

Why an Atheist?

Reasonable atheists eventually become theists because they *are* reasonable; and furthermore, because they are honest. They are willing to follow the evidence wherever it leads; and in many cases the evidence comes to the atheist most coherently and well-presented through the writings of believers in God.

“C.S. Lewis was an atheist until he read Chesterton’s book, *The Everlasting Man*, but he wasn’t afterwards...”

Most common statements and questions:

1. I believe in Evolution. How can you believe in a “young earth?”
2. I don’t see how you can take the Bible literally.
3. How could a loving God send someone to Hell?
4. How do you know your religion is the right one?
5. There is no evidence for God’s existence.
6. Where did God come from?
7. Believing in God is the same as believing in the Tooth Fairy, Santa Clause, and the Flying Spaghetti Monster.
8. Christianity arose from an ancient and ignorant people who didn’t have science.
9. Christian’s only believe in Christianity because they were born in a Christian culture. If they’d been born in India they would have been Hindu instead.
10. The gospel doesn’t make sense: God was mad at mankind because of sin so he decided to torture and kill his own Son so that he could appease his own pathological anger.

Most effective defense of faith:

1. Historical Study of the Gospels.
2. Honest Philosophical Reasoning.
3. Reasonable Believers. Disengage emotion rebuttals.
4. Evidence For The Resurrection
5. Genuine love, respect and interest in a personal relationship with the person.
6. Change your goal from winning to learning, and discovering truth together.
7. Disregard the presupposed idea that your opponent is evil, mean, and hateful.
8. Admit that you are not all knowing.

It has been the obnoxious position of some (not all) atheists that in order to believe in God, one must have a significant lack of intelligence and/or reason. Most atheists believe that modern science has ruled out the possibility of the existence of God. For this reason, they tag believers with a lack of up-to-date knowledge and critical thinking skills. (Of course, the question of the existence of a God who is outside of the physical universe is fundamentally *philosophical* question—not a scientific question.) Intelligent and reasonable believers in God, who can engage atheistic arguments with clarity and logic, become a great challenge to atheists who hold this shallow attitude towards the existence of God.

Ironically, it was C.S. Lewis' influential defenses of Christianity that would eventually prompt countless conversions to Christianity—and his influence continues today unhindered. Among the Lewis-led converts from atheism is former feminist and professor of philosophy, Lorraine Murray, who [recalls](#):

“In college I turned my back on Catholicism, my childhood faith, and became a radical, gender-bending feminist and a passionate atheist Reading Lewis, I found something that I must have been quietly hungering for all along, which was a reasoned approach to my childhood beliefs, which had centered almost entirely on emotion.

Lee Strobel, the former legal editor of the Chicago Tribune and author of the influential work, [The Case For Christ](#), is a prime example of what happens when an honest atheist sets out to establish once and for all whether the claims of the Gospels are reliable or not.

Strobel writes at the end of his investigation in *The Case For Christ*:

“I’ll admit it: I was ambushed by the amount and quality of the evidence that Jesus is the unique Son of God. . . . I shook my head in amazement. I had seen defendants carted off to the death chamber on much less convincing proof! The cumulative facts and data pointed unmistakably towards a conclusion that I wasn’t entirely comfortable in reaching.”

Antony Flew was one of the world’s most famous atheists of the 20th century. He debated William Lane Craig and others on the existence of God. But eventually his recognition of the profound order and complexity of the universe, and its apparent fine-tuning, was a decisive reason for the renowned atheist to change his mind about God’s existence.

In [a fascinating interview](#) with Dr. Ben Wiker, Flew explains:

“There were two factors in particular that were decisive. One was my growing empathy with the insight of Einstein and other noted scientists that there had to be an Intelligence behind the integrated complexity of the physical Universe.”

What does the Bible say about giving a defense?

1. Jude 1:3 Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people.
2. 1 Peter 3:15 but honor the Messiah as Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to give a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.
3. 2 Corinthians 10:5 We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ
4. Psalm 94:16 Who will rise up for me against the wicked? Who will take a stand for me against evildoers?
5. Titus 1:9 He must be devoted to the trustworthy message we teach. Then he can use these accurate teachings to encourage people and correct those who oppose the word.
6. 2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.
7. Philippians 1:16 The latter do so out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel.
8. Acts 17: While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ So he reasoned in the synagogue with both Jews and God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸ A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to debate with him.
9. Acts 26 - Then Agrippa said to Paul, "Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?" Paul replied, "Short time or long—I pray to God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am.