and evil.
- **Morality** - It is critical that a person understand that morality must have a foundation.
- **Certainty** - For some, certainty about the existence or nonexistence of God is unattainable. Yet, God gave the gift of certainty to humanity through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, three days after His death. Because of His resurrection from the dead in history we can be certain:
 1. God exists: This supernatural act demonstrates that there is more to our existence than mere natural forces and the material world. The miracle of the resurrection gives proof that God exists and that He acts in the world He created.

2. Life after death: Something awaits beyond this life.
3. Christ's identity as God's Son is verified: Jesus is the unique representation of God on earth (not God's biological son).
4. There will be a judgment of all who ever lived.

QUESTION 10: MAY I PRAY FOR YOU?

- Even if the person does not currently desire to believe in God, they may allow you to pray for them.
- Pray briefly but sincerely.
- **Remember**
 - Do not be surprised if this message is not initially received.
Those that are committed atheists are often as determined to not believe as much as a believer in God has determined to believe.
 - The most important goal is that a credible witness has taken place.

THE ONE2ONE BOOKLET

1. Why use the One2One book for evangelism?

- Many already have a Church background but have never been born again or developed strong foundations.
- It majors on the foundation.
- It's very simple to follow.
- It's personal.
- You can use it to start a regular meeting with people.
- It is a great tool for teaching others to minister the Gospel.

2. Tips to Remember:

- It can be used in a one on one setting, or with a group.
- Do not assume that because they attend church regularly that this material is common knowledge. Remember there are scores of

people who go to church and believe in Jesus but have never repented and trusted Jesus as Savior and Lord.

- Let the people you are talking to be a part of the lesson. For example, have them read the scriptures.
- Make sure you ask all the application questions. Don't answer for them; rather wait for their response. Remember the S.A.L.T. method while working through the material.
- Always be humble and respectful. Listen well to their thoughts, opinions, beliefs, and even emotions. Resist the urge to correct wrong beliefs they may share. Listen well to the Holy Spirit. He will give you insight on how to reach a person's heart often with inspired questions.
- Read all the text in the book and don't skip over anything. The information is in there for a reason.

HOMEWORK

- Watch the TheGodTest Side A Video at www.thegodtest.org.
- Use THEGODTEST to talk to two people about God and the Gospel.
- Help someone to go through the One2One Booklet.