

In the past would you have used either of these labels to describe yourself?

How would you respond to someone who told you they were an agnostic? (Don't forget about giving a reason for our **hope**.)

Pray

Pray for preparations for the Summer Fair and for opportunities to build links with people in our community.

Pray for those who have a particular ministry and calling as apologists and for those, such as Vinny Commons, who are engaged in full-time work as evangelists.

Pray for young people who will be attending Christian camps over the summer and for the opportunities that exist for them to hear the gospel and explore the meaning of faith with those of their own age.

Pray that God would pour out His Spirit so that people would have a spiritual hunger and would find in Christ living water and the bread of life.

David Phillips, June 2014

Giving an answer

Week 3 : Starting in the right place.



Athens : Read Acts 17.16-21

What is the picture we get of religion in Athens?

Why was Paul disturbed by this?

Does the spiritual environment in which we live disturb you?

Read Acts 17.22-34

What does Paul say here about these other religions?

How does he turn their religious devotion to his advantage?

What does Paul tell them about Jesus?

Our Parish

According to the 2011 Census 2 out of every 3 people in our parish say they are Christian. What do you think they mean by this?

How does this affect evangelism? If they are “Christian” do we need to evangelise them? How might evangelism be helped or hindered by what they already believe?

One in every 5 people say they have “no religion”. Why do you think the number of such people doubled since 2001?

The “no religion” figure is still quite low, and lower in the North West than the rest of the country. But what do people mean by this? Do you think they are consistent atheists? Or do they mean they are not part of an organised religion?

Think of someone you know who might call themselves an atheist. What do they actually believe about “life, the universe and everything”?

I wouldn't start from here.

You probably know the joke about the man who on being asked for directions to such and such a place replied “I wouldn't start from here”. There is an approach to apologetics that follows this way of thinking - it is called presuppositional apologetics.

In the first week you hopefully thought about evidence for the existence of God. Do you think it is possible, using evidence and reason, to persuade someone that the Christian faith is true?

What did our study last week suggest about why people are unwilling or unable to believe, despite the clear evidence for God?

Do you sometimes find yourself talking to others about your faith but seemingly talking at cross purposes?

The presuppositional approach says that an atheist is closed to evidence and reason because their presuppositions already exclude the possibility that God exists. Therefore we must help them to see the problems with what they believe, that it doesn't make sense and doesn't explain the world. Alongside this we also explain our own presuppositions and beliefs, show how these do make sense and explain the world. As we do this we also tell them the gospel, the call to repentance, faith and our hope. It needn't be as hard as it sounds.

Things people say.

Rather than a question suppose someone says to you “**I am an agnostic**”.

What do you think people mean by this?

Why do you think some people call themselves agnostic rather than atheist?