

March 2024 - Intro. to Apologetics for Chatting

Hello everyone. My name is Diana Stewart.

I want to talk to you today about an interesting way to engage seekers with the gospel that I've recently been using with some success. I thought you might want to give it a try.

What I'm sharing with you is not from any brilliance on my part; these are things I've learned from others. I'm not sure I have ever had an original thought.

Not too long ago Preston Condra, a pastor, author, and evangelist, spoke at my church on the topic of, "Sharing Christ Effectively." One of his many books is called, *Can I Ask You a Question?* (show book) This book meets 40 common objections to the gospel with great responses. Very helpful tool!

Many times in a chat we can find ourselves trying to persuade someone about Jesus who does not even believe the Bible. Has that happened to you? They could care less what the Bible says about Jesus.

Other times we encounter people who have never really thought about the Bible. They're not opposed to it, but they also really don't know enough about it to attach any merit or weight to it when we use it to talk about Jesus.

So, to tie this back to what we started with, a good segue into presenting the gospel to an unbeliever might start with the title of Preston's book; "**Can I ask you a question?**" followed by, "It's a spiritual question so if you don't want me to ask I understand." Now, don't miss this: The act of seeking permission opens the door for us to share more. Getting permission is important!

When they say, "Go ahead and ask," your next question is, "**What do you think of the Bible?**" That question gives us great insight into our seeker. If they think it's a fairy tale it will do us no good to start sharing the Romans Road, right? We would know we have to back up and begin to follow the tips I gave you last year about conversing with skeptics. If you need to review just go to our Coach Resource page and begin watching the videos from Stand to Reason for chatting with Skeptics and Atheists.

But if your chatter says they don't know a lot about the Bible, my next advice comes from the Alpha Group. In Video 2 of their series, they offer some very helpful facts about the Bible. We have put these into a "facts resource" to share with your chatter.

Let me share a short personal example of how all this can come together:

I was chatting with a man from India a few months ago who was Hindu. He told me he had no purpose in life. After telling him God had a great purpose for his life, I asked him, **“What do you think of the Bible?”** He didn’t really know anything about the Bible. I told him, “I want to share some things from the Bible about God’s purpose for your life but first, would it be okay if I gave you some facts about the Bible so you would know it was trustworthy?” He said, “Yes.” (Notice I received permission.)

I shared the incredible facts from the Alpha Group that describe Textual Criticism comparing how many copies of a document we have and what is our earliest copy. For the Bible, we have 5,000 + ancient Greek manuscripts, 10,000 Latin ones, and 9,300 copies in other languages. I told him how that compares to other ancient documents we trust, such as Tacitus, which was written in AD 100. We only have 20 copies of that and the earliest copy we have was penned 1,000 years later in AD1100. Caesar’s Gallic War was written in 58-50 BC. For that, we only have 9 or 10 copies, with the earliest copy penned 950 years later in AD 900.

In contrast, the New Testament was written AD 40 -100, and we have 1,000’s upon 1,000’s of copies of ancient New Testament manuscripts. Not only that, but we have fragments as early as AD 130. More than 2,000 times the Bible says it is the Word of God. There is no other book on the planet like the Bible. It is trustworthy!

My chatter said, “Okay, okay I believe you!” Then I shared God’s rescue plan from the Bible and this former Hindu man prayed to receive Jesus!

Hey ... Try it out. You might like it! Bye for now.