

*I don't have enough* **FAITH**  
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with Dr. Frank Turek      **PODCAST**

## Top Ten Ways to Advance the Gospel

(December 24, 2019)

Are you dreading the awkward Christmas dinner this week? You know, with the family members you haven't seen most of the year. You might not agree with them on religious issues, political issues, moral issues. You're worried there could be some trouble, but you still love these people and you want them to know Christ. What do you do? How do you turn those awkward family events into an event that can move somebody closer to Jesus? That's what we're going to talk about today. This just doesn't have to be a Christmas dinner. It could be at any time during the year. How do you move people closer to Jesus without making it so awkward?

About a year ago, I put something on our blog at [crossexamined.org](http://crossexamined.org): "[The Top 10 Ways to Advance the Gospel](#)" [correct title] over those holiday dinners. In fact, I don't even know if that's the actual title. I'll find the title here during the break, but I'll link to it so you can see what I'm talking about. I'd like to go through these top 10 ways you can move people closer to Jesus at these awkward family dinners. Whether it's a holiday or not; just generally, here are some good tactics to use. Let me say my friend, Greg Koukl, has some good insights on this. As you know, he's released the new version, the 10th year anniversary version, of *Tactics*. He's got some new tactics in there. We had him on the program a few weeks ago. You should listen to that program. He calls himself a "gardener". Now what does that mean? It means he's planting seeds; he's watering seeds. God, of course, brings the increase, but he does not feel like he has to get to the foot of the cross in every conversation with somebody. You shouldn't feel that way either. If you think that way, if you think, "I gotta get somebody all the way to the gospel. I gotta have them kneel and do the sinners prayer." and all that, you will never say anything, because there's just too much pressure. You just got to move the conversation forward. You need to plant seeds, as Paul said, some plant some water, God brings the increase (1 Corinthians 3:6-9)

So, Greg is saying, "Look, I'm a gardener. I'm just trying to get them to think a little bit more about these issues. Maybe it'll move them closer to Jesus." They may not accept Christ at

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Christmas dinner. But maybe you say something, or do something, that gets them to think about it. Then somebody else a week later says something, and somebody else a week later says something else, and something else happens and before you know it, maybe at some point in the future, they become a Christian. It's not your job. In fact, you can't do this. You can't bring people to Christ. All you can do is bring Christ to everyone. You can't bring everybody to Christ, all you can do is bring Christ to everyone. Sometimes that happens, in fact, most of the time it happens in small, incremental steps. So, don't feel that you have to have all this pressure to bring somebody to Christ, because you can't do that anyway. The Holy Spirit has to be involved and it's a process. It's not normally a one-time event.

You say, "Well, I know people who have, you know, evangelized folks and they became a Christian right away". Okay, sometimes that does happen. But I guarantee you when that happens, there was a whole bunch of seed planting that happened before then for that person to be ripe for the harvest when that other individual gave them the Gospel. In fact, my friend J. Warner Wallace puts it this way. You know, you think you bring somebody to Christ, he uses the baseball analogy. He says, look, you don't have to hit a grand slam. You don't have to hit a home run. Just get on base. Just start moving people around the base path. You say something to someone, and they become a Christian. You think, wow, I brought that person to Christ. No, he was on third base leaning in already. Who got him to third? Somebody else did, maybe. Somebody else got them on base, and then to second, and then the third, and they were leaning in and you just happened to be right there for the harvest. What you said, got them home. So again, you don't have to bring everybody to Christ in one conversation. It's very unlikely that happens, and when it does, it wasn't that one conversation that did it anyway. There were a whole number of events that occurred before that.

So, here's some ideas that you can use to bring people closer to Christ. Now one of the easiest things you can do at a holiday dinner is volunteer to do the prayer. Do the prayer. Start praying now for opportunities, and for hearts to be open, and then volunteer to pray before the meal. Now no one, and I mean no one, will interrupt or critique a prayer. You just don't do that. So, here's how I recommend you do the prayer. Keep the prayer short. Thank God, which is what you ought to do. We're not manipulating people here. This is what you ought to do in a prayer. You ought to thank God for the family members who are there, and their guests, and thank God by [their] name. Thank you for Aunt Bea, thank you for Uncle Art, thank you for cousin Susie.

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Whatever. Thank God that they're there at the dinner table with you. Thank God for them by name.

Of course, you want to thank God for the food and His provision. Then you can thank God that the first Christmas is about the person of Jesus. That's why we're celebrating this. That Jesus came to pay for our sins and to offer forgiveness and salvation: "Lord, thank you for your salvation. Thank you that you came to offer us salvation for free if we place our trust in you." I mean, that is why we're celebrating Christmas. That Christ actually came to earth and anyone who trusts in Him, anyone who accepts the free gift of salvation, based on the sacrifice He made, can have their sins forgiven and Christ righteousness imparted to them, and they can enjoy eternal life with Christ. I mean, after all, if there ever was a time when people expect you to talk about Jesus, it's during a prayer on the day we celebrate His birthday. I mean, right? Come on. So, volunteer to do the prayer. Just keep it short. When you got all that food on the table, people don't need this pompous prayer where you go on and on for 10 minutes as the food's getting cold. That'll just annoy people. Just thank God for the family there, thank God for the food, and thank God for Jesus, and that He came to save us. So, that's one way you can just plant a seed. That may spur conversation later, it may not, but [unintelligible].

That's number one. Start praying now for that opportunity. Start praying for the hearts to be open at this Christmas dinner you're going to have, or Christmas Eve dinner, whatever you're doing, or any event you have. You could be listening to this program, or this podcast, in July. It's still going to be the same thing. Pray for people.

The second thing you can do is serve. In other words, get off the couch and serve people like you're a real Christian. Wouldn't that be nice? Serve them.

Thirdly, and I think this is one of the most important things you can do, is you can seriously ask people how they've been doing. How they have been doing this year? Then, if you have a one on one situation with somebody, this might be a little awkward in a group, but if you're having a conversation with a family member or friend during this year, you might ask them, "Is there anything I can pray for you about?" I mean, most people will say, "Sure. Yeah, you can pray for this and pray for that." If something about Christianity comes up in the conversation, then you can use Greg Koukl's tactics. The three questions that represent the core of Greg's book are

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these tactics such as, “What do you mean by that?” Somebody says something, you're going to ask them a question. “What do you mean by that?” “How did you come to that conclusion?” Or “What evidence do you have for that?” “And have you ever considered \_\_\_\_\_?”

I'll talk more about those in a minute; they're really part of the fifth point I want to make.

But I just want to preface that when somebody says something, it's not your job to refute what they say. It's their job to support what they say. So, if somebody says, I can't believe the Bible because it's been changed throughout the centuries, you don't want to give them a dissertation on why it hasn't been changed. You want to ask them, “What do you mean by that?” “How did you come to that conclusion?” In other words, ask for evidence. So, those questions are helpful. Here are some other questions you can ask. Well, I'll get to them right after the break.

You're listening to, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*, with Frank Turek on the American Family Radio Network. Our website is [crossexamined.org](http://crossexamined.org). That's CrossExamined with a D on the end of it.org. If you haven't availed yourself of our YouTube channel, you need to. We've got over 600 short videos up there you can share with people. Most of them are Q and As from the college campus, so they're short and to the point. Just check that out. We'll be back here in just two minutes. Don't go anywhere.

Today we're talking about The Top 10 Ways to Advance the Gospel at holiday dinners, or at any dinner. If you want this, it's in a post that I put on our website, [crossexamined.org](http://crossexamined.org), a year ago. Just go to the search engine, look for [The Top 10 ways to Advance the Gospel](#) at holiday dinners, right there at [crossexamined.org](http://crossexamined.org). This happens to be from December 19, 2018, but it's still relevant today. Only a year old. Much of what I'm saying is from that post, because we ought to be able to move people closer to Jesus. Maybe not all the way to the foot of the cross. We're just planting seeds, but we want to be deliberate about the most important thing we can do besides worship, and that is, we can help others know about Jesus. That's what these tactics, these ideas we're talking about today, will help you do.

So, we said, prior to the break, pray and serve. The third thing we're talking about is ask. Ask people how they're doing. If Christianity comes up, here's some questions you can ask: “Do you consider yourself a Christian?” See what they say. You can also ask, if they're not a Christian,

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“Why are you not a Christian?” Because you're really trying to figure out well, why is somebody not a Christian right now. Maybe you ought to just ask them, “Why are you not a Christian?” Then just see where the conversation goes. It's really hard to know what kind of solution you can provide for a person, unless you know what the problem is, or what obstacle that stands between them and Christianity. You can't overcome an obstacle that you don't know they have. So, you might as well ask them, why are you not a Christian?

Then the question that I have spoken about many times on this program, is this, “If Christianity were true, would you become a Christian?” Or you could say it differently, because sometimes “Christian”, for people, they have the wrong idea of what “Christian” is. They think well Christian might mean, I'm just a good person. Or, of course, I live in America, I'm a Christian. Or they may have negative, obviously, connotations about Christianity. So, instead of asking them, if Christianity were true would you become a Christian? Maybe you want to say something like, “If Jesus rose from the dead to prove he was God, would you follow him?” See what they say. That takes the whole misunderstanding about what the word Christian means right out of the equation.

Now, as I've said before, a lot of times when you ask that question, you'll get people hesitating, or they'll say, “No, I wouldn't become a Christian.” Because the problem is not in their head. It's in their heart. They're not on a truth quest, they're on a happiness quest. They don't want it to be true. They don't want there to be a God because they want to be God of their own lives. They don't want somebody telling them what they can and can't do and that's, unfortunately, what it appears God does sometimes. I want to be God. I don't want God to exist. They think that if God exists, He's going to get in the way of their pursuit of happiness. Well, I've got news for you. Ultimate contentment and happiness only come through truth and Jesus is the Truth. Of course, Jesus famously (John 8:32) said, “That you shall know the truth and the truth will set you free”, which implies if you don't know the truth, you're in bondage. If you need the truth to set you free, if you don't know the truth, you're in bondage. Yeah, you're in bondage to your sin. You're in bondage to your own selfish desires, and, until you accept Christ, that will continue.

So, ask the question, “If Christianity were true, would you become a Christian?” Or, “If Jesus rose from the dead to prove he was God, would you follow Him?” See what people say.

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Unfortunately, many times the issue is not intellectual, because intellectual issues are actually relatively easy to overcome. It's the emotional issues that are harder to overcome. Or the will that's harder to overcome. If somebody doesn't want Christianity to be true, it doesn't matter how much evidence you give them, they're not going to believe. In fact, it might annoy them that you're giving them evidence. They want to suppress that truth to go their own way, as Paul says in Romans one.

So, pray, serve, ask. Also listen. Listen. You know, if they ask you how you've been doing, maybe you can fold in a story about how God is working. Or if they don't ask you, just keep listening and keep asking them. Keep asking them what they're up to. If they only want to talk about themselves, let them. That's fine. Learn more about them. By the way, this is not just true in interpersonal relationships, it's also true in business. I remember once, when I was back in business doing corporate training, I was interviewing the CEO of a company in order to do training for him. I asked him a half hours' worth of questions, just to try and learn about him and what his situation was. After the half hour of questions, he finally looked at me and he said, "Frank, you're a good listener." I said, "Well, thanks, Bill." And he said, "Who has the power in this conversation?" I go, "I don't know. What do you mean?" He goes, "You do." I said, "Why?" He said, "Because you know everything about me, and I know nothing about you." You say, "Well, that's a good point."

But, if you really want to make people feel important, because they are important, ask them questions and then listen. You should be talking 20% of the time. They ought to be talking 80% of the time. So, listen. Listening demonstrates care and concern and that the person is valuable. So, in order to listen, sometimes you have to ask. So, ask questions. That's number four.

Number five of The Top 10 Ways to Advance the Gospel at holiday or any dinner is to use tactical questions, especially when they get something wrong. As I mentioned a little bit earlier, when people make truth claims, it's not your job to refute them. It's their job to support them. So, before responding to their statements, you want to ask some questions: "What do you mean by that?" "How did you come to that conclusion?" Or "What evidence do you have for that position?" And then, "Have you ever considered \_\_\_\_\_?" And then you fill in the blank.

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So, let's use an example I brought up a minute ago, a few minutes ago. I can't believe the Bible because it's been changed throughout the centuries. "What do you mean by that? What do you mean it's been changed throughout the centuries?" See what they say. They probably think the Bible got to us like the telephone game. You know, you tell somebody something, he tells somebody something else. It goes through a chain of, you know, these verbal commands. Or these issues are passed on verbally, from one person to another, and by the time it gets to the end of the chain, it's garbled. It doesn't reflect what the original message was. That's not how we got the Bible. That's how people think we got the Bible. Just ask, "What do you mean by that?"

Then, secondly "How did you come to that conclusion?" Or, "What evidence do you have for that?" If you want to customize that question, for that particular objection, you can. You can say, "What do you mean by that?" Or, "How did you come to that conclusion? Have you investigated the manuscript evidence for yourself?" I mean, how many people are going to say, "Yeah, you know, just last night I was up reading a book about the Byzantine line of manuscripts." Nobody's going to say that, right. Because most people don't have evidence for their false views. They merely have heard a slogan and they liked the slogan. They've never considered whether or not the slogan is really true. They just assume it is, and as soon as you ask them for evidence, they're out of intellectual justification in order to support the slogan. So, ask them, "How did you come to that conclusion?"

The third question...again, this is all from Greg's book *Tactics*, which I highly recommend you get. Some of these questions, by the way, are on our app, the CrossExamined app. (you can download that as well), in the quick answer section. The third question is, "Have you ever considered?" "Have you ever considered that the New Testament documents were not transmitted like the telephone game? They were written down by eyewitnesses, and then these manuscripts were copied and copied over and over again. And we have enough copies to compare the copies to figure out what the original said. More than 99% accuracy in that process. We know what the original said. Even skeptics like Bart Ehrman agree, we know what the original said." So, that's a polite way of providing some evidence back: "Have you ever considered?"

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So, “What do you mean by that?” “How did you come to that conclusion?” “Have you ever considered?” Use these questions when you're talking to people over a holiday dinner, or any dinner, or just any interaction. Again, you don't have to refute what they say. They have to support what they say. Before somebody is going to accept your worldview, they have to begin to doubt their worldview first. For those who are old enough you used to remember, probably, that people would sometimes knock on your door and try and sell you a vacuum cleaner. You know, they come into your house and they take a pillow off your couch and they use their vacuum to suck all these mites out of your pillow. And you're like, “Wow, I need this thing. This thing's amazing.” And they go, “Yeah, it's \$1400 dollars.” You go, “Whoa, it's a lot of money.” Now suppose that guy comes to your door, he knocks on your door, he shows you the vacuum cleaner, and you go, “Wow, that's great.” And then you go, “Hang on.” You go into your closet, you take out your vacuum, you show him your vacuum and he goes, “I want that.” That's not gonna happen right? Before he's gonna be interested in your vacuum cleaner, he's got to start doubting his vacuum cleaner. He has to find reasons that vacuum cleaner isn't as good as your vacuum cleaner.

Well, the same thing is true when it comes to worldviews. You don't think Uncle Art is just going to abandon his worldview at Christmas dinner this weekend, do you? Or, this week. No, you've got to start maybe giving him subtle reasons, or subtly given reasons, I should say, as to why his worldview may be faulty. One of the ways you do that is you ask questions. “What do you mean by that?” “How did you come to that conclusion?” In fact, we'll go through some specifics here in just a minute. You want to ask questions to the point where they're going, “Oh, yeah, I never thought of that. Oh, gee, I didn't know that's the way we got the Bible. Hmm.” You're just planting seeds, as Paul said.

So, ask those questions and provide some evidence back. Before somebody is going to accept your worldview, they have to begin to doubt their worldview first. They have to actually have a need to adopt your worldview. If there's no need, if they're perfectly comfortable with their worldview, why are they going to start looking at your worldview? Why are they going to consider Christianity? They don't think they have any need for Christianity. You can ask certain questions to get them to realize that they have a need.

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The sixth thing you can do, is you can seed the conversation. What do I mean by that? Sometimes issues are going to come up, and you can turn those issues, in a tactful way, to an issue related to Christianity. In fact, sometimes issues are going to come up that are objections to Christianity. There's a number of responses that you can provide. If they bring up hypocrites, or that Christianity is exclusive, or that atheism is true, or that science has disproven God, or that miracles don't occur so we shouldn't believe in Christianity, or the Bible is a conspiracy, or there are errors in the Bible, or there's too much evil in the world. Or you may even get issues related to politics, particularly with the impeachment that just happened. You know, Trump is evil, or the democrats are evil, or Christians are immoral, or there is no truth, or everything is subjective. These are all things you can turn to Christianity. After the break, we're going to talk about how to do that.

But before we do, are you looking right now for a meaningful gift for somebody you know, who's a Christian? You haven't gotten them a gift yet? Well, I've got good news for you. If you go to our website and click on Online Christian courses, you can actually buy a gift certificate for one of our Christian courses. Particularly, the new ones that are beginning in January. Wouldn't that be great to give them something that's going to actually bring them closer to Christ? We have, *Doubting Toward Faith*, with Dr. Bobby Conway. If you have someone that has a lot of doubts, that'd be a great course. Also, the *Textual Criticism* course, by Daniel Wallace. One of the top scholars in the world is teaching for us. Go to [onlinechristiancourses.com](https://www.onlinechristiancourses.com).

You know, I get so excited about things, sometimes I fail to look at the clock. And that's what happened in the last segment there. I was telling you to get a gift certificate to one of our online Christian courses. Actually, you can just get a gift certificate and apply it to any of the courses, whether it's Dan Wallace's course or Bobby Conway's course, or my course, or Gary Habermas' course, or J. Warner Wallace's course. Any of those courses you can get by going to [crossexamined.org](https://www.crossexamined.org). Click on "Online Courses" and you can give somebody a gift certificate that they can use in any of those courses. I was just pointing out that the the new courses that begin in January, are these Live Premium courses, where you will be live on Zoom Video with the professors themselves, to ask them questions on several occasions during the course. So, with Bobby Conway and his course, *Doubting Toward Faith*, or Dan Wallace, one of the top manuscript experts in the world, who teaches at Dallas Seminary. He'll be teaching these courses for us. You'll be live on Zoom Video with Dan. But you got to sign up for the Premium

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version. Just give your loved one the gift certificate that you can get by going to [crossexamined.org](http://crossexamined.org). Click on “Online Christian Courses”, or click on “online courses”, and you'll see them there. Of course, you can just give them the gift certificate, and they can choose the course they want to take. It's a great opportunity to give them a gift that actually means something at Christmas.

All right let's go back to what we were talking about. You're listening to, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*, with Frank Turek on the American Family Radio Network. We're talking about The Top 10 Ways to Advance the Gospel at holiday dinners, or any dinner, or any interaction. We were talking about the sixth way and that is to seed the conversation. Sometimes people will bring things up that are related to Christianity and you can then turn the conversation to a question, or a comment, that gets them to think about either the problem with their worldview, or the truth of Christianity. Say somebody brings up the fact, “Oh, you know, there are too many hypocrites in the church.” What should you say? Well, you could ask them, “What do you mean by a hypocrite?” “Somebody who doesn't live as he believes.” Okay, that's true. You can say, “Yeah, I agree with that. We don't, but if we could live up to our standards, then we wouldn't even need Jesus. We're all hypocrites. The church is a hospital for hypocrites. It's a hospital for sinners. It's not a country club for saints.” Yeah, I realize we're saints theologically, if we're Christians, because we have Christ's righteousness, but that's not the sense I'm using it here. What I'm saying is, we're still sinners, even after we've accepted Christ. And we're never going to live up to Christ's standards here on Earth. Not perfectly, anyway. We hope we're making improvements in our sanctification, through the help of the Holy Spirit, but we're going to agree with the objection when they say there are hypocrites in the church. In fact, when people tell me, “I can't go to church because there's too many hypocrites.” I always say, “Come on down, pal. We got room for one more.”

Of course, we're hypocrites. That's why we need a savior. If we were perfect, we wouldn't need a savior. You know, you can get to heaven by being good. You can. You just have to be good for your whole life and never do anything wrong. Well, I don't know about you, but I've already failed. Well, I do know about you. You failed too. That's why we need a savior. Christ wouldn't need to punish us if we were perfect, but we're not perfect. None of us are. When they say, “There's too many hypocrites in the church”, agree with them and say, “Why don't you join us?”

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Okay, how about if this objection of exclusivity comes up? “Well, I can't believe in Christianity because you know, it claims to be the only way and...” Well, first of all, one question you ask back is, “Do you realize that most, if not, well, there may be a couple of religions which think everybody goes to heaven, but most of them don't. Do you realize that most religions are exclusive? Do you realize that you don't really have a choice in some of these religions?” For example, in Hinduism, you don't really have a choice. You're just caught in this endless cycle of karma. You're going, either to higher levels, or lower levels of life in your next life, because of what you did in this life. And you really don't have much of a choice.

By the way, there's a couple of problems, as you know, with the eastern viewpoint. One, is it assumes a moral standard, and in that viewpoint, they don't have a theistic God whose nature is the moral standard, but they're assuming that karma actually exists and there's a moral standard by which you can judge whether somebody is being good or bad and should go to, either a higher plane of living in the next life, if they've been good in this life, or a lower plane of living in the next life, if they've been bad in this life. That assumes a moral standard, and their worldview doesn't have a moral standard, an objective standard outside of them.

Secondly, it assumes a being like God who can keep track of what everyone else is doing. They don't have that theistic God. I mean, how does karma work? How do people wind up where they should wind up morally in the next life if, number one, there isn't an objective moral standard, and, number two, there isn't a mind, an all-knowing mind, who can properly put them in the next place, or the next life, at the right level? Well, they seem to have to steal the Christian God in order to make their system work. Islam believes that salvation is exclusive. You're going to be in hellfire, according to Surah Five, if you're not a Muslim. Atheists don't think you have any choice at all. You're just going to become worm food. Look, every worldview is exclusive. In fact, truth is exclusive. If I say two plus two equals four, I'm excluding every other number when I say that. When they say that Christianity is exclusive, you can agree with it, but you can say, just about every other worldview is exclusive as well. That's the nature of truth.

You can also ask this question. “Do you think God should force people into heaven against their will?” “Really, do you think God should force people into heaven against their will?” You see, the assumption is everyone wants to go to heaven. That's not true. There have been people

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running from Jesus their entire lives and Jesus is going to be in heaven. So, what's He going to do in the afterlife? What's He going to say to them? "Oh, you need to be with Me now." How would that be loving? No, God gives people the object of their choice. If they want to be with God in the afterlife, then He accepts them because of the sacrifice Christ has done. If they haven't accepted what Christ has done, then God leaves them alone. That's hell; separation from God.

So, I mean, we could talk a lot more about that, but you can just put a few seeds of doubt in their claim that exclusivity...is that even a word? Am I making up a new word? I probably am. Anyway, put a seed in their doubt that truth being exclusive is a problem, because it's not. In fact, they're excluding Christianity when they say, Christianity is wrong because it's exclusive. They think they know how the afterlife works just as much as Christians do. They're saying they know how it works. And their view is exclusively true. And the Christian view is false. They're just they're being just as exclusive as Christians are. That's just the nature of truth.

How about if they say atheism is true? Well, you can say, "I don't have enough faith to be an atheist", if you want to be cute. But you can also ask them questions. "Why do you think that is?" "If there is no God, why is there anything rather than nothing at all?" "Why does something exist rather than nothing at all?" Of course, we've talked about the arguments for Christianity and theism in here, ad nauseum. You can go down that route, if you want. Or if you just want to say one thing, well, I just don't have enough faith to be an atheist and see if they respond. If they don't respond, they're not interested anyway. Doesn't matter.

How about if they say science has disproven God? You might want to ask them, "How has it disproven God?" "What do you mean by that?" If science is just about cause and effect in the natural world, how can science say a word about something outside the natural world? By definition, it can't, if that's your definition of science. By the way, science doesn't say anything. Scientists do. As I point out in the book, *Stealing from God*, you might just say that and see if they respond. Because science doesn't say a word. Scientists say things. That objection you can deal with in that regard.

How about if somebody brings up miracles? "Well, we don't see miracles today, so miracles can't occur." First of all, you might say, "Even atheists admit the universe began to exist out of

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nothing. Now that's the greatest miracle of all." The greatest miracle in the Bible is Genesis 1:1. If that verse is true, every other verse is at least possible. Even atheists are admitting the data for Genesis 1:1. They don't think it's God, but what else could it be? If space, time, and matter had a beginning, whatever created space, time, and matter can't be made of space, time, and matter. In other words, the cause has to be spaceless, timeless, immaterial. Powerful to create the universe out of nothing. Personal in order to choose to create, because only persons can make choices, and someone had to make a choice to create something out of nothing. Also, intelligent, in order to be a person to make a choice. Or to be personal to make a choice. Now when you think about a spaceless, timeless, immaterial, powerful, personal, intelligent cause, who do you think of? That's what we mean by God.

Miracles, by the way, have to be rare if they're going to get our attention. I mean, if miracles occurred all the time, or they occurred frequently, we wouldn't think they were anything unusual. We would say, "Well, this is just the way things are. This is the way things happen. These are, kind of, natural laws." [Miracles] have to be rare if they're going to get our attention. I mean, if resurrections occurred all the time, what would the resurrection of Christ mean to us? Nothing. You know, you go to somebody, you go, "Jesus rose from the dead for your sins." And the guy goes, "So what? Uncle Leroy just rose from the dead two weeks ago. Now I got to give the inheritance back." No, it can't be a regular event. It's got to be a rare event. So, you shouldn't expect to see many miracles, if any of them.

Now, by the way, Christianity does not need one miracle to occur since Jesus and the apostles, for Christianity to be true. There may have been no miracles since the first century and Christianity would still be true. Now, I think there have been miracles since then. We've had several podcasts in the past couple of years on that topic. Just go back and look for miracles. We've had a couple of shows with the great Craig Keener, who wrote that classic two volume set on modern day miracles [Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts]. We've had Lee Strobel on the show, *The Case for Miracles*. But even if they're wrong about miracles today, Christianity is still true, because the greatest miracles already occurred: the creation of the universe out of nothing. So, a resurrection is easy to believe if Genesis 1:1 is true! Even atheists are admitting the data for Genesis 1:1.

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What if they say about, “Oh, the New Testament writers just made it up?” Really? “What motive did the Jewish writers of the New Testament have to make up a new religion? They already thought they were God's chosen people and they were persecuted for saying the resurrection occurred. They had no motive to make it up; every motive to say it wasn't true.” Conspiracy doesn't work.

“There are errors in the Bible.” You know, you should say when they say that? “Where are they?” If they think they found one, you might want to say, So? Even if you're right, does that mean Jesus didn't rise from the dead?” Look, Christianity did not originate with a book. It originated with an event; the resurrection. “Why would Jews write the New Testament documents if Jesus didn't rise from the dead? They thought somebody claiming to be a God was blasphemy to begin with. They already thought they were God's chosen people. They're not inventing this. Even if they had errors in some of the details, which I don't think they did. But even if that's true, that doesn't mean the main story's false. The story is still true, even if there are errors in the New Testament. There aren't, but even if there are, your point doesn't really lead anywhere”

There are more objections we'll get you right after the break. You're listening to, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*, with Frank Turek. And I'll end before the music ends. So, don't go anywhere. We're back in just two minutes.

What are The Top 10 Ways to Advance the Gospel at holiday dinners, or any dinner, or any interaction? So far, we've covered pray, serve, ask, listen, use tactical questions when people get something wrong, and seed the conversation. If objections come up with Christianity, then say certain things that get people to be intrigued. We've covered: what about hypocrites? what about being exclusive? what about people claiming atheism is true? or science has disproven God? or miracles don't occur? or the New Testament writers had engaged in a conspiracy? or there are errors in the Bible? Those are all things that may come up.

What about this objection? You may get this. “Well, there's too much evil in the world.” What should your question be? “What do you mean by evil?” If they say, “Well rape is evil. Murder is evil.” Go “No, I don't want examples of evil. Give me a definition.” They're not going to be able to answer the question without appealing to good. See, evil is a lack in a good thing. Evil doesn't

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exist on its own. It only exists as a lack in a good thing, or a parasite in a good thing. Evil's like cancer. If you take all the cancer out of the body, you got a better body. If you take all the body out of the cancer, what do you have? Nothing. In other words, evil doesn't exist on its own. It only exists in a good thing. But if there is a good thing, then that means God exists, because God is what we mean by the standard of good. Whatever we mean by the standard of good, that's what we mean by God's nature. God's nature is the standard of goodness. And so, if you're going to say there's a lack in that standard, you're assuming the standard exists. This is why some atheists try and bite the bullet and say, well, there is no good or evil, because they know there's no way of justifying objective good or evil without God.

Now, if your worldview tells you that say, the Holocaust isn't evil, you have the wrong worldview. Don't abandon God. Don't abandon your deepest intuition that there is good and evil. Abandon atheism, because it doesn't fit with the facts. It doesn't fit with your deepest intuitions. So, when somebody says "here's too much evil in the world." [ask] "What do you mean by evil?" It can only exist if good exists, which means if evil exists, then God exists. Because God is the objective standard of good by which we won't even know whether evil exists.

The shadows prove the sunshine. In order to have shadows, you have to have sunshine. In other words, in order to have evil, you have to have good Oh, you can have good without evil. You can have sunshine without shadows. But you can't have evil without good. You can't have shadows without sunshine. So, point that out.

By the way, you may also want to point this out. That every worldview has a problem with evil, and should, and has to answer the problem of evil. The only worldview that can answer the problem of evil is Christianity. In fact, Christianity is the answer to the problem of evil. That's what the whole story is about. In fact, next week, we're going to talk about this in depth. That a CRIME was committed. We're going to go over the Bible from 10,000 feet in the next episode, and we're going to use an acronym CRIME. A crime was committed in the beginning and, the entire story of Christianity is the answer- the solution, to that crime. Evil is actually dealt with. That's why Christ came. He's the answer to the problem of evil.

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Now, since we've got all these political events going on in our country right now, you know, politics are probably going to come up. You might have people saying, "Trump is evil." You may have other people saying the democrats are evil. You know what you should say? "I agree. Trump is evil, and the democrats are evil, and so am I. We're all evil. All of us are evil. That's why we need a savior." Just turn it right back to the whole problem we all have, regardless of what your political views are. Agree. "Yeah, you're right. We're evil. Trump's evil, the democrats are evil, I'm evil, you're evil. We're all evil. That's why we need a savior. That's why we're celebrating Christmas. Because the solution to the problem of evil put on human flesh and came to earth to save us. That's why we're here."

GK Chesterton, a hundred years ago, answered an editorial in a newspaper this way. Here was the editorial question. The editor wanted people to write in and answer this question. Here was the question they asked: What's wrong with the world? Chesterton wrote back a two word response: "I am," he said. That's what's the problem with the world. We're the problem. We've seen the enemy and it's us. Okay? So, turn it back to Christianity.

By the way, I know people are wondering, what about all the program that you had a couple of weeks ago, when you talked about why evangelicals voted for Trump? Didn't you get some email responses to that? Yeah, I did. We're going to talk about them in a few weeks. Okay? We want to talk about these other issues. We'll get to the whole Trump thing in a couple of weeks. We'll talk about it then. So, keep sending me your emails. [Hello@crossexamined.org](mailto:Hello@crossexamined.org).

By the way, a lot of you have been asking about Ed Mang, the gentleman that I spoke about who wrote that editorial [about Trump]. It was actually in a comment at the New York Post. It actually, I've learned since then, that it wasn't probably authored by Ed Mang. It was authored by another gentleman at townhall.com, in 2017. And the title of the editorial was, He Fights. You can look it up. Google it. [He Fights. Townhall.com](https://www.townhall.com). I think it's in the transcript of the podcast. We're trying to put transcripts up of all these podcasts, all these radio programs. So, if you go to our website, you'll see it there, as well. Just wanted to clear that up. And we'll get to that in a couple of weeks. We got other things we're dealing with today.

How about if you hear, "Christians are immoral?" You might ask the question, "What do you mean by immoral? What standard are you using when you say someone's immoral?" And you

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might agree with them. “Yeah, we are immoral. That's why again, we need a savior.” I've noticed, by the way, most questions that we get today on college campuses are moral questions. They don't seem like they're moral questions, but they are. Questions like, “What about those that have never heard?” That's a moral question. God is somehow immoral for not getting the word to everybody, allegedly. Or, “Why did God create people he would go to hell?” That's a moral question. God is immoral for creating people he knew would go to hell. Or, “Why did God kill the Canaanites? God's immoral.” Or, “what does God have against homosexuality?” That's a moral issue. These are all moral questions.

So, you've got to get good at dealing with moral questions. One of the ways you can get good at dealing with them is, ask the person bringing up the objection what the standard of morality they're using in order to even bring the charge. How about if they say, “There is no truth?” Of course [you ask], “Is that true? Is it true there's no truth?” Or if they say, “Everything is subjective”, you might want to ask them, “Is that subjective?” That's an objective statement. In order to say something is subjective, you have to use objective tools to do so. You are appealing to an objective standard to even make that statement. So, anybody who claims everything is subjective, thinks that that statement is objective. And they're using these objective laws of logic to even say them. Those objective laws of logic are grounded in the nature of God. We couldn't even communicate without them.

What if they have all these objections? They keep bringing up these objections and they aren't listening to your answers. Let's go back to the question that we asked before: “If Christianity were true, would you become a Christian?” or, “If Jesus rose from the dead to prove He was God would you follow Him?” That just cuts right to the chase, ladies and gentlemen. It just gets people to consider what their real objections are. Most of the time, in my experience, it's not intellectual. It's volitional or moral. They don't want Christianity to be true because they perceive Christianity is going to get in the way of their autonomy. Christianity is going to get in the way of their goals. Christianity is going to get in the way of their happiness. They're not on a truth quest, their a happiness quest. You might also be the one to reveal it to them by simply just asking the question.

All right, those were a lot of objections we went through. We've only got a few minutes to cover the last four things you can do to advance the conversation toward the gospel. Agree.

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Number seven is agree and affirm whatever they get right. That will make points of disagreement more acceptable. Be fair and agree with things that they get right.

Number eight. Use the quick answer section of the CrossExamined app. If you haven't downloaded the CrossExamined app, why not? You're probably not even saved! Come on. Download the app. Two words in the App Store; cross examined. It's got this podcast, this radio program on it. It has our TV show on it, streaming live. It's got a quick answer section that can help you interact with people right on the fly. Right off your phone. So, you can get these questions that we're using right now in this podcast. You can not only listen to this podcast again, right on the app, you can also get some of these questions I'm using, because they're in the quick answer section of the app. You can also find more robust answers to many of these objections in the book, my latest book called, *Stealing from God: Why Atheists Need God to Make Their Case*. There's a DVD set you can get it on our website by the same name. Crossexamined.org. Just go there, click on store. So, that's number eight.

Number nine: show them what makes your walk with Jesus easier. How about the YouVersion of the Bible? The Bible Project videos. Have you guys seen The Bible Project videos? Go to the [Bible Project](#). Those guys are doing great work. The CrossExamined app. - look, people love short, clarifying videos. They love apps. They love gadgets. Show them what you're using right there on your phone. So, the YouVersion of the Bible, the Bible project videos on YouTube, or on their website, the CrossExamined app, the CrossExamined website. [Our YouTube channel](#), which has over 600 short videos. Most of them are Q&A videos from the college campus. They're there for your edification, for your use. Share them with other people. They're short. You can put them in an email. You can put them in a text. You can get the conversation going. In fact, if you don't know the answer to some of the objections brought up at the holiday dinner, you might want to go to the YouTube channel and see if one of those questions we've answered on campus. There's 600 of them up there. Chances are we probably heard a question similar, or exactly like the one that one of your relatives is bringing up over the holiday dinner.

Finally, number 10. The 10th way to Advance the Gospel during holiday dinners is, write them afterwards. You know, follow up on a conversation later via email. It can be very effective. Why? Because you can present your ideas more clearly and completely why the other person

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can actually consider what you're saying without feeling the pressure having to respond immediately. You can also include links to articles or websites that will help people go deeper.

So, these are things you can do, ladies and gentlemen, this week. Do them. Number one; pray. Number two; serve. Number three; ask. Number four; listen when people are speaking. Number five; use tactical questions when they get something wrong. Number six; seed the conversation, particularly when some of the objections to Christianity come up. Number seven; agree and affirm whenever they get something right. Number eight; use the quick answer section of the CrossExamined app. Number nine; show them the apps and gadgets you're using. And number 10; write them afterwards. Friends, bring people closer to Jesus this holiday season! That's what the season is all about.

Don't forget about those online courses. Get a gift certificate for somebody so they can take an online course beginning in January. I'm Frank Turek. See you next week.

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