

OpenTheo

Quick Answers to Common Atheist Objections, Part 1

September 3, 2022



Knight & Rose Show - Wintery Knight and Desert Rose

Wintery Knight and Desert Rose discuss how to respond to common atheist objections to Christianity, in a minute or two. We cover these topics: insufficient evidence, evolution, status of women, days of Genesis, copying from ancient myths, and forced labor. This is the first of a three-part series.

Please subscribe, like, comment, and share.

Show notes: <https://winteryknight.com/2022/09/03/knight-and-rose-show-episode-21-quick-answers-to-common-atheist-objections-part-1>

Subscribe to the audio podcast here: <https://knightandrose.podbean.com/>

Audio RSS feed: <https://feed.podbean.com/knightandrose/feed.xml>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@knightandroseshow>

Rumble: <https://rumble.com/c/knightandroseshow>

Odysee: <https://odysee.com/@KnightAndRoseShow>

Music attribution: Strength Of The Titans by Kevin MacLeod Link:
<https://incompetech.filmmusic.io/song/5744-strength-of-the-titans> License:
<https://filmmusic.io/standard-license>

Transcript

[Music] Welcome to the Knight & Rose Show, where we discuss practical ways of living out an authentic Christian worldview. Today's topic is Quick Answers to Common Atheist Objections. I'm Wintery Knight.

And I'm Desert Rose. So for today's episode, we're going to talk about several common objections that atheists use to oppose Christianity. I'm not talking about well-thought-out questions or concerns resulting from in-depth analyses of cosmology or biology or

philosophy.

We discuss those types of things in other episodes. I'm thinking more of pithy mantras that atheists seem to have heard from other atheists, which they then repeat without really giving it much thought. Because atheists may not be genuinely interested in hearing evidence for Christianity, or perhaps because the circumstances don't always lend themselves to an in-depth response at that moment.

A Christian may only have a minute or less to reply in a way that causes the atheist to think. That's the type of scenario we'd like to help our listeners be ready for in this episode. So why don't we get started? Okay, I will play the role of skeptic, and I will give you some common objections, and you can try to give me something quick that will cause me to think about how I formed my beliefs.

So here's my first objection. There's no evidence for God's existence. Yes, I have heard this before as well.

My response is usually something along the lines of "interesting." So what are some of the arguments for God's existence that you've studied and found unpersuasive? Along those same lines, I might ask, "Which books or authors have you read when you were researching the evidence for God's existence?" I mean, these types of questions really get at the common problem that a lot of atheists will make claims like this. There's no evidence for God's existence without having done any research, without really having looked into it. And quite honestly, that is just a silly claim.

And so these questions are going to expose that. That's an excellent response. Those questions kind of get at Greg Coeckel's question, "How did you arrive at that conclusion?" Which is an excellent question.

There are a lot of different ways to ask that question. I'd also probably ask, "How would you test for the existence of God?" You must have some idea for how you could test for God's existence if you're rejecting all of the arguments and evidence that's out there as non-evidence. Right.

So they're basically making a claim here that they're saying, "I know for a fact that there's no evidence for God's existence." So we're justified in saying, "Well, what sort of investigation have you done?" Imagine I had a son and I said to my son, "If you graduate at the top of your class in high school and you get admitted to Harvard, I will buy you a car, any one that you want." And he said, "Okay." And he graduated at the top of his class and he said, "Okay, I want a car." And I said, "Okay, go ahead and pick one out." And he just said, "That one." And I'd say, "Okay, sort of tell me, explain to me why you picked that one." And he said, "Because it's the best." And I said, "Well, what sort of research have you done to look at other cars?" And he said, "All the research." And then I said, "How do you know that other cars aren't faster or more reliable?" And he said,

"There's no evidence of any car being better than this one." This is making me not feel good about investing in buying him this car because it sounds like he hasn't done any investigation of the alternatives. And so I would say these questions that you're asking, what are some of the arguments that you studied that weren't good? And what are some of the books and authors you've read that weren't convincing? That's a good way of making sure that if this person has really done their homework and it will cause them to walk away from you and think, "I haven't done my homework and here I am having an entire worldview." A lot of people form their view of Christianity when they're really young from people who also don't know much about Christianity. And so their rejection of it typically has nothing to do with whether it's true or not.

Exactly. Let me give you another objection. How about this? So maybe in the first objection, I was a little hasty when I said there's no evidence.

Maybe there's some evidence, but I think that if God were real, he would give me more evidence. So how would you reply to that? Yeah. I think I would respond again with another question saying, "Well, what evidence would convince you that God is real?" Because what I have found in my conversations with atheists is that I'll point out some evidence and they'll say, "Well, if God were really to provide more, that's not enough." Well, that's not enough either.

We have such an abundance of evidence and we allow atheists just to sit there in the passive listener's seat going, "Oh, not enough, not enough with no burden of proof at all." And so before I jump on their hamster wheel and spin myself around until I'm dizzy, I really like to ask from near the beginning, "Well, what evidence would convince you that God is real?" Yeah, that's excellent. And there are two ways that people kind of press this argument in my experience. In the first way, what they do is they say, "Well, if there were evidence for God, it should be really obvious to me because I want to put all my effort into entertaining myself, doing well in school, being good with the ladies or the gentlemen as the case may be.

I want to work on my hobbies. I want to play Minecraft. I want to watch Disney movies." They have other priorities.

And so what they mean is, what they're really saying is they're saying, "If God existed, he would provide me with the kind of evidence that doesn't require me to investigate. Did the universe have at the beginning? Is the universe fine-tuned for life? Can life emerge spontaneously without the work of an intelligent designer?" They don't want to do that. So that's one way that they mean the subjection.

And the other way that they mean the subjection is they mean, "If God was real, then he would provide me with the kind of evidence that I like." So in other words, if I pray to God for a Cadillac to appear in my driveway and it appears, then I'll know that he exists. But what do you think about that? Is that the right way to approach the creator of the entire

universe to say, "Make me a Cadillac or I don't believe in you?" It's all about me, right? God is just here to do whatever I want, to give me whatever I want, to make sure I don't have to do any work, look into anything, investigate anything. I hear, as you were talking, I was thinking of the types of responses that I get to that question, "What would be enough evidence for you?" And it is.

It's very much like what you described where people are like, "Well, wherever I am, whatever I'm doing, God would be right in the sky. Hey, George, it's me, God. I am real.

You need to worship me." And things like this, where they don't really have to do anything. The funny thing is that there is actually far greater evidence of that kind of a personal message of specified complexity like the writing in the sky that we could point to in every single cell of the human body. The DNA in every cell is far more complex, more brilliant, and even personal because everyone's DNA is not the same.

And so we do have this complex code that requires a coder, a programmer. So if people who claim this have lived in the dark ages, I might understand, but in the 21st century, they're without excuse if they think that some of the types of things that they ask for with information right in front of them is really what is needed. Yeah, let me say one quick thing.

So I don't think God is interested in a relationship where people just kind of sit on their couch and watch TV and expect the evidence to appear there. I think that they do have to look into these areas that we talked about, investigating the resurrection of Jesus, whether the Bible's reliable, and so on. I do think that God takes the initiative to reveal Himself to people.

But like when I was young, God kind of put a really good youth pastor in my path. And He asked me what I thought about God and what kind of things I was interested in. And I said, "Well, in my family, we'd like to argue." And He said, "Hold on one second." And He went away and came back a few weeks later with books on apologetics.

He said, "Here you go. Read these. It's all about arguments.

I had to read them for seminary. I didn't like them, but you might like them." And that was the beginning of my investigation of the big questions. I think every human being that God makes has a moral, cognitive obligation to say, "How did I get here? How did this universe get here?" Ask these big questions.

And I think that that's the kind of relationship God is looking for. He wants to give you a little, and then He wants you to chase them. Then He wants to give you a bit more, and then He wants you to come towards them again.

And it may be difficult, but that's what He wants. He wants you to show endurance. He wants you to show persistence.

Yeah, exactly. And if someone says, "Well, I don't have time to investigate all the religions of the world," then I would just say to focus on the major ones and specifically investigate the testable claims of those major religions. And also, when you find the one that is a perfect fit for reality and that has an abundance of evidence to support its claims, you probably don't need to spend all your time continuing to look for something that's an even better fit than all the evidence supports.

So start with the major religions, investigate the claims. And a lot of times, when people respond to me with what would convince them, it's the types of things that actually we have evidence in the historical record of God having done when He entered space and time and did perform all kinds of miracles and heal people and all the sorts of things that people will sometimes ask for. Yeah, don't look for evidence that's relevant to me and about my life and making me happy.

Look for evidence that this guy can do the creating, the designing, the big things, laying down the moral law, coding the DNA. Look for that evidence. Don't look for evidence about you.

Don't think that you're the be-all and end-all. As you often say, God is not your cosmic butler. He's not your cosmic butler, right.

So when I was a young man, I grew up with Hinduism and Islam in my family and I met a couple of guys, Mormon brothers in high school. So I was presented with religions and I had to work through them. But what I did is I did what you said.

I focus on the testable claims. So for Hinduism, they claim an eternally oscillating universe and I just went and studied a little bit, very little bit of cosmology and said, "Sorry, but there's the mainstream cosmology, so this is the beginning of the universe." So you're out. And then my Mormon friends, same thing.

They said, "Oh, God formed the universe out of pre-existing matter." And I said, "Nope. The mainstream cosmology says there is no pre-existing matter. It all came into being.

So whatever causes it has to be non-material." And they said, "Well, we don't agree with the mainstream science." I said, "Too bad for you." And similarly with the Islam side of my family. Right. Yeah, exactly.

Yeah, because Islam makes several historical testable claims like whether or not Jesus rose from the dead. Islam says, or rather actually Islam says that Jesus was never crucified or killed. And so you look into the historical records and you see virtual unanimity on that, even from atheists and agnostics and people of every other worldview.

Didn't we do an episode on that? Yeah. In fact, we did a whole episode on Islam. It was episode 17, Common Muslim Objections to Christianity.

And I gave several arguments against Islam as true in that episode. Right. Okay.

Next objection. So evolution is a proven fact. We now know from the progress of science that nature can do all of its own creating.

There's no need for a God. Right. So yeah, what I would say here is, so first of all, what do you mean by the word evolution? And what do you mean by the word science? So sometimes people will stack the deck with self-serving definitions.

And these are two very common words that they'll do this with. Yeah. Yeah, I've seen this done.

So I read a lot of Philip E. Johnson when I was young, when I was just exploring, you know, how much wiggle room did I have on origins and which view was correct. He would say this in debates with people and in college lectures, he would say, we have to get clear on the definition of science. If you define science as the search for the best naturalistic explanation for the diversity of life that we see, you win automatically because if we're looking for the best naturalistic explanation and what that means is no designer explanation, then of course, evolution is true.

Even I'll concede this. This is me talking. Evolution is the best naturalistic explanation for the diversity of life.

But that's not the question. The question is what is the true explanation? Right. What is the best explanation? Yeah.

I mean, that's like speculating about, you know, a multiverse to escape from fine tuning because you've preemptively eliminated the possibility of a designer of intelligence behind it. Right. The multiverse might be a junk explanation for the fine tuning, but if you've already ruled out the existence of a cosmic designer, then it's a great explanation.

Right. Right. What's the explanation for all this code that got put into our application wintry? Oh, that that was the we left a window open and the wind, you know, blew the keyboards down.

Well, maybe somebody somebody wrote it. No, no, no, no, no, no, no. I'm telling you the best explanation without appealing to a coder.

Yeah, that's that's dumb. Don't don't do stupid things like that. Yeah, exactly.

And then, you know, with this, the definition of evolution in particular, you know, they'll they'll use the definition for micro evolution in order to try to prove macro evolution when they have two completely different definitions. Right. Right.

I remember talking to my high school science teachers about this and they'd say you

should believe in evolution. I'd say what is it? And they go just change over time. I'm like, well, that's undeniable.

Right. And they go, right. It's just change over time.

And since things change over time, then you kind of, you know, it's kind of like we have an explanation for the full diversity of life. It's just change over time. And I'm like, I think there needs to be some more work here because you're talking about taking non-living matter, making a simple living cell.

And then from that cell working up to all these different body plans, like with wings and hearts and lungs and life from no life intelligence from no intelligence and all of this. Yeah. So because of change and time.

Right. And so just watch them with this definition of evolution of change over time. You know, you know, you were mentioning saying to people asking them, what are some of the explanations you didn't accept? What are the some of the evidences that you did, you read about that you didn't accept just to just to see whether they've considered alternatives.

So with this issue, yeah, with this issue, same thing. I mean, I would I would say, you know, what areas of evolution have you wrestled with that are controversial to scientists who disagree with evolution? You know, we want to know who, you know, who have you read? What have you studied? What what issues have you wrestled with that are a problem for evolution? Because there are problems for evolutionists and intellectually honest scientists, even, you know, evolutionists are going to acknowledge that there are problems for evolution. Right.

And so, you know, a couple examples would be the presence of biological information in DNA. Like we said, it's like software code, very, very complex, complicated software code. And that requires a software engineer.

Another problem for evolution for macro evolution is the fossil record, which should show under evolution that it should show a continuous and gradual changes, lots and lots of changes from the bottom layer to the top layer. But that's not what it shows. What it actually shows is that nearly all groups of animals appear suddenly and simultaneously and fully developed in the fossil record.

This is a huge problem for macro evolution. Yeah. Sometimes when I'm working, we have situations where we're designing an application and we have to choose like off the shelf frameworks, libraries and components that are made by other people.

And sometimes you get somebody who comes in and says on the team and they just say, we have to go with this component. This component is the latest and greatest and it's better than all the others. And we say to them, what do you think we're trying to do

in this application? Like our application? And they go, I don't know, but this is the best for it.

And I'm like, well, do you want to know what the requirements are? And they're like, no, I don't care about the requirements. And we say to them, what alternatives have you looked at? And they go, none. And what are the strengths and weaknesses of your choice? It's all strengths and no weaknesses.

So just be careful when people are pushing evolution as a proven fact. Their basis for saying that might just be, uh, this happened to me one time when I was working at NIT. I met an East Indian guy and he was, he had traveled away from home.

His parents were very conservative. I said to him, why are you doing all this drinking and partying? You know, now that you're away from home. And he said, uh, well, I'm just acting like a monkey.

You know, evolution says that we're, you know, we're, we're just animals. So just keep in mind that some people who come to this question of origins, they're coming to this question with a desire for their, for evolution to be true. So that they can act like animals and the way to get them to think about it a bit more is to follow the Rose approach, which is to say to them, what are the alternatives? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the alternatives? How much reading have you really done? Right.

Okay. That this is excellent. So let's move on to another objection.

Uh, the Bible is oppressive and harmful to women. How would you respond to that? Oh goodness. Yes.

I hear this from feminists, uh, occasionally who incidentally have almost never read any of the Bible. So I would ask them, well, okay. So what changes to the status of women would you attribute to the influence of Christianity over the last 2000 years? What have you seen? What does the Bible teach about women and how have you seen that impact society cultures over the last several thousand years? And again, you might notice that I love to ask questions and this is another question that is going to cause the person making the claim to realize, well, I mean, I suppose I haven't really, you know, done my work.

They may not admit that to me, but they're going to be thinking about that probably in the moment and probably almost certainly later, you know, with their alone or next time they think about making this charge. Regardless of how they answer, I like to list off a few things about what the Bible does teach about women. For example, in Genesis one, men and women are both made in the image of God.

That is enormously significant. Men and women have equal value and worth and dignity in the eyes of God. I also point to Jesus's relationships with women.

I mean, for example, we see Mary at his feet, learning from him like a disciple and her sister Martha running around the kitchen frantically, you know, trying to make food and living out a traditional female role. And Martha gets all upset at Mary for, you know, just sitting at Jesus' feet. What does she think she is? Some, you know, kind of a man who can learn and receive, you know, receive like a spiritual education.

Chris Shandy teaches that men and women are equally designed for relationship with God. So theology, New Testament, all that stuff is equally the task of men and women. They have to have true beliefs about all of it.

Exactly. And so, and Jesus affirms Mary in what she's doing. Right.

And then we, you know, we see Paul's instructions to husbands to love their wives the way Jesus loved the church and laid down his life for her. That is huge. There was, nobody was teaching that at that time.

That is incredible when you look at every other culture, worldview, religion that came prior to Christianity and then look at Paul saying, "Be willing to lay down your life for your wife." It's really remarkable. And then, you know, the Bible also condemns all kinds of activities that had traditionally hurt women the most. It condemns things like abandonment, rape, adultery, divorce, physical abuse.

These were all things that put women in horrendous positions and the Bible condemns those things. And so it shouldn't be a surprise to us that as we look throughout the last 2000 years where Christianity has made significant inroads into a culture, women have been elevated significantly. Yeah.

I get frustrated with questions like this because it sounds like the people are coming to the Christian worldview with like a preconceived ideology, in this case, kind of a woman power, you know, sexual revolution ideology. And they're saying, you know, if the Bible doesn't allow ending babies through all nine months of pregnancy for any reason, then I can't accept it. If the Bible doesn't allow me to have the same amount of sexual experience as the men who are having so much fun, then I can't accept it and on and on and on.

The funny thing is it does actually allow for the same sexual opportunities because men as well are to have one part in one lifetime in the marriage. Exactly. I think what happens sometimes, we're getting it off topic, but I'm going to be brief.

You know, I think what happens sometimes with radical, you know, women power advocates is they kind of get hurt by guys who are horrible guys, but they like those guys because those guys are like tall and handsome. And then they think those guys are the ideal. And what are those guys doing? They're sleeping, you know, with everyone.

They are focused on their careers. They're materialistic. They're doing this.

They can sleep around without consequences. So therefore, I have to be able to end my baby. I have to be able to delay marriage for career.

I have to do this. And they're thinking that this is a good, you know, thing for them. Well, that's a topic for another show.

Is this, you know, is this a good way for women to go? Does it get them where they want to be, you know, in the end? But I think the main thing is, is that you don't come to the Bible and say, this is the way I want things to be. If God creates the universe and he creates you, then he makes the rules. And if he's a God of love, you should trust that those rules are going to work out for you in the long run.

It would be stupid for me to say, um, I'm a bird person. So I kind of don't really like cats because they hunt birds. So it would be really stupid for me to turn to the Christian worldview and say, I can't believe in a God who would allow the existence of cats, you know? You know, like that, that's, you got to give him some respect to do things the way he wants to do things because he's in charge.

That's such a great point. Yeah. You don't come to something and say, I don't like this.

Therefore, I'm not going to believe in God. That's absolutely ridiculous. It's really common.

People do that all the time. It is. It's very common.

And of course, you know, I think I do like to point out how Christianity has in fact elevated women tremendously. And, um, I also do a lot of teaching on Islam, which is very counter to Christianity in every way. Once you go, you know, about, about a centimeter deep into any given teaching.

But, uh, this reminds me, you know, talking about teachings on, on women in the Bible, I was teaching Islam at a Methodist church several years ago and we were looking at Muhammad's treatment of women and girls. And you were teaching about Islam. Yes.

I was teaching about Islam. Yes. And we were looking at how Muhammad had married a six year old and start and consummated the marriage at age nine and just treated women horribly.

And this woman raised her hand in the church, the woman who claimed to be a Christian and she goes, how dare you, you know, uh, be judgmental of Islam. Christianity is no better than Islam. I said, really? How so? And she said, well, Jesus commanded women to be stoned to death.

Like if they committed adultery. And I said, really? I said, interesting. Yeah.

Why don't you give me that passage and we'll look that up. Well, of course you didn't

know the passage because that's not in the Bible. Uh, but, uh, she said, well, I don't know where it is.

And I said, well, by any chance, are you thinking of the, the passage where a woman was caught in the act of adultery and she was before a group of, of men and you know, they were about to stone her and Jesus was drawing in the sand and she's like, yes, yes, that's the one. Yes. And so we turned there.

I said, well, that's John eight. Let's go ahead and turn there and read it. So I read the passage and in this passage, as I'm sure most of our listeners know, Jesus said that whoever was sinless could cast the first stone knowing that everybody there had some sin in their lives.

And so she was not to be stoned. It was the exact opposite. So I read the story and I said, interesting.

So in my Bible, she's not to be stoned. There's tremendous grace shown to her, even though she has clearly violated, uh, the 10 commandments here and the woman kind of kind of looked down and she goes, well, that's not what I was taught. And so that's why you need to do the work yourself.

Exactly. Yes. Ultimately, each of us is responsible for the worldview that we may have.

Okay. So here's another objection. How can the Bible be true if it says that the universe is only 6,000 years old? Yeah.

So what I would say to this is that there's actually a diversity of opinions among conservative Bible scholars regarding the age of the universe. So for Christians, you know, when talking to a non-Christian, I like to, um, encourage people that it's actually a really good strategy, I think, to appeal to the scientific consensus about time and space and matter having a beginning, which is what the standard model of the Big Bang cosmology teaches. That really is a great launching point for our arguments for the truth of Christianity.

But, um, also, you know, this is a peripheral issue. There are core issues that are critical to get right. Like does God exist? Was Jesus deity? Did Jesus rise from the dead? These are core issues.

And if you don't know the evidence for, have not made an informed decision about these issues, then we don't need to be talking about how old the universe is. Yeah. I actually have a, I had a friend, uh, from Scotland.

Uh, her name was Dina and, uh, she was a really close friend of mine. She recently passed away and she is extremely conservative and she accepts this young earth creationist view. And, uh, not only that she has a lot of very strict views.

She's a double predestination Calvinist. She thinks that the King James only Bible is the best and so on. So one day she asked me for some books to read and I said, are you okay with reading books from an older is creationists? And she said, sure.

So I sent her all the books from Dr. Steven C. Meyer, who's like a leading thinker in the intelligent design movement. And he writes about evidences for a creator and designer. So he writes about the big bang cosmology, cosmic fine tuning, the origin of life and the, and the sudden origin of body plans and organ types in the Cambrian explosion.

So this was a bit challenging for her because she was going to have to accept mainstream timelines in order to make sense of, of what he was saying. Like he's, he's very conservative. He teaches classes for folks on the family.

Anyway, so she read all those books and then she decided to try out what she had read on her atheist brother, who is also very intelligent. Both she and her brother are fabulously successful in their careers. So she knew she needed to use the best, uh, mainstream arguments.

So she called me on Skype. She slipped the phone into her pocket so that I could still hear. And then she debated her brother for two hours.

Wow. And I could hear everything that was being said. And she was basically using all of these arguments from the Steven Meyer books that I had sent her.

At one point I heard him protest saying that she wasn't allowed to use those arguments because she believed in a young earth. And she replied to him and said, yeah, right. First I'm going to get you to admit to God's existence with the mainstream science, and then we'll have a debate about what the age of the earth is.

Yes. Nice. So yes, that's exactly what I, what I'm saying.

You know, this is great. You can use the standard cosmology to make a case to non-Christians. And then yeah, once they're on board with the core issues, then we can talk about whole thought the universe is.

That's great. Love it. Right.

So good. You know, this actually reminds me of, um, of Calvinists who will utilize arguments from middle knowledge when explaining things to non-Christians because they don't want to have to defend Calvinism to them. So, so as you know, middle knowledge is the view that God knows what every person would choose in any and every situation.

And so God orders the world so that their free choices are respected, but also so that he achieves the end result that he wants as the sovereign God. And so sometimes

Calvinists, uh, will be asked about how to reconcile God's sovereignty with human free will and responsibility when talking to non-Christians. And they will use this middle knowledge view in order to explain it.

So that's, you know, that when you were talking about Dina utilizing the old earth arguments in order to persuade her, her brother, that theism is, is respectable and accurate, truthful. I thought of that. I thought of how Calvinists do that as well.

Yeah. So actually Dina did that too. Even though she was a really strong Calvinist, she would invoke middle knowledge whenever she was asked about how to reconcile divine sovereignty with human free will.

And when I found out she was doing that, I said to her, so you do believe in middle knowledge. And she said, no, middle knowledge is just middle earth hobbitry. That's what she would call it middle earth hobbitry.

So she, she would be willing to use like a close explanation to explain this to her non-Christian friends. And then later on, when they sort of became Christians, then she would contend for her Calvinist view, you know, that's great, which I think is a bit more mysterious than middle knowledge. Um, but, uh, in general, I think it's important not to let atheist nitpick about things like the age of the, of the earth and predestination.

Uh, I think that those are topics that can wait and we have to get agreement with them on God's existence, Jesus's divinity, the resurrection of Jesus, reliability of the gospels, you know, we have to get those things settled first and then we can talk about these other secondary issues. Yeah, exactly. Why? And yeah.

And I, I will frequently let people know, you know, when they really want to discuss those issues, but they're not even Christians yet, that there's a lot of diversity of thought among Christians, you know, if they want to hear all the different, you know, views, we could talk about that sometime, but that's just not a core issue. So yeah. Yeah.

And that's not to say that people who accept an old earth and an old universe, except evolution, like I said, Stephen Meyers and older creationists, just because you accept long periods of time, it doesn't mean that you think that a life emerged from some naturalistic random mutation, the natural selection process. Yeah, that's a great point. Okay.

Another objection. Christianity is just a reimagining of other ancient myths, like the myths of Horus, Osiris and Mithras. How would you respond to that? Yes.

I actually heard this view from choir members at a church I used to attend and sing with. They actually believe this view. So yeah, it wasn't the most theologically solid choir.

But I'm shocked. I'm not making fun of choirs. All right.

That's funny. Yeah. So I asked them, have you done any actual research on these mythological figures or did you just watch a YouTube video and repeat whatever you heard? And they just kind of looked at me like, this is real.

This is serious. We know what we're talking about. I said, okay, well, tell me all that you know about Horus.

What do you know about him? Yeah, that's a great question. So we're going back to our habit of saying to people, what are the alternatives? What are the strengths and weaknesses? How much have you read or are you just taking something that sounds good to you and saying this is the truth? Right, exactly. Yeah.

So so they said, you know, some of the predictable things that I figured they would say. They said, well, he was, Horus was born of a virgin and he was born on December 25th and he was worshiped by three kings and he was a teacher by the age of 12 and he had 12 disciples and he was crucified and resurrected. And so these are the claims.

I said, look, I don't know where you're getting this information, but this is not coming from any sort of primary sources or academic research or anything that's reliable because I happen to know that Horus was an ancient Egyptian myth who was said to have the body of a human and the head of a falcon and he was considered to be the god of the skies and of kings and that he was not conceived by a virgin. He was conceived by his parents, Isis and Osiris. There's nothing that says that he was born on December 25th.

And by the way, there's nothing that says that Jesus was born on December 25th either. That is a date that we just chose traditionally to celebrate his birth, but he almost certainly was not born in the winter. And we don't know the date of Jesus' birth.

Then with regard to the worship by three kings, Jesus was visited by an untold number of Magi, so wise men, but we're not told that they're kings. We're not told that there were three. So, you know, a lot of this, if you just know the Bible stories, you'll know that these are silly correlations to be made anyway.

These are not even serious claims about Jesus. Teacher at age 12, yes, the Bible does record the account of Jesus teaching in the synagogue at age 12, but there's no record of Horus teaching at age 12. There's also no record of Horus having 12 disciples and crucifixion had not even been invented yet when the Horus myths originated.

Horus is not reported to have died. He represents the living who never died. So he was not resurrected.

He was a myth with no evidence and not even myths that match up with the story of Jesus. Yeah, I can agree with him having the falcon part of him, but beyond that, I can't agree. What would you say about Osiris? Yeah, so Osiris was the mythological father of

the mythological Horus and Osiris was the god of the underworld and of fertility.

He was never resurrected from the dead. He died and went to the underworld and became the ruler and judge there. And so when kings died, they were identified with Osiris.

He signified renewal of life in the next world, but there was no claim that he was resurrected to this life or much less visited by, seen by eyewitnesses, over 500 of them and different groups at different times as Jesus was. This is a mythological figure who went to the next world, stayed there and reigned there. According to the myth, he was cut into 14 pieces and scattered all over Egypt.

His sister collected those pieces and she buried all but the phallus, which is why he's considered the god of fertility. Yeah, this doesn't sound like Jesus at all. Yeah, not at all.

Tell me about Mithras. Let's see what Mithras is like. Yeah, we find the same thing.

I mean, he was an Indian god of light. Worship of him spread to Persia, the Hellenic lands, the Roman Empire. The claim is by people who like to draw parallels that don't exist, that he was born of a virgin.

But according to the myths, Mithras spontaneously arose from a rock in a cave. Come on Rose, that's like a virgin. Virgins are rocks.

It was a virgin rock. Yes, it was. This rock had, there was no evidence that this rock had had relations with another rock.

So yes, the Jesus account was no doubt stolen from that. Yeah, so you know, this is again, this is silly. I mean, wherever there are some parallels between Mithras and Christianity, they arose in the centuries following the life of Jesus, not before.

So when you get these objections, ask the person, where did you read that? What is your primary source for that? Which scholar agrees with you on that? Where is this in the academic literature? You know, we don't have to accept every view as legitimate. They have to show the reasons why we should accept it. Right.

All right, last objection for this episode, the Bible condones slavery. What would you say to that? Yes. So another, I don't like it, objection, but also, also another false and misleading assertion that has no basis when we know the context and we understand the Bible.

So the Bible does not condone slavery. Slavery in fact, cannot survive in a culture that takes Christianity seriously because of the teachings of Christianity. The Bible is about how all human beings are equal in value because God made them in His image.

Again, we see that in Genesis one and all humans were made for relationship with God.

All humans are, have inherited sin nature and willfully choose on their own to rebel against God. And all humans are offered the gift of salvation by faith through the death of Jesus, who paid the penalty that we deserve on the cross.

So are you familiar with the slave Bible by any chance? No. So there was actually an original slave Bible on display at the museum of the Bible in Washington, DC in 2018 and 19. I visit the DC area pretty frequently.

And this, so this slave Bible was published in 1807. And just to show how incompatible Christianity is with slavery, this so-called Bible removed any passages that might lead slaves to believe they were equal to free men and shouldn't be enslaved. And so the result was that approximately 90% of the Bible was removed from this slave Bible, from this version, because they were considered dangerous to the interests of slave masters and of the government.

Okay, let me pause here for a sec. So what I want people to understand about slavery in the Bible is this, what the Bible teaches is that men and women are made in the image of God. The purpose of their life is to enter into a relationship with God.

When you think about how you treat other people, you know, we're talking about slavery, but let's just talk about any, any way you treat other people. If you're a God-fearing person, you cannot do anything to that person that would cause them to dislike God or move away from God. So that doesn't mean I have to agree with you when you're doing something bad.

I don't have to agree with you when you're doing something bad, but I cannot get in the way of you being reconciled with God. In fact, I'm supposed to be helping you to be reconciled with God. You know, you need a book to read, I get you the book.

So I'm just giving a summary of what the Bible tells us about how we treat God and how we treat one another and what we're here to do. And you just can't get from that picture, you can't get the idea that it's okay to mistreat others. Right.

Or that they're not important, that they're not significant, that they're not equally important to you, whether you should look down on them, you know, that you should think you're better than them, you know, it doesn't emerge from the text. Yep, exactly. You don't quote Bible verses for this.

You look at the thing as a whole and say, what is this teaching about the human condition and how should we see God and our neighbor? Absolutely. Excellent. Amen to that.

Yeah. It's also important to understand the context of slavery when it's talked about in the Bible or, you know, it's the same word for servant, servanthood. And so in Bible times, people sold themselves to be servants in order to pay off their debts.

And the Bible provides instructions to protect and help these servants not to harm them. That's not condoning this behavior, but it is protecting people who are in desperate situations and felt the need to sell themselves into slavery. And so Exodus 20 verse 10, for example, gave servants a day off each week.

That was mandatory for the people of God. Deuteronomy 23, 16, forbids mistreating a slave. Colossians 4, 1 commands people to treat their servants justly and fairly, remembering that they themselves have a master in heaven.

And so these are in place to protect and help people who are in desperate situations. But then again, like you mentioned, the larger context leads people inevitably to conclude that no one should be a slave to another. Yeah.

It sounds like the Bible is talking about indentured servitude here. Yeah. You wouldn't be able to use that to justify enslaving groups, entire groups of people, on the basis of their race or their religion or their national origin.

Yeah, exactly. And so it's not a coincidence that it was Christians who led the fight to abolish slavery in England and in the US, while most other nations around the world continued to practice slavery of the worst kind, not temporary indebted servitude, but involuntary capture of other tribes. There is no place for that.

There is just no room for that at all in the Bible. And so it's not a coincidence that Christians have led the way also in our lifetime to rescue sex slaves all over the world and to eradicate sex slavery from the world. Yeah.

Our most popular episode on YouTube right now is episode 13, which is "Why Should I Be Moral, Atheism versus Christianity?" And in that episode, we discuss why the atheistic worldview provides no rational grounds for condemning slavery or anything as morally wrong. And it also provides no rational grounds for defending human rights of any kind. So if people are curious about how to defend this objection about the Bible condoned slavery, I would just recommend that you go back and take a look at that episode.

So I think that we've covered a lot of challenges today. That's all the time we have though. So we'll have to do another episode where we cover more challenges.

That sounds great. Yes. So for now, listeners, if you enjoyed this episode, please consider helping us out by sharing this podcast with your friends.

We would really appreciate it if you left a five star review on Apple or Spotify. It also helps us a lot if you subscribe and leave comments on YouTube. If you can hit the like button, wherever you listen to the podcast, it would really help.

We appreciate you taking the time to listen and we'll see you again in the next one.

[Music]