

Attacking Deconstruction - Iron on Iron 2020

Introduction

It has become very popular for people who at one time considered themselves to be Christians to “deconstruct” their faith and move away from orthodox Christianity. One of the biggest problems with this is that it often leads them to a place where they feel like they can just “pick and choose” what to believe regardless of whether or not it fits into a consistent worldview. We need to challenge students to think in terms of an overall worldview and demonstrate that Christianity is the only worldview that is both *externally consistent* (making sense of the world around us) and *internally consistent* (not holding contradictory beliefs).

Another word of introduction

At the beginning of this year I was thrown for a huge loop when Rhett and Link published their “Spiritual Deconstructions”. For those of you unfamiliar with Rhett and Link they are a YouTube, comedy duo that began as committed Christians and have now rejected Christianity. It really messed with me for a while because we share the same basic background. They grew up in the same basic context that I did. We have read the same books, listened to the same sermons and even have mutual friends (I don’t

mean on Facebook, but actual real life mutual friends). And when I listened to their stories it broke my heart.

This session is partly in a reaction to what they shared. Rhett basically laid out an academic rejection of Christianity, and Link seemed to reject it for more emotional reasons. But let's really think about it. As Spencer mentioned in the morning session from Jude 17 these false teachers are following their own ungodly passions. And to be honest even with Rhett it doesn't look like he was led away from Christianity by academic arguments. He even mentioned that he no longer feels like he has a need for certainty and that he has jumped out of the "ship" of Christianity but hasn't jumped into any other "ship" but that he is just floating in the sea of uncertainty.

This isn't the way that an academic battle is won. People are won over by the evidence, yet all Rhett seemed to do was question everything and has just decided to give up on being certain about anything. Now, I don't want to be too sarcastic here, but you gotta ask the question, "Are you certain you want to give up on certainty?". He has resigned himself to self-identify as a "hopeful agnostic". But let's be honest, if you are an agnostic you can't possibly have any hope at all. You have to have something that is true that can give you this hope.

So now what? How do we address this? How do we prepare our students for this wave of Deconstruction that is threatening to crash over them? This summer I did a breakout session dealing with specific cultural objections to the Bible with the desire to help students prepare for difficult questions. Those were: Genocide, Slavery, Oppression to Women, and Hell. You can access that breakout audio and notes on our website. What I want to do now is to take a step back to talk about how Christianity provides the only consistent way of viewing the world. The reason for this is because it seems like people can easily get bogged down dealing with specific questions but in so doing they are missing the forest for the trees.

The Impossibility of the Contrary

So here is my big point. I firmly believe that it can be reasoned that Christianity provides the only worldview that actually makes sense of the world in which we live. Instead of focusing on specifics, let's take a step back and look at generalities. All too often we get too nit picky because we want to show how one leaf looks different from another leaf but that pails in comparison to the whole forest.

So let's talk about the universe we inhabit and look at 2 sets of triads (if they were good enough for Jude, they're good enough for me).

1. Reason, Science, and Language
2. Truth, Goodness, and Beauty

Caveat: There will always be mystery

In the summer breakout we spent time looking at difficult questions, which is super helpful. The goal was to help keep a firm foundation in the Bible. However, at the end of the day we are still finite minds, trying to understand an infinite God. The point is that Christianity provides the proper context for us to even ask these questions. Naturalism does not.

Borrowing from God

Here is the deal, we can't get away from the fact that we are human beings, created in the image of God, living in God's world. It is as simple as that. When we talk about these 6 things (and anything) we have a solid foundation, not only for what we believe

but also for why non-believers believe them. It is because they too are image bearers of God, living in God's world.

Let's get down to the nitty gritty

1. Reason:

- 1.1 We use words like "rational" "common sense" but where does that impulse come from?
- 1.2 We ask the question "why?" to someone or even to the universe (we'll get to that next) and expect an answer. Why?
- 1.3 When someone acts outside of the bounds of rationality, we assume there is something wrong with them
- 1.4 If you and I are just a higher level of animals then when did this rationality come into existence?
 - 1.4.1 Darwin's doubt - "But then with me the horrid doubt always arises whether the convictions of man's mind, which has been developed from the mind of the lower animals, are of any value or at all trustworthy. Would any one trust in the convictions of a monkey's mind, if there are any convictions in such a mind?[To William Graham 3 July 1881](#)"
- 1.5 We have rules and laws of logic... how is that if everything is material? How do we explain the existence of non-material realities if there is no such thing as non-material realities?

1.6 Reason itself rests on assumptions that elude rational proof but that are taken on faith. (Veith Jr., Gene Edward. Post-Christian)...
whuh oh

2. Science:

2.1 Again here, why do we assume that the universe itself is intelligible? Einstein - "The most incomprehensible thing about the Universe is that it is comprehensible". That rewords a passage in a 1936 article in the Journal of the Franklin Institute: "The eternal mystery of the world is its comprehensibility ... The fact that it is comprehensible is a miracle."

2.2 We also have laws of nature? Aren't those laws non-material realities?

2.3 "Mathematics is the language in which God has written the universe." Galileo

2.4 The deeper that we get into the mechanics of the universe the more ordered it appears: The mathematical order of the universe goes beyond this or that particular example of intelligent design. Mathematics shows that everything is designed. Even randomness can be accounted for mathematically. (Veith Jr., Gene Edward. Post-Christian . Crossway.)

2.5 That mathematics "works" would suggest that there is a connection between mind and matter. Or that there is a Mind that has constituted the physical world, making it possible for lesser minds to apprehend it. (Veith Jr., Gene Edward. Post-Christian)

3. Language:

3.1 We cannot think without language...

- 3.2 How is this possible? When did language evolve?
- 3.3 How are we hard-wired for language without an intelligent designer?
- 3.4 Do you see this? For a non-Christian to use his language to say that there is no Creator is ludicrous. It is like a child crawling onto their father's knees in order to slap him in the face.

4. Truth:

- 4.1 This would be laughable if it wasn't so heartbreaking.
- 4.2 We are reaping the consequences of the postmodernist movement and our popular culture is totally fine saying that there is no such thing as any absolute truth. Of course, who are you to impose your truth onto someone else, that is so oppressive.
- 4.3 And I don't want to be too sarcastic (yet again) but the statement "there is no absolute truth" is 100% self-defeating. Like we talked about yesterday with the death of the author. Relativism does not work.

5. Goodness:

- 5.1 This is huge. Where do we get any standard of morality? If we have no moral standard then you cannot use words like: good, bad, fair, just, evil... you just can't do it.
- 5.2 Christianity is constantly getting questioned with the "Problem of Evil" but naturalism has the even greater "Problem of the Good". Where does this standard of goodness come with which you are trying to disprove Christianity?
- 5.3 We are moral creatures created in the image of God. That is inescapable. All of these non-Christian philosophers and thinkers

can say that they don't hold to any absolute standard of morality, but when you punch them in the stomach and steal their wallet, they will cry out for justice. Yet, they will do so without a foundation in their own thinking.

6. Beauty:

- 6.1 SWO is located in such a beautiful valley. Every day I'm struck by this. Or even last night I was driving with the boys with the top off of our Jeep and Parker was talking about how awesome the stars were. And nobody can watch the sunrise or sunset and not acknowledge the inherent beauty of the world that we live in. But where does this impulse come in? How is that?
- 6.2 We have all been created in such a way that we have receptors for beauty. Not just that, but each of our 5 senses are able to give us so much pleasure. Why is that? Where does that come from? It comes from the fact that God is good God who created a good world that he intended for us to enjoy.

Conclusion

The Christian worldview provides answers to all the big, real-life questions that our students are asking. But more than that it provides the context to be asking all these questions in the first place. When we come across specific, difficult issues let's remember to point our students to the fact that they are even able to ask those questions in the first place.