

General Topics :: How much should we know?**How much should we know? - posted by saved_matt (), on: 2005/10/26 15:18**

How much should we know?

'about what?' you may ask

Well counter-christian arguments is my object of discussion for this forum, as an open air evangelist i have found knowledge of the creation/evolution debate to be vital even if it's just for the purposes of showing someone there is actually a debate taking place (it doesn't get much press in england), anyway there is barely a one-to-one discussion i have when it doesn't come up in one form or another.

So my question again 'How much should we know?' should we know about buddhism to talk to buddhists, i spoke with a buddhist recently and frankly because i knew nothing about his beliefs i feel i was not as effective as i could have been, however when i got onto the theme of the rejection of God and what Christ did for him on the cross he did get a bit anxious.

Also i know a little about Islam and i mean a little, they believe the OT is the inspired Word of God that's a great piece of weaponry for your arsenal there. This has helped me to witness to muslims in the past.

anyway should we know about these false beliefs in order to counter them or should we just know the Truth and we will be able to spot error a mile off?

matt

Re: How much should we know? - posted by dohzman (), on: 2005/10/26 15:56

witness/witnesses

For more street or one on one ministry it would be good to grasp the idea of what a witness is. Do a word study on that. Much of what bro. Jesse and Ray Comfort & some others I have noticed do is more on the lines of apologetics or a defence of the gospel. They use the law of God to defend a position that God is taking toward mankind (that is one method you can take). We are all called to be witnesses, few are called to be apologists. If I have seen something I can get on a stand and witness to that fact and my testimony to what I have witnessed is quiet effective. In christianity the Holy Spirit will prove out our testimony with supernatural signs and wonders, Or often times with a deep sense of conviction behind our testimony. Think of the court scene.

(The sad fact with much of the church is that her people neither have the empowering of the Holy Spirit nor anything they can testify of as having witnessed). No genuine experiencing of Christ in their lives. On a personal note, I love simplicity so I don't try to upload a lot of information to the people I speak to. If I have a lot of knowledge, say in different religions, it's only for the purpose of discerning quickly where an individual is coming from (background). However I still keep it very basic, very simple, very straightforward. I witness to things which I have both seen and heard

:-)

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2005/10/26 16:06

I've heard a preacher say something to this effect: Apologetics are the bait, but the law is the hook that brings conviction. If all you have is bait it will do no good.

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Re: - posted by allhavsinned (), on: 2005/10/26 16:20

I will remember that. I have found that a lot of people are pleased to find someone who has an answer to their questions, this leads them into wanting to know more about my faith. You put it better with your quote. Thanks.

I Pet 3:15 ...and ready always to an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

I think this 'be ready' is more to do with confidence in Christ than knowledge

Re: - posted by PaulWiglaf, on: 2005/10/26 22:22

If I remember correctly, the term used for "to give an answer" in Greek translates literally "to give a defence" (Apologia), where we get the two words "apology" and "apologetic". Even Paul himself exercises knowledge of the world's ways as a tool to direct their thoughts to God (Acts 17:16-34). Therefore, we must know our enemies, as the maxim goes: "I want my friends close, but my enemies closer", so one can watch them with scrutiny.

Yet, we must always remember that Paul and the other apostles were diligent in studying the Word. If we try to just study the world and forget the scriptures, then no wonder the church is so confused; however, we must also remember that many of the greats, such as C.S. Lewis, Jonathan Edwards, R.A. Torrie, and others, made sure they understood the world around them.

As the Lord said, "You are the light of the world", and light, when shining without hindrance, will illuminate *all* its surroundings--displaying both the dangers and the deliverances to be found.

Keep on seeking after Christ (who Himself used His enemies words against them; c.f. Sermon on the Mount--Matt. 5-7)

Blessings,
Benjamin

Re: How much should we know? - posted by letsgetbusy (), on: 2005/10/26 22:35

A couple of verses I lean on concerning this:

2 Timothy 2:15 "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

1 Peter 3:15 "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear"

I think that people are liable to give you more respect when you show them that you are knowledgeable of other religions. I would say that the Lord should set it upon your heart how much you should learn about a subject. For some it becomes a lifelong study about another religion. The best would be to find a good testimony of someone who was converted from Buddhism.

Ergun Caner and David Nasser are converted Muslims who preach regularly on the subject. One was from a lukewarm Muslim family, the other a devout missionary Islamic family. I would love any resources of Christians converted out of other religions as I am sure Matt would, too.

I have also heard a great testimony of a converted Jew, though I can't recall his name. Very powerful and informative.

Re: How much should we know? - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/10/26 23:31

Here is a good place to pursue more on this:

<http://www.rzim.org/>

http://www.rzim.org/publications/jt_index.php

<http://www.rzim.org/radio/radio.php>

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Re: - posted by saved_matt (), on: 2005/10/27 3:25

crsschk

Something that recently brought this issue back to my mind was looking at Ravi Zacharias' site in particular his great conversations series, which includes:

- 1: The Lotus and the Cross: Jesus Talks with Buddha
- 2: Sense and Sensuality: Jesus Talks with Oscar Wilde
- 3: The Lamb and the Fuhrer: Jesus Talks with Hitler

The first and last I'd be very interested in reading, also testimonies of people who have converted from other religions would be awesome too.

thanx everyone

matt

There is a place for logic... - posted by groh_frog, on: 2005/10/27 6:08

I have to say that I respect the way that dohzman and parsly put it- too many people can get too into knowing their enemy, and not enough of the Word. I have been one of those.

I was raised a Baha'i. If you know anything about the Baha'i faith, it's basically a new-age type of "faith" where all religions are considered correct, and work together to, well, form a "ladder" so-to-speak. Basically, they would acknowledge that Jesus was a "messenger" of God, and the Bible is here to teach us about God. So, also, are Islam, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism...

Well, for me, studying other cults and denominational beliefs makes me question them, and consequently, why they are wrong, according to the Word. This, in turn has helped me to grow in my faith, and has been the primary indicator as to scripture that I memorize.

Often times, you will find that religion upon religion is wrong by the same premises and specific scriptural verses. But it doesn't take much to know why they are wrong (John 14:6).

Now, like said, it can be useful in specific debate or talking with a person about christianity. If you were to intellectually convict a Baha'i using the Law, similar to the way that Ray Comfort does, you would quickly find that he is probably familiar enough with general world religions to dismiss the Law as "God's teaching for that religious era". Knowing how to show him things like how Christ came not to abolish the Law, but to fulfill it, can be a step in the right direction.

Like dohzman would probably say, it's not our work that convicts a man. Don't underuse prayer, and don't underestimate the Holy Spirit in doing his work. It's up to God to convict, not us. Even when you can logically prove that they are following a lie, people don't often live by logic.

So, if I haven't confused you all with my babbling, I hope it is useful. Bottom line, it can be useful to study the cults, but don't use it as a replacement for studying the Word.

Grace and Peace...

Re: There is a place for logic... - posted by groh_frog, on: 2005/10/27 6:13

Something I should have included, also, is that I, as a former Baha'i, was not won over to Christ by logic, but by conviction. Part of being able to understand that, however, was understanding the fallacy in my "faith".

Grace and Peace...

love and knowledge work together - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/10/27 6:50

Quote:
-----Don't underuse prayer, and don't underestimate the Holy Spirit in doing his work. It's up to God to convict, not us. Even when you c
an logically prove that they are following a lie, people don't often live by logic.

Amen! In my youth I used to "witness" by taking the intellectual approach, using reason to prove the reality of God. People just fit what I say into their existing convictions. Really they adjust my words in order to suit their beliefs. (we all have a tendency to do that)

Now I see that it is not what or how much we know, but WHO we know that touches others. I must become less, Christ must become more. For many years I was too influenced by society - which stressed academics, knowledge, human understanding (humanism) Love was a rather meaningless, subjective word. Yet in Scripture, love is a powerful testimony.

That is not to dismiss the value of knowledge and understanding. It is just that those things don't have too much "sway" apart from our "Knowing Christ" and walking with him so that others may be drawn to HIM.
I learned that through experience.

Having said that, I know a missionary to the Muslims in Africa who uses the Koran to witness to them. His ministry is very effective. There are powerful statements of truth in the Koran.

In Bangladesh the missionaries say Allah for God. This would upset our western evangelicals, but in THEIR language it means GOD.

If I don't have love, I am as a sounding gong or clanging symbol.

Diane

Re: love and knowledge work together - posted by groh_frog, on: 2005/10/27 7:47

Diane, I think that's cool how that missionary you talked about is able to effectively use their Koran to show them the only true way. But I think you still have to be careful how much you allow things to bend when you share Christ and the Word.

You pointed out that they say Allah for God. Well, yes, that's their equivalent, but I think this is one instance where they are two very different things. For instance, did you know that Allah, before he was the muslim "god", was a pagan moon god of fertility? To this day, the symbol for islam is the crescent moon.

Again, you have to be careful with what you allow to be seen as the same. Like the Baha'is believe, all religions point to the same "god", just with different names, and different prophets. I would consider it an insult to the Lord Almighty to let it be said that he is the same as a pagan "god", like allah. Even if it's a concept that the muslims might understand.

I don't mean to attack you in this- and I think that missionary is probably awesome in serving the Lord, but I also believe it's very important to have a clear understanding that "we are not of this world", and our God is the only True God.

Grace and Peace...

Re: - posted by saved_matt (), on: 2005/10/28 12:47

The Lord gave me this word this morning in my time with Him,

Jeremiah 10:2,3a, Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are vain:

suppose that's pretty clear thank you all though

matt

Re: - posted by groh_frog, on: 2005/10/28 12:58

Hmmm...

I think there's a difference, however, between knowing what the enemy uses for ammunition, and, say, knowing how to participate in a seance or witchcraft ceremony.

Grace and Peace...

Re: - posted by saved_matt (), on: 2005/10/28 17:56

groh_frog

thank you so much for your contributions to this forum especially your testimony, I did notice early on in the forum, people emphasising the need to be thoroughly grounded in the Word, I myself do not feel I'm grounded well enough to look at the teachings of other faiths yet, I get a sense from the Lord of more a 'wait, not yet, your not ready' than a 'do not look at all' if that makes sense.

thank you very much though

matt

Re: - posted by groh_frog, on: 2005/10/29 1:59

hey, like it was said earlier, "very few are called to be apologetics", and I believe that might be true. There is definitely more than just hands, or just eyes, or just ears, or just feet in the body of the Lord. Plus, if you knew nothing else than the Word of the Lord, you wouldn't be lacking in anything.

Grace and Peace...