

ATHEISM: BUMPING INTO REALITY – REALITY ON OUR SIDE (Video 10:56)**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Do you have any friends or acquaintances who are atheists? Have you engaged in conversations with them about their beliefs? How did it go?
2. How did you first come to believe that God exists?
3. What things have solidified your belief that God exists after your initial belief?
4. Here is how the American Atheists organization defines atheism: “Atheism is not an affirmative belief that there is no god nor does it answer any other question about what a person believes. It is simply the rejection of the assertion that there are gods...To be clear: Atheism is not a disbelief in gods or a denial of gods; it is a lack of belief in gods.”¹
 - What is your response to this claim about atheism? How would you discuss this with someone who said it in conversation?
 - How is atheism a belief about God?
5. In this class, Greg Koukl says, “The reason we believe in God is because he is the best explanation for the way things are.”
 - What things have you observed that point to God as the best explanation?
 - How do these things you’ve observed counter the atheist’s worldview?
 - How could you use your observation of the way things are to discuss God’s existence with your atheist friends?
6. Why is atheism an attractive worldview for people? What do you think they get out of their belief that God does not exist?
7. Read Psalm 14:1. Why does this verse characterize atheism as foolish?
8. Read Romans 1:18–25. How does this passage describe what atheists are doing and how does it correlate with Psalm 14:1?
9. Do you personally know any Christians who were formerly atheists? What led them to convert to Christianity?

ACTION POINTS:

1. This week read “Atheism Isn’t Simply a Lack of Belief” by Tim Barnett:
<https://www.str.org/w/atheism-isn-t-simply-a-lack-of-belief>
2. Listen to the first 17 minutes of this podcast:
<https://www.str.org/w/a-clarification-on-the-definition-of-atheism>

¹ <https://www.atheists.org/activism/resources/about-atheism/>

ATHEISM: BUMPING INTO REALITY – BUMP OF STUFF (Video 10:57)**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. The starting observation that both theists and atheists can agree on is that stuff exists. Why is it important to begin your conversation with something about the universe that both you and your atheist friend agree on?
2. Can you think of a worldview that denies that stuff exists? How would you engage with that worldview about God's existence?
3. Why is the challenge "prove to me that God exists" difficult to engage with? What questions could you ask to get a more specific challenge to engage with?
 - Digging Deeper: The Kalam Cosmological Argument is a classic argument for the existence of God based on the beginning of the universe. Here is the argument:
 - Premise 1: Everything that begins to exist has a cause.
 - Premise 2: The universe began to exist.
 - Conclusion: Therefore, the universe has a cause.
4. What evidence do we have from science that proves the universe had a beginning? (If you can't think of any, check out this article: <https://apologeticsbible.holmanbibles.com/evidence-for-god-cosmological-argument>)
5. Read Romans 1:18–25. How does this passage speak into the atheist worldview? What does this passage claim is happening to those who suppress the truth that God exists?
6. What philosophical reasons do we have that indicate the universe had a beginning? (If you can't think of any, check out this article: <https://crossexamined.org/philosophical-arguments-universe-beginning/>)
7. How would you respond to this objection: "If everything that exists has a cause, then what caused God?"
8. Another argument from the stuff we observe in the universe is called the Teleological Argument. It goes like this:
 - Premise 1: Every design has a designer.
 - Premise 2: The universe exhibits design.
 - Conclusion: Therefore, the universe has a designer.
9. What evidence do we have from science that the universe is designed? (If you can't think of any, check out this short video: <https://www.str.org/w/a-finely-tuned-universe-necessity-chance-or-design>)
10. Even if it is possible for things to pop into existence out of "no thing" (nothing), why is that not the most plausible explanation? Have you ever observed something popping into existence out of nothing?
11. Read Genesis 1:1–31. How does this passage harmonize with the Cosmological and Teleological Arguments?

ACTION POINTS:

1. Watch this four-minute video on the Kalam Cosmological Argument: <https://www.str.org/w/a-simple-explanation-of-the-cosmological-argument>
2. Read this classic argument for God's existence by Thomas Aquinas: <https://aquinasonline.com/first-way>

ATHEISM: BUMPING INTO REALITY – BUMP OF BAD (Video 12:43)**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Why is it important to establish that if something is broken, that means there is a purpose or a way the thing is supposed to be? How does this apply to the problem of evil?
2. Why do you think the most frequently raised objection to the existence of God is the problem of evil?
3. What is a non-Christian answer to why evil exists in our world? What is a non-Christian solution to the problem of evil?
4. What questions can you ask to help people see that moral truths are objective, not subjective?
5. Why does there need to be universal, moral laws for people to recognize how things should or ought to be?
6. How would you respond to this objection: “Morality is part of human evolution. Our sense of right and wrong has evolved within humanity, aiding in our survival as a species. There is no God who determines right and wrong. Each culture has their own sense of right and wrong, and that is just part of how morality continues to evolve in different groups.”
7. If atheists believe that there is no objective moral right and wrong, why do they get upset or hurt when evil things happen to them? How can you use questions to point out this inconsistency to them?
8. Read Romans 2:12–16. How does this passage inform our understanding of how human beings know right and wrong?
9. How could you use the existence of objective morality as evidence for God’s existence?
10. What is the solution to the problem of evil in the world according to a Christian worldview?
11. Is there a worldview with a better solution to the problem of evil? If so, what is it and why is it better than the Christian view?

ACTION POINTS:

1. This week read/watch this article/video on how to respond to the problem of evil:
<https://www.str.org/w/how-to-respond-to-the-problem-of-evil>
2. This week, ask one of your non-Christian friends how they make sense of the evil in the world. What is their answer to why evil exists, and what do they think should be done about it?

ATHEISM: BUMPING INTO REALITY – BUMP OF ME (Video 13:05)**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Read Genesis 1:26–31. What roles did God give to human beings in this passage?
2. What does it mean to be created in the image and likeness of God?
3. Christianity has an answer for why all human beings are valuable. The image of God is what grounds the basis for human equality. It is the one thing that all human beings share. How do atheists ground human equality?
4. What events in history have shown that atheism leads to human inequality? How did the atheistic view of humanity lead to these examples of inequality?
5. According to Darwin, natural selection consists of slight, advantageous modifications that help a species adapt to its environment. With this in mind, why does the atheistic worldview have difficulty explaining the universal feeling of guilt?
6. What is the ultimate purpose of human history according to atheism?
How does atheism inform human purpose?
 - Does this view of human purpose satisfy your longings for significance and meaning? Why or why not?
7. What is the ultimate purpose of human history according to Christianity? Where is all of this going?
 - How does knowing the purpose of humanity inform you to your individual purpose?
8. Because Christianity is the way the world really is, we can point out longings for purpose and meaning in all human beings. How could you point out the desire for purpose and meaning to an atheist? What aspects of their life could you point out that show they desire an ultimate purpose, not just death and non-existence?
9. Read Romans 3:1–31. How does this passage explain human guilt? What is the remedy to human guilt according to this passage?
 - Does Romans 3 accurately describe the world you have experienced? Why or why not?
10. Which of the three points from Greg Koukl do you think is most helpful when discussing reality with an atheist?
 - Humans have (are) a soul.
 - Humans are beautiful.
 - Humans are broken.

ACTION POINTS:

1. This week read “How Did You Get a Soul?” by Tim Barnett:
<https://www.str.org/w/how-did-you-get-a-soul-creationism-versus-traducianism>
2. This week read “Atheism’s Empty Soul” by Alan Shlemon: <https://www.str.org/w/atheism-s-empty-soul>

ATHEISM: BUMPING INTO REALITY – SUMMARY (Video 7:55)**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Why is it effective to appeal to our human experience in the world to answer the question of whether or not God exists?
2. Why does Greg Koukl's method in this course not use the Bible as evidence for God's existence with atheists?
3. What do atheists believe is the best tool for knowing truth? How can you use their favorite tool to give evidence for God's existence?
4. Which of the three bumps do you find most compelling? Why?
 - Bump of stuff.
 - Bump of bad.
 - Bump of me.
5. Let's practice!
 - How would you respond to this objection: "There is an obscene amount of evil in the world. I cannot believe in a God who would idly sit by and do nothing about the human suffering that permeates our world."
 - How would you respond to this objection: "Human beings create their own purpose and meaning for their life. I am perfectly satisfied believing that the only purpose for my existence is what I make out of my life. I don't need God for purpose."
 - How would you respond to this objection: "The universe does not need a maker in order to exist."
6. What are some good questions that you could ask your atheist friends in order to expose the deficiency of their worldview?
7. Other than the 3 bumps, are there other ways that Christianity makes sense of the world that atheism does not?
8. Share what you most enjoyed about this course and how it will help you to share the truth with your atheist friends.
9. Take some time to pray together for your atheist friends, and discuss when and how you will share the truth of Christianity with them.

ACTION POINTS:

1. This week read "Why I Left Atheism for Christianity" by Jon Noyes:
<https://www.str.org/w/why-i-left-atheism-for-christianity>
2. This week read "Atheists Should Accept the Grim Truth Wherever They Find It" by Amy Hall:
<https://www.str.org/w/atheists-should-accept-the-grim-truth-wherever-they-find-it>