

SPECIAL: HOW DO I EVANGELIZE TO AGNOSTICS AND ATHEISTS?

September 15, 2024

Welcome To BARAH MINISTRIES

**Rory Clark
Pastor-Teacher**

Good Morning!

Welcome to Barah Ministries...an intimate, local Christian Church with a worldwide impact. My name is Pastor Rory Clark. Thank you for tuning in to this Bible lesson.

Welcome to the final day of Homecoming Weekend for the Barah Ministries Non-Resident Congregation Members. We also are celebrating Pastor Appreciation this weekend, giving you the chance to express your gratitude for what the Lord can do through a couple of willing men...Pastor John Farley and I...men who have made a lifetime commitment to serve you by teaching the Word of God.

Here is the schedule for this final day...

THE SCHEDULE Homecoming and Pastor Appreciation Weekend

The Lessons
9:00AM-11:00AM

Ask the Pastor and Prayer Circle
11:00AM-12:00PM

Food, Fellowship, and Football
This Afternoon and Evening

The plan is to learn a lot and to have some fun!

LESSON INTRODUCTION

The subject matter for the lessons this weekend is evangelism. We ask...what would God want us to do in ministry as the Body of Christ and as individuals in evangelism?

SPECIAL: HOW DO I EVANGELIZE TO AGNOSTICS AND ATHEISTS?

September 15, 2024

What is evangelism?

EVANGELISM

The sharing of the gospel message with others...the good news concerning the Lord Jesus Christ's salvation offer...either by public preaching or by personal witnessing...whether in a corporate way with the members of the Body of Christ in your congregation or individually.

Evangelism is a critical part of the Christian experience.

Pastor John Farley is focused on what Scripture has to say about evangelism, specifically in the apostle Paul's New Testament letters. My focus is to provide insights on how to evangelize to religious, to atheist, and to agnostic unbelievers.

In today's lesson, you'll hear final thoughts on evangelism. In addition, we'll celebrate the Lord's Supper.

OPENING SONG INTRODUCTION

Let's hear some music! John, Chapter 20, Verse 31 says...

JOHN 20:31

...these things written in the Bible have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ...(He's the Jewish Messiah...the Lord...the Son of God who took on human form)...and that by believing in Him you may have the resurrection life (eternal life) in His name.

There is no other name that has been given among men by which we must be saved except the name of Jesus. June Murphy invites us in song to get a glimpse of this unique and powerful Person in her song COME SEE A MAN.

MUSIC

OPENING SONG

Let's Sing the Lord's Praises

COME SEE A MAN

June Murphy

SPECIAL: HOW DO I EVANGELIZE TO AGNOSTICS AND ATHEISTS?
September 15, 2024

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray...

We're grateful Heavenly Father for the privilege of studying Your absolute truth...the Word of God...

Father...thank you for being such a great teacher...thank you for filling our hearts and our minds with insights about how to share the good news of the gospel message with others...thank you for solving the sin problem by sending Your Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to pay for sin so that those who believe in Him would not be at the wrong end of Your wrath...thank you for surrounding us with men and women who believe in Your Son so we can be edified by fellowship with them...and thank you for inspiring in us a concern and a compassion for those who have yet to make a decision to have a relationship with Christ...

...let God the Holy Spirit teach us what You want us to know through today's lesson...let the words of Your truth embed themselves deep inside of us as a guide through life in the kingdom of Your enemy...Satan...and teach us how to deliver the most vital message in history...the gospel message...to the hearers You provide...

...we ask this through the power of God the Holy Spirit...in Christ's name...Amen.

THE LORD'S SUPPER CELEBRATION

At the Cross, the Lord Jesus Christ Pioneered the Most Unique Lifestyle in History

Welcome to The Lord's Supper Celebration, the most intimate expression of our love for the Lord Jesus Christ in The Christian Way of Living.

The Lord demonstrates His desire for a deep, intimate, and personal relationship with His believers by creating a way to keep on sharing His body and His blood with us, just as He did with His apostles on the night before His death. Luke, Chapter 22, Verses 14 to 16...

LUKE 22:14

When the hour had come (and His crucifixion was near) ... the Lord Jesus Christ reclined at the Passover table...and the apostles reclined with Him.

SPECIAL: HOW DO I EVANGELIZE TO AGNOSTICS AND ATHEISTS?
September 15, 2024

<RECLINE AT THE TABLE SLIDE>

LUKE 22:15

And the Lord said to the apostles, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover meal with you before I suffer ... "

LUKE 22:16

"...for I (the Lord Jesus Christ) say to you that I shall never again eat this Passover meal until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God the Father."

In First Corinthians, Chapter 11, Verse 26, the apostle Paul says, on behalf of the Lord...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:26a

...as often as you eat this bread (representing His body) ...and as often as you drink this cup (representing His blood) ...as part of the Lord's Supper Celebration...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:26b

...you proclaim as a reality and you announce the significance of the Lord Jesus Christ's death on the Cross ...and His resurrection from the dead... until He comes again at the second coming.

During the Lord's Supper Celebration, Jesus wants His believers to REMEMBER. We look back to the Cross for a moment and we REMEMBER how the Lord rescued us from the kingdom of darkness. We REMEMBER the Lord's sacrifice of shedding His blood to cover our sins. We REMEMBER the gift of the resurrection life the Lord orchestrated, bringing us into His kingdom of light. We REMEMBER with anticipation that the Lord is coming again.

As believers in Christ, when we celebrate The Lord's Supper, we ask ourselves in reflection, "What did the Lord Jesus Christ do for us at the Cross?" At the Cross, the Lord Jesus Christ pioneered the most unique lifestyle in history... the Christian Way of Life.

When unbelievers are looking for evidence of God, unfortunately, they look at those who claim to represent God...to those who claim to be on God's team...they look to believers in Christ. What are they looking for?

They're looking for evidence.

SPECIAL: HOW DO I EVANGELIZE TO AGNOSTICS AND ATHEISTS?

September 15, 2024

Unbelievers want evidence that Christians have something they need. Unbelievers want to see things they do not have. What's unique about Christianity?

Unbelievers love conditionally. They don't love others no matter what. They love others when others are lovable. "I'll stay married to you until you cheat on me. The minute you make a mistake...the minute I see you are human...I'm gone." That's unbeliever philosophy.

Through the lifestyle the Lord pioneered, Christians are empowered with unconditional love. God the Father proved His unconditional love for sinful mankind with a unique offer...Romans, Chapter 5, Verse 8 says...

ROMANS 5:8

God the Father demonstrates His own unconditional love toward all mankind in that while we were yet sinners (while we were unrighteous, ungodly unbelievers), (the Father sent) Christ...and He died a sacrificial death for us.

The Lord Jesus Christ proved His unconditional love for sinful mankind with a unique offer as well...John, Chapter 15, Verse 13...

JOHN 15:13

Greater unconditional love has no one than this...that one lay down his life for his friends.

Jesus Christ laid down His life for people who hated Him, a unique approach to life an unbeliever would never consider.

Unbelievers are not forgiving. When someone wrongs them, unbelievers hold grudges...they hold wrongs against the person...they envision revenge.

Through the lifestyle the Lord pioneered, Christians are empowered with forgiveness...the ability to not take into account a wrong suffered. What did the Lord say at the Cross about those who had just conspired to set up His slaughter, His torture, and His death? Luke, Chapter 23, Verse 34...

LUKE 23:34a

"Father, forgive them...for they do not know what they are doing."

Jesus forgave those who treated Him worse than anyone has ever been treated,

SPECIAL: HOW DO I EVANGELIZE TO AGNOSTICS AND ATHEISTS?

September 15, 2024

something an unbeliever would never consider.

Unbelievers are intolerant of mistakes. They criticize those who make errors.

Through the lifestyle the Lord pioneered, Christians are empowered with grace...an ability to give people the benefit of the doubt...to give people things they can't earn...to give people things they don't deserve. Ephesians, Chapter 2, Verses 8 and 9...

EPHESIANS 2:8

For by God's grace, you unbelievers have been saved through faith in Christ for salvation...and that grace and that faith and that salvation are not from the source of yourselves...it is the gift of God the Father...

EPHESIANS 2:9

...so being saved is not as a result of your works (deeds you have done in self-righteousness)...so that no one may boast (about saving himself).

Jesus did not make people work for their salvation. He offered salvation as a free grace gift. It's called justification by faith. You make a request for salvation by placing your faith in Jesus Christ alone, and He grants your request. Unbelievers might be heard to say, "There's no free lunch."

As Christians we have a unique lifestyle. Unconditional love, forgiveness, and grace are just a few of its unique qualities. When unbelievers see these qualities, they are intrigued. They don't have these qualities and they would not consider doing the things that Christians do as a routine.

How do we share the unique lifestyle called Christianity with unbelievers...the religious ones...the agnostic ones...the atheist ones?

It's called evangelism.

Evangelizing to the religious is hard. Yesterday we learned that the way to their hearts is by helping them compare the doctrines of their religion to the doctrines of the Bible...the Word of God.

How do we evangelize to atheists and agnostics?

First, what are atheists?

SPECIAL: HOW DO I EVANGELIZE TO AGNOSTICS AND ATHEISTS?

September 15, 2024

ATHEISTS

People who claim there is no evidence of God's existence and there can be no evidence of God's existence. Therefore, they believe there is no God.

To truly understand atheists, it's important to see their viewpoint. A great resource is a book by Bertrand Russell called *Why I Am Not a Christian*. It's always important to know why others think what they think.

Atheists have faith. Atheists believe. So do Christians. What we place our faith in and what we believe is different.

A fallacy in atheism is, "I only believe what I can prove." Well, the Pharisees were atheists...and they saw God in the flesh...the Lord Jesus Christ...and they still didn't believe. In John, Chapter 8, Verse 45 the Lord said...

JOHN 8:45

But because I (the Lord Jesus Christ) speak the truth, you do not believe Me.

Atheists don't believe what they can prove...they believe what they want to believe.

What are agnostics?

AGNOSTICS

People who claim the existence of God is unknowable, while simultaneously claiming to be open to the possibility that God either does or does not exist.

Talking to agnostics is a journey of confusion. The conversation goes in circles and always ends with, "I just don't think things about God can be known."

To be comfortable in sin...to be comfortable being spiritually dead...is a deadly mistake. Sin is the target of the wrath of God the Father. Yet anyone can be saved from the wrath of God the Father according to Romans, Chapter 5, Verse 9.

ROMANS 5:9

Much more then, having now been justified by the Lord Jesus Christ's blood, we believers in Christ shall be saved from the wrath of God the Father through our union with Him.

SPECIAL: HOW DO I EVANGELIZE TO AGNOSTICS AND ATHEISTS?
September 15, 2024

Since your lifestyle as a Christian is unique, your approach to evangelism ought to be unique as well. Here are a few things to consider...

A SUGGESTED APPROACH TO EVANGELISM

1

Listen more than you talk

What intellectual purchase did religious, atheist, or agnostic unbelievers make that caused them to adopt their viewpoint? Diagnose before you prescribe. Hear their viewpoint.

A SUGGESTED APPROACH TO EVANGELISM

2

Avoid assumptions from previous knowledge

Don't assume the religious are antagonistic. Maybe they are just skeptical. Don't assume that atheists hate God. Perhaps they want evidence they can believe. Don't assume agnostics who wallow in confusion aren't interested in being invited to clarity.

What evidence would be convincing to them?

A SUGGESTED APPROACH TO EVANGELISM

3

Don't argue

Ephesians, Chapter 4, Verse 15 says...

EPHESIANS 4:15

...keep on speaking the truth in unconditional love...

Every heartbeat can be our last. Some unbelievers enjoy the sport of intellectual fencing with Christians. Don't engage.

SPECIAL: HOW DO I EVANGELIZE TO AGNOSTICS AND ATHEISTS?

September 15, 2024

A SUGGESTED APPROACH TO EVANGELISM

4

Trust God the Holy Spirit more than you trust yourself...let God the Holy Spirit do the work of conversion.

A friend asked, "How do I convince my brother who has a comfortable life and sees no need for Christ to believe in Christ?"

It is not our job to convince people.

Every human being who comes to earth needs a remedy for three things... SIN and RIGHTEOUSNESS and JUDGEMENT. God the Holy Spirit presents the convincing proof to unbelievers through His convicting ministry of what it takes to have the remedy. In John, Chapter 16, Verses 8 to 11 the Lord Jesus Christ says...

JOHN 16:8

"And when God the Holy Spirit comes...He will convict the world...of its sin (Adam's sin imputed...sin as a master...our own sins...and the flesh inside of us which sins)...and of the need for God's righteousness...and the coming judgment."

JOHN 16:9

"The world's sin is that unbelievers refuse to believe in Me (the Lord Jesus Christ)."

JOHN 16:10

"Righteousness is available because I go to God the Father, and you disciples will see Me no more (so you have to carry forth the gospel message)."

JOHN 16:11

"And judgment is coming...because the ruler of this world (Satan) has already been judged, and everyone under the rulership of Satan and his world system of thought is headed for the same judgment (the Lake of Fire)."

Take the pressure off of yourself for evangelism. God the Holy Spirit will do it. He may choose to use you to help.

SPECIAL: HOW DO I EVANGELIZE TO AGNOSTICS AND ATHEISTS?

September 15, 2024

A SUGGESTED APPROACH TO EVANGELISM

5

Don't get results focused

God gives people a lot of time to make a decision for or against Christ. Don't consider an evangelism unsuccessful if the person chooses only to consider salvation but not believe.

A SUGGESTED APPROACH TO EVANGELISM

6

Don't exude superiority

Remember that once you were an unbeliever...in the same desperate condition as the people to whom you are witnessing.

A SUGGESTED APPROACH TO EVANGELISM

7

Don't come from a position of persuasion

Just present accurate information.

A SUGGESTED APPROACH TO EVANGELISM

8

Know the accurate gospel message

Review First Corinthians, Chapter 15, Verses 1 to 11.

A SUGGESTED APPROACH TO EVANGELISM

9

Don't dilute the gospel message

Perfect truth doesn't need your "spin."

SPECIAL: HOW DO I EVANGELIZE TO AGNOSTICS AND ATHEISTS?

September 15, 2024

A SUGGESTED APPROACH TO EVANGELISM

10

Keep it simple

God has an enemy who loves being complicated to get us to abort hearing the gospel message. What is Satan's response to evangelism efforts? Matthew, Chapter 13, Verses 3 to 9...

MATTHEW 13:3

And Jesus spoke many things to the crowd in parables, saying, "Behold, the sower went out to sow..."

MATTHEW 13:4

"...and as he sowed, some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up."

MATTHEW 13:5

"Other seeds fell on the rocky places where they did not have much soil...and immediately they sprang up, because they had no depth of soil."

MATTHEW 13:6

"But when the sun had risen the seeds were scorched...and because they had no root, they withered away."

MATTHEW 13:7

"Other seeds fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out."

MATTHEW 13:8

"And other seeds fell on the good soil and yielded a crop...some a hundredfold...some sixtyfold...and some thirtyfold."

MATTHEW 13:9

"He who has ears...let him hear."

Jesus explains the parable in Matthew, Chapter 13, Verses 18 to 23...

MATTHEW 13:18

SPECIAL: HOW DO I EVANGELIZE TO AGNOSTICS AND ATHEISTS?

September 15, 2024

“Hear then the parable of the sower.”

MATTHEW 13:19

“When anyone hears the Word of the kingdom (the gospel message) and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road.”

MATTHEW 13:20

“The one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the Word and immediately receives it with joy...”

MATTHEW 13:21

“...yet he has no firm root in himself, but is only temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the Word, immediately he falls away.”

MATTHEW 13:22

“And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the Word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the Word, and it becomes unfruitful.”

MATTHEW 13:23

“And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the Word and understands it...who indeed bears fruit and brings it forth...some a hundredfold...some sixtyfold...and some thirtyfold.”

Evangelism is something we would do if we considered it valuable. Christianity is more than valuable. It's unique. Let unbelievers know they are investing in something that makes them unique as well.

THE LORD'S SUPPER CELEBRATION

Enjoying the Elements

Bread and wine.

The Lord gave us these things to remember Him. We will enjoy the elements together in a few moments as we listen to The Lord's Supper Song.

Obeying God's command, we keep on celebrating CHRIST and His Cross regularly...we eat to remember who He is as a PERSON...we drink to remember His WORK on the Cross...the voluntary sacrifice He made on our behalf as our sin

SPECIAL: HOW DO I EVANGELIZE TO AGNOSTICS AND ATHEISTS?

September 15, 2024

sacrifice. We are grateful for what God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ have done for us.

Matthew, Chapter 26, Verses 26 to 28...

MATTHEW 26:26

While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take...eat...this is My body which is being broken for you."

MATTHEW 26:27

And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you..."

MATTHEW 26:28

"...for this is My blood...the blood of a new covenant...blood poured out for many for the forgiveness of their sins."

As you enjoy the bread and the wine, enjoy the memory of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as well.

Now and always, let us keep on giving thanks that we are loved unconditionally and accepted fully by a Lord who is always there for us...the One on whom we depend...and let's keep on being transformed by His life, His death, His resurrection from the dead, and His Word...and let's enjoy His unconditional love, His forgiveness, and His grace.

Enjoy the elements as you listen to June Murphy sing about the permanence of the Lord Jesus Christ's work in her song YOU CAN'T UNDO THE CROSS.

THE LORD'S SUPPER SONG

YOU CAN'T UNDO THE CROSS

June Murphy

TEN-MINUTE BREAK

NOBODY

Casting Crowns

WELCOME OUR GUEST PASTOR!

SPECIAL: HOW DO I EVANGELIZE TO AGNOSTICS AND ATHEISTS?
September 15, 2024

Evangelism in Paul's Letters

John Farley
Pastor-Teacher
Lighthouse Bible Church

Let's welcome Pastor John Farley to finish our study of evangelism.