



## Just Ask #1

1. In Genesis 2:18 the Lord God said that it's not good for man to be alone, but man isn't alone. God is with him. So, why does God say he's alone? Also, since this is before the fall of man how can anything be not good?

## Genesis 2:18-25

**18** Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." **19** Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. **20** The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him.

**21** So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. **22** And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.

**23** Then the man said,  
“This at last is bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
she shall be called Woman,  
because she was taken out of Man.”

**24** Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. **25** And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

**When it comes to our relationship with God we can never compare it to a merely human relationship. Whenever we think about God and man we must always remember that we are only analogous to God, meaning we are very dim reflections.**

For instance, when we refer to God as being a Person (which He is) we tend to think of God in terms of our experience of personhood. When in fact the truest form of personhood is something beyond us — Trinitarian Personhood. That is the truest form of Personhood, because He is the definer of all things. So, our personhood is a pale imitation of true personhood. Our personhood is analogous, not identical to God's Personhood. He is other than we are.

**This is the creature Creator distinction, but this is why it means so much more to understand how far beyond us God is and yet how near He is to us as our Shepherd to protect and guide us, as our Father to love and care for us, as our King to show how immensely generous He is to give us the kingdom.**

**That's why He is concerned here with human companionship for us, which is different than God relating to us.**

God relates to us through mediated care, meaning other sources, such as sound waves and the written word, etc. This is simply necessary because of who He is — the God with no beginning and no end. Therefore, God is saying that what is needed for us is human companionship. Therefore, it's not good for man to be alone.

If you read through the creation account, after every step of the creative process God says that it is good, but also notice that just because it's good doesn't mean He is finished with the process. It's the same thing with humanity. God created man and it was good as everything else was good, but God wasn't finished yet.

**God is always greater than our thoughts about Him.**

## **2. How can I present the gospel to a friend or family member who is an atheist?**

**First, always remember that we're not trying to win an argument. We want to win them to Christ.**

**When you're in a conversation with a professing atheist who is open to talking about the gospel (and many are open) don't ever feel like you first have to prove the existence of God to them before you talk about the gospel.**

**Begin with the premise (the reality) that deep in their hearts they know God exists. Atheism is the denial of God's existence and in most cases it is an emotional decision, not an intellectual one.**

**It is very common for someone who is an atheist to say something along the lines of, "I lost my dad when I was eleven and I decided then I would never believe in a God who would take my father from me." That's emotional position.**

**So, begin with the understanding that deep down they know God exists.**

## **Romans 1:18-22**

**18** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. **19** For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. **20** For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. **21** For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. **22** Claiming to be wise, they became fools,

**This is a very important thing to understand about humanity — knowledge is not neutral. Everything about how we perceive the world is tainted by sin, which darkens our understanding. It prejudices how we even view evidence, etc.**

**To put it more bluntly, sin makes you stupid.**

**Two highly intelligent academics published a study in which they said, "Most animals portrayed in children's books, songs and on clothing send a bad message."**

## **That bad message?**

**That animals only exist for human use, that humans are better than animals, that animals don't have their own stories to tell, that it's fine to "demean" them by cooing over their cuteness. Perhaps worst of all, they say, animals are anthropomorphized to reinforce "socially dominant norms" like nuclear families and gender stereotypes.**

**Now, studies like this are published all the time and they don't just border on nonsense. They define it.**

**Many very intelligent people have said, "The universe came from nothing." They will state it that way. Yet, when someone says, "God created the universe out of nothing," they will roll their eyes like that's the dumbest thing they've ever heard. But somehow they're okay with, "Nothing created everything." That doesn't just border on nonsense. That statement is insane. You have to be in denial of reality to utter such a statement.**

**All that to say, I think the best place to begin a conversation with any atheist is with justice. Press them (ever so gently) on the idea of justice.**

**Ask them what they think the greatest injustice in the world is. Most will have some strong feelings about this.**

**Then call them on their inconsistency. If there is no source of ultimate justice (meaning God) then there is no justice. If they truly claim to believe that when we die there is only nothingness, then any concern for any justice is inconsistent with their worldview.**

- [bigthink.com](http://bigthink.com)

**But their worldview doesn't hold up because it is not in line with reality — there is justice and injustice in this world because God has written His laws upon our hearts.**

- [The Facebook Killer](#)

**This is one note that you can continually bring the conversation back to by simply asking the questions. What do they base their view of justice on? Why does anything matter if there is nothing? Isn't caring about anything self-deception at this point?**

**And just keep driving home those questions, because justice is the great concern of the**

gospel. We have committed a great injustice against God by our rebellion against Him. But because of His great love for us He resolved that injustice Himself by sending His Son so that we might be justified — declared not guilty for our sins.

3. In Matthew 13 what is meant by “to you it has been given to know the secret of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given?” My question is — can’t Jesus give this revelation to their hearts or can that only happen after His death, burial and resurrection?

## Matthew 13:10-11

10 Then the disciples came and said to him, “Why do you speak to them in parables?” 11 And he answered them, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.

But the question in one sense is asking, “Why do some people have faith in Christ and others do not?”

There is a longer answer, but the simple answer is because faith is the gift of God.

Two things the Bible unquestionably teaches — God is sovereign and humans are responsible.

- How do we harmonize those two realities?

## Ephesians 2:8-9

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Well, if God gives faith but not everyone has faith in Christ, isn't it God's fault if someone doesn't believe?

## Romans 9:14-16

14 What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! 15 For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” 16 So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.

God is always greater than our thoughts about Him.

4. How can people who claim to be Christian follow false doctrines? Can Christians be spiritually blind?

## 2 Peter 3:18

18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

A 2014 survey conducted by LifeWay Research for Ligonier Ministries reveals that many American evangelicals hold views condemned as heretical by some of the most important councils of the early church. Nearly a quarter of participants believe false teachings about Jesus, and more than half about the Holy Spirit.

Find out if you are among them by answering “true” or “false” to the following statements.

- a) God the Father and Jesus Christ are equally divine.
- b) Jesus is a hybrid, partially divine and partially human.
- c) God the Son is uncreated.
- d) The Holy Spirit is a force
- e) The Holy Spirit is less divine than the Father and the Son.

- f) “Father,” “Son,” and “Holy Spirit” are three different names for one divine person.

## Answers

- a) True. The Council of Nicaea in 325 affirmed that the Father and the Son are of the same divine essence, and condemned Subordinationism, which teaches that Jesus is inferior to the Father.
- b) False. Apollinarianism, condemned at the Council of Constantinople in 381, taught that Jesus is not equally human and divine, but is one person with one nature. Jesus has a human body and soul, but a divine mind.
- c) True. The Council of Nicaea affirmed that the Son is coeternal with the Father, and condemned Arianism, which taught that the Son was created by God before time.
- d) False. The Council of Constantinople affirmed that the Spirit is coequal to the Father and Son, and condemned Pneumatomachianism, which taught that the Spirit was a created force or power, not a person of the Trinity.

- e) **False. Subordinationism, ruled out by the Nicene Creed, teaches that the Spirit is inferior to the Father and the Son. Similarly, some proponents of Pneumatomachianism, condemned at Constantinople (381), taught that the Spirit was of a different essence from the Father and the Son.**
- f) **False. Modalism, ruled out by the Nicene Creed, teaches that God's names (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) change with his roles or "modes of being" (like a chameleon).**
5. **I would like to know more about spiritual gifts.**

## **1 Corinthians 12:1; 4-11**

12 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed.

4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; 5 and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; 6 and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. 7 To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 8 For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to

another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

**Four applications:**

**Family**

**Church**

**Work**

**Community**

## **2 Chronicles 7:14**

14 if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

## **James 4:8**

8 Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

**God is always greater than our thoughts about Him.**