

Question: How do you approach a non-believer about the presence of God in your life, how He is there for us always, and if He doesn't answer the way you want in life, it is always His way, not ours?

Reasons God May Not Answer How We Want

- Humans have free will to disobey God
- We have an Enemy, Satan, who opposes the plans of God
 - The Prince of Persia hindered Daniel's prayers
- We have to wait for God's timing, which isn't always immediate
 - Elijah had to pray multiple times before the drought ended
 - Jesus said to "ask and keep asking, seek and keep seeking, knock and keep knocking"
 - The Persistent Widow had to keep going back again and again (Luke 18)
- We're asking for foolish, selfish reasons
 - James 4:3 – You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.
- We have sin in our hearts and are not in right relationship with God
 - 1 Peter 3:7 – Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.
- We have unforgiveness in our hearts
 - Matthew 5:23-24 – 23 So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.
 - Matthew 6:15 – but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.
 - Matthew 18:21-35 – The Unforgiving Servant
- Ultimately, God is in charge and He does not have to answer all our prayers just because we want something
- God is wiser than us, so maybe He has a reason we don't understand

Question: Proverbs 26:4-5. These 2 verses contradict each other. One says don't and the other says do. Which is it?

Proverbs 26:4-5 – 4 Don't answer the foolish arguments of fools, or you will become as foolish as they are. 5 Be sure to answer the foolish arguments of fools, or they will become wise in their own estimation.

Context

- Proverbs 26:1-12 – All about fools
 - Every verse but one is about fools
 - Vs. 1 – fools don't deserve honor
 - Vs. 3 – the best way to teach a fool is like you teach a horse or a donkey, with a stick
 - Vs. 6 – Trusting a fool to convey a message is like cutting off one's feet or drinking poison!
 - Vs. 7 – A proverb in the mouth of a fool is as useless as a paralyzed leg.
 - Vs. 8 – It's useless and dangerous to honor a fool
 - Vs. 9 – A proverb in the mouth of a fool is like a thorny branch brandished by a drunk.
 - Vs. 10 – Don't hire fools to work for you because they're not dependable

- Vs. 11 – Fools are just gonna keep being foolish, like a dog returns to eat its vomit
- Vs. 12 – There is more hope for fools than for people who think they are wise.

Elsewhere About Fools

- Fools don't know or understand (Psalm 92:6)
- Fools hate knowledge (Proverbs 1:22)
- Fools are complacent (Proverbs 1:32)
- Fools inherit disgrace (Proverbs 3:35)
- Foolish sons bring sorrow to their mothers (Proverbs 10:1)
- Doing wrong is a game to fools (Proverbs 10:23)
- Fools proclaim foolishness (Proverbs 12:23)
- Fools flaunt their foolishness (Proverbs 13:16)
- Fools won't turn away from their foolishness (Proverbs 13:19)
- Fools are so destructive that anyone near them gets harmed (Proverbs 13:20)
- Fools are recklessly confident (Proverbs 14:16)
- Proverbs 15:2 – ...the mouth of a fool belches out foolishness.
- Fools feed on trash (Proverbs 15:14)

Proverbs 14:7 – Stay away from fools, for you won't find knowledge on their lips.

Proverbs 26:4-5 – 4 Don't answer the foolish arguments of fools, or you will become as foolish as they are. 5 Be sure to answer the foolish arguments of fools, or they will become wise in their own estimation.

- Fools need to be confronted, but if you're going to get involved, be prepared to use wisdom and tact and don't get dragged into useless arguments
- Sometimes wisdom and tact means you just don't say anything

2 Timothy 2:23-24 – 23 Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. 24 And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil...

- Don't get involved with foolish arguments, but be ready to teach

Question: Tell us about a secular book, movie, and/or song (or all three) that makes you think about God, or that makes you love Him more.

Is secular media OK?

The Case for "No"

- 2 Corinthians 6:16-18 – 16 What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you, 18 and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty."
- Job 31:1 – I have made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I gaze at a virgin?
- Proverbs 4:23 – Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.
- Psalm 101:3 – I will not set before my eyes anything that is worthless. I hate the work of those who fall away; it shall not cling to me.

The Case for “Yes”

- Titus 1:15 – To the pure, all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled.
- Jesus quoted secular media
 - He quoted popular secular proverbs
 - Matthew 16:2 – When it is evening, you say, “It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.”
 - Luke 4:23 – Physician, heal yourself.
 - When He appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus, He quoted a line from the Greek poet Aeschylus – “It is hard for you to kick against the goads.” (Acts 26:14)
- Jude quoted secular media
 - He quotes the extra-biblical Book of Enoch in Jude 1:14-15
- Paul quoted secular media quite a bit
 - Acts 17:28 [A quotation from the Greek poet Aratus] – for “‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, “‘For we are indeed his offspring.’”
 - Titus 1:12 [A quotation from the poet Epimenides] – One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.”
 - 1 Corinthians 15:33 [A quotation from the Menander, a Greek comedic playwright] – Do not be deceived: “Bad company corrupts good morals.”
- The Bible itself is not G-rated
- Christian Media isn’t Perfect

My Conclusion

- Mark 7:15 – There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him.
 - If the movie, TV, music, or book increases your love for God and desire to live for him, then let Him use it for good
 - If it does the opposite, or dulls your spirit, or makes you feel uneasy, then stay away
- Psalm 101:3 – I will not set before my eyes anything that is worthless. I hate the work of those who fall away; it shall not cling to me.
 - If it doesn’t cling to you, you’re probably OK. If you let it cling to you, back off.

Book

- *A Walk Across America* by Peter Jenkins

Movie

- *Hotel Rwanda*

Songs

- “Love Reign O’er Me” by The Who
 - Only love can bring the rain
 - That makes you yearn to the sky
 - Only love can bring the rain
 - That falls like tears from on high
 - Love reign o'er me
 - Rain o'er me
 - On the dry and dusty road
 - The nights we spend apart alone
 - I need to get back home to cool, cool rain
 - I can't sleep and I lay and I think
 - The night is hot and black as ink
 - Oh God, I need a drink of cool, cool rain

- “Let Me Die in My Footsteps” by Bob Dylan
 - I will not go down under the ground
 - 'Cause somebody tells me that death's comin' 'round
 - An' I will not carry myself down to die
 - When I go to my grave my head will be high
 - Let me die in my footsteps
 - Before I go down under the ground
 - There's been rumors of war and wars that have been
 - The meaning of life has been lost in the wind
 - And some people thinkin' that the end is close by
 - 'Stead of learnin' to live they are learnin' to die
 - Let me die in my footsteps
 - Before I go down under the ground
- “Creep” by Radiohead
 - When you were here before
 - Couldn't look you in the eye
 - You're just like an angel
 - Your skin makes me cry
 - You float like a feather
 - In a beautiful world
 - I wish I was special
 - You're so [very] special
 - But I'm a creep, I'm a weirdo
 - What the [heck] am I doing here?
 - I don't belong here