

## Youth Group 10/14/20 - Atheism

- Review from last time:
  - Everyone is religious. We all worship something, even atheists.
  - Learning about other religions...
    1. helps us witness to other people.
    2. shows us what is vital about Christianity.
    3. helps us think about and understand our own beliefs better.
    4. gives us confidence in what we believe.
  - 4 things that Christianity differs from all other religions:
    1. Christianity is based on objective and verifiable historical fact
    2. Jesus is God
    3. We are saved by faith and not by works
    4. The Trinity

### Atheism

- Atheism – Very simple beliefs: there is no \_\_\_\_\_
  - Difference between atheist and agnostic: Agnostics don't believe we can know whether or not God exists. Whether God exists or not doesn't matter to them. "Who cares?"
- Traditional Atheism
  - Historically speaking, Atheism is very \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Traditional atheism was very quiet and kept to itself.
  - They sought to coexist with other religions.
  - Had sophisticated arguments by great thinkers: Nietzsche, Sartre, Freud, Camus, Marx, Hume...
- New Atheism
  - Generally characterized by these things
    1. \_\_\_\_\_ - very excited about being atheists and want you to know
    2. \_\_\_\_\_ - specifically deny Christianity
    3. \_\_\_\_\_ - arguments are mostly scientific and not philosophical
    4. \_\_\_\_\_ - many believe Christians should be punished for their beliefs
    5. Unsophisticated – all their scientific arguments have been refuted many times over
  - In summary, new atheists are \_\_\_\_\_.
- Remember, as we go forward with different religions, some important questions we want to ask are:
  - What does this religion believe...
    - ...about God?
    - ...about man?
    - ...is wrong with the world?
    - ...has been/is being/will be done to make it right?
    - ...is the source for knowing these things?
- Problems with atheism
  1. \_\_\_\_\_ - They have no objective standard by which to truly call an action good or bad, what do they mean by "good"? people's opinion? Then there is no good.

2. \_\_\_\_\_ - why is there something rather than nothing? How did the universe begin/how did we get to today?

3. Determinism - if nothing spiritual exists everything we do is mechanistic (just molecules running into each other) and we should not be held responsible for our actions.

4. \_\_\_\_\_ - if nothing spiritual exists, there is nothing that makes me "me".

5. Consistency - If our mind evolved to survive then we can't trust it because it didn't evolve to find truth, only to believe whatever would help it stay alive.

6. \_\_\_\_\_ - Survival of the fittest tries to get rid of weak genes. Original atheism promoted racism. Darwin believed "inferior races" would be wiped out. The full title of Darwin's work on evolution: "On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life." Examples of weak genes.

7. \_\_\_\_\_ - Nothing is objectively evil. Many will argue that there can't be a god because there is evil in the world, but there is no evil without a God who has determined what is evil.

8. \_\_\_\_\_ - There is no point to anything. Goals require a mind, so if there is any purpose to the universe there must be a God.

9. \_\_\_\_\_ - Love does not exist. It is merely a chemical change in the brain. We think we "love," but really, we just have an evolutionary emotion to keep ourselves alive. How many atheist hospitals can you name?

10. The Unseen - Most atheists say only material objects exist. What about thoughts, numbers, existence, concepts, etc.?

- Bottom line: Atheism does not ultimately explain why we are here, what gives life meaning, what happens to us after we die, why there seems to be some reported miracles, why we have an intrinsic conscience for right and wrong, why we seek for purpose and justice, why atheistic countries tend to commit the most atrocities, etc.

- Christianity's belief: There is a God.

- What is the evidence for this being the case? Think about the problems with atheism.

## Study Guide

- Atheism – There is no \_\_\_god\_\_\_\_\_
- Historically speaking, Atheism is very \_\_\_\_\_uncommon\_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_Boldness\_\_\_\_\_ - very excited about being atheists and want you to know
2. \_\_\_Focus\_\_\_\_\_ - specifically deny Christianity
3. \_\_\_Science\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_Persecution\_\_\_\_\_ - believe Christians should be punished for their beliefs

- In summary, new atheists are \_\_\_spicy\_\_\_\_\_.

- Remember, as we go forward with different religions, some important questions we want to ask are:

- What does this religion believe...

...about God? There is no god

...about man? Man is the random result of molecular activity

...is wrong with the world? Need to weed out weakness in the world

...has been/is being/will be done to make it right? Natural selection>survival of the fittest

...is the source for knowing these things? Science, Darwin

- Problems with atheism

1. \_\_\_Ethics\_\_\_\_\_ - They have no objective standard by which to truly call an action good or bad, what do they mean by "good"? people's opinion? Then there is no good.
2. \_\_\_Existence\_\_\_\_\_ - why is there something rather than nothing? How did the universe begin/how did we get to today? No answer.
3. Determinism - if nothing spiritual exists everything we do is mechanistic (just molecules running into each other) and we should not be held responsible for our actions.
4. \_\_\_Identity\_\_\_\_\_ - if nothing spiritual exists, there is nothing that makes me "me"
5. Consistency - If our mind evolved to survive then we can't trust it because it didn't evolve to find truth, only to believe whatever would help it stay alive.
6. \_\_\_Evolution\_\_\_\_\_ - Survival of the fittest tries to get rid of weak genes. Original atheism promoted racism, Darwin believed inferior races would be wiped out. The full title of Darwin's work on evolution: "On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life."
7. \_\_\_Evil\_\_\_\_\_ - Nothing is objectively evil. Many will argue that there can't be a god because there is evil in the world, but there is no evil without God.
8. \_\_\_Purpose\_\_\_\_\_ - There is no point to anything. Goals require a mind.
9. \_\_\_Love\_\_\_\_\_ - Love does not exist. It is merely a chemical change in the brain. We think we "love," but really we just have an evolutionary emotion to keep ourselves alive. How many atheist hospitals can you name?
10. The Unseen - Most atheists say only material objects exist. What about thoughts, numbers, existence, concepts, etc.?