



Fishing Stories: Ark Encounter episode

Sharing the gospel with "atheists" and "atheist leaders" who were protesting the opening of the Ark Encounter
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Greetings and welcome to this episode of "Fishing Stories" where we follow a fisherman, and in this case his family too, as they endeavor to share the gospel with normal every day people as well as unique people wherever the Lord opens a door and provides resources to share the gospel. I'm your host, Steven Henry.

So, my family and I got a chance to share the gospel with some atheist leaders the other day (now about 2 weeks ago). It was really cool... but also very hard! Normal everyday-atheists are fairly easy to talk to, because they aren't making profits off of sharing their religion of "atheism" and "evolution" and you can usually help them see the facts around them and share the Word of God with them, and you can see God actually working with them. "Atheist" leaders?... That's a totally different story :) ~ In this case, we had both here at this gathering.

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There were a lot of Christians from all across the US to see the opening ceremony of Ken Ham's new "Ark Encounter", in addition to his "Creation Museum". If you haven't seen either, you need to check them out - it will inspire you. Here are two links:

Ark Encounter - <https://arkencounter.com/about-the-ark/>

Creation Museum - <http://creationmuseum.org/>

And you'll notice, in this episode (if you didn't already) that I sometimes/often put the word "atheist" in quotations. That is intentional, but so that I'm not misunderstood, please allow me to clarify *why* I do that. You see, in John 1, John 3:16-21, Romans 1:18-32, and Galatians 3:23-25, God makes it clear that He is talking with every single living person on a consistent basis. To the unbeliever, He is convincing them of their sin and their continual need to repent before they die - literally, turning from their active sin-rebellion against God, turning to Christ, and making an eternal covenant with Him, through the blood of the cross - something Jesus referred to as the "New Covenant" (Matthew 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; 1st Corinthians 11:25; 2nd Corinthians 3:6; among others). I call that the "Covenant of the Cross" - it's similar to Biblical marriage in many ways, but marriage is a life-covenant between a husband and wife, while genuine salvation is an eternal covenant between God (the Creator) and men and women (humans). ~ So, back to the atheism subject: God is proving that He

exists, and the judgment is coming, and that Jesus is the Only Way to salvation - to every living person on planet earth, daily. So, why isn't everyone just turning from their sins and giving their lives to Jesus Christ? Well, some are, but the reason they don't is specifically referenced and explained in John 3:16-21 (19-21) and Romans 1:18-32 (18-20). What is it? God says they are "**without excuse**", but that they are rejecting what God shows to them through creation and the Bible, because they love their lawlessness and sin/rebellion, so they then move to "**suppress the truth in unrighteousness**". They have the right information (or at least enough that they could get right with God, according to their age and reasoning ability), but they reject obedience to God and hatred of sin because they love their sin, so they lie and reject God instead of giving up their sin. Their love for their sin is *stronger* than their love for God. So, "atheists" do not exist. We could *maybe* call them agnostics, but that just means to doubt or question if God exists... so even that, isn't an accurate Biblical definition. So, I don't really know what to call them, so my best approach is to call them evolutions, after their favorite false religion. :)

Here's a picture that is on topic:

Evolution is a big fairytale religion of atheist & rebels Romans 1:18-32

Genesis chapters 1-3 Romans 2:7-11

Interesting, yes? You see, even though I'm aware that (to some extent) atheists/evolutionists are suppressing the truth in unrighteousness, that doesn't let me/us off the hook from sharing the gospel and the Word of God (the Bible) with them. Why? Because reasoning with the people from the Word of God is what Jesus did and what He teaches His disciples to do. So, if He did it, we need to learn how too. Paul the apostle had a tremendous example - he would reason with the unreasonable Greeks and Hebrews in the synagogue week after week after week, sometimes for 2 years, because Paul, unlike some today, knew what God meant for us to do in reasoning with people from God's Word to leave behind sin and more fully follow the ways of Christ. We, here in lukewarm America, need to study their examples to grasp what we should be doing instead.

Okay, with all that intro, let's review what actually happened there. You will find some - somewhat comical, versions of what happened there from the atheists/evolutionists. But, I'd like to just review who was there and what we talked about. **[Note to self:** use your video camera next time when in conversations... oh well :)]

So, my family arrived at the "Ark Encounter" (see picture albums at the end of this update) around 10AM, on July 7th, the official date where it was open to the public. As I understand it, the Ark Encounter opened around 8 or 9AM, so we got there pretty early in the day. Most of the Christians we saw there had already seen the Ark either on the 5th or the 6th, so it was a group of some return customers as well as new customers this day... including atheists/evolutionists... but I'm getting ahead of myself. :)

So, we got there, glanced around, gave our cameras and some tracts and then headed over to go join Eric Hovind and his team who were actually sharing the gospel with the atheists on a piece of public property not even a tenth of a mile away from the Ark Encounter entrance. We got there, briefly got the plan from Eric and then spread out to have conversations with atheists/evolutionists.

I got to talk a few, but couldn't really start any conversations at first, and then I realized that I could just walk over to the line of people facing traffic from the interstate and read their signs and maybe have some conversations there. So, that's what I did. I was walking through and, again, no real conversations. I quickly found out that the organizers of this atheist/evolutionist protest had warned those who came out to not talk to us, which they called "creationists", and sometimes it had a few more colorful words with it too. ~ At any rate, a few did talk to us (quite a few actually). But, the first one I got to talk to was a lady holding two different signs, and when I asked if I could see the other side of both, she just handed them to me.

The signs (which I sadly did not get pictures of), basically were mocking God from the atheistic/evolutionist 'definitions' - meaning, they made/make up a system of thinking and definitions that works with their ideology and false religion. It's like Disney, they work hard to explain things in a way that completely excludes God, their Creator. So, the signs just mocked God, often using examples of where those who were supposed to be God's leaders did things that not only displeased God, but also allowed those who reject God to falsely accuse God, because of what they did. One example quite a few of them referenced was when Noah got drunk and another one they referenced was when Lot (Abraham's nephew) was made to become very drunk by his two daughters and then they had babies by him. You can find the honest discreet stories in Genesis 9 and Genesis 19. Sad stories for grownups to study, not little children, and lessons for all of us to not do things we know are wrong, even when things are really, really bad or painful (Romans 2:23-24 talks about this some). ~ Anyway, so that's what some of their signs had. Others were criticizing God for how He created some things. Like insulting Him for the bat, which isn't a bird. I think there was also some false accusations against God because of the Mosaic law God gave the Jewish people, telling them what they could and couldn't eat... I think you get the point - just light to harsh mocks of God their Creator.



So, after I read this lady's signs (the lady in the red and black shirt - sorry, I do not remember her name, so I just pray for her by her face), she asked me what I thought of my sign. Now, I had a straw-hat and a Creation-Today shirt on, as well as "I love Jesus" lanyard, but across my shoulder was my camera bag, so I guess at first glance, this lady couldn't tell who I was, but she was also a talkative lady. She talked with most if not all of us evangelists/creationists. Do pray for her and her family. Thanks! ~ So, I asked her some questions to start dialogue, and then was working through the logic of reality and Scripture to lead toward the gospel. This lady and I were talking maybe 5 to 10 minutes, when a middle-aged gentleman joined the conversation and sort of took over the conversation. So, then he and I talked for 20-30 minutes. I later found out that this man is AronRA (who I still didn't really know anything about, until hearing from others and looking up his website (on the pagan patheos.com) as well as his youtube page. Btw, the RA at the end of his pseudo-name stands for "Reason Advocates". I don't know if Aron is his real name or a pen name, but I do know that AronRA is not his name, but it is the name he goes by, and how he makes his living.



So, AronRA and I started off somewhere off in our conversation... I can't quite remember what topic we started on, but it start getting lively when we talked about beginnings. AronRA is absolutely sure (or states that he is) that we evolved from monkeys/apes, but not just any monkeys/apes, but a very, very, very specific type - and he can quote the latin to you too. (He likes to belittle the people he talks to.) So, when I asked if we came from apes, he proceed to give his long speech and then the humorous insults that I didn't know anything. I chuckled and we kept talking. So, then I asked if we evolved slowly or quickly? - a question he dodged (he did that a lot with everyone). So, then he proceeded to give a long scholarly-sounding speech about what evolved into what... it was actually the brief version, I'm sure, but it lasted 2 to 5 minutes, while I tossed in some questions here and there.

So, along the way, I looked for things to talk about that would lead to Scripture, and specifically the 10 Commandments - very hard to do, but you have to do that anyway, because God's Word is the infallible tool that God uses to convict and change hearts. And I don't know if AronRA is thinking about what we discussed (or his conversations with others), but I'm sure others in the group are - and that is the point of conversations like this, to share the gospel and get others thinking, then pray for them that they might turn from sin to Christ. So, anyway, along the way, I saw a place to pick up on his words and talk about the conscience. ~ Now, you have to realize that when an atheist/evolutionist leader uses the

word conscience, they don't mean the normal definition, or the Biblical one. No, they've created a version that doesn't exist - but it's what they use.

Atheists/evolutionists use the word "conscience" as though all created beings (including animals, which they say we are too) have a conscience and therefore know right from wrong. Atheists/evolutionists dodge what the standard of right from wrong is by pretending it's taught by the culture. But, the fact remains that animals do not have a conscience like humans have a conscience. God created man in His image (Genesis 1:26-28). God did not create animals in His image, but as helpers for man as well as to show, reveal, and prove that God is the Creator, that He loves us, and that one day we will all give a thorough accounting before Him of all of our deeds, words, thoughts, and motives.

So, back to the conversation with AronRA. AronRA was pretending that animals have a 'conscience' because they know when they've displeased you and when they do something you approve of, but it's evolutionary thinking, but not accurate. You see, as I then reminded AronRA, animals only know what you like and dislike - and they know they don't want you to be angry with them, but happy with them. That is a far-cry different from what the Bible teaches of a "conscience" that knows right and wrong from God and knows to do what is right because it is right, not just because God says it is, and to not do what is wrong because it is wrong, not just because God says so. AronRA then change subjects completely, because he had lost that argument. But before he changed subjects, we did also talk about the 10 Commandments briefly - it's the closest I got to sharing the gospel, but my Dad finished that part later. We sort of tag-teamed, by God's providence. I know there was more to the discussion, but I can't remember what other topics we covered. I do remember discussing the difference between true and false repentance, but that didn't go very far.



But, our conversation got drowned out for a bit, when our fellow laborer, Eric Hovind, and team walked over to the atheists. That's not because Eric was loud, but because the whole crowd of 40 atheists there erupted into chant-songs to try to chase Eric away. This went on for almost a minute. It was humorous, but the crowd did some chant-singing and then Eric was able to have some conversations with a few of the leaders and the crowd. And while he was talking with people on that side, AronRA and I continued talking for another couple of minutes. I do remember he ended it with 2 things.

1) AronRA invited me to have a public debate with him, probably because he thinks he will humiliate me and probably so. But, I'm considering and praying about if God would lead me to

do that in 4 or 5 years. But, I know that AronRA is only looking to humiliate Christians on film to increase his funding from sponsors. I, if the Lord leads, will not be trying to win the debate, but to reason with his heart and those listening about the Way, the Truth, and the Life, who is Jesus Christ. So, AronRA and I have two different motivations, but we'll see if God opens that door someday.

2) AronRA called me brainwashed as his closing argument. I laughed. He had just been saying that he only follows the evidence. So, I reminded him that he doesn't know me or my story, so he doesn't know the evidence, and yet he blank-check calls me brainwashed while still holding onto saying he holds to evidence. I just politely reminded him that he is rejecting people rather than hearing them out. I don't know if he even followed his own break in logic, but I know others around him did.

3) Pray for AronRA. Pray for his salvation. I honestly don't care that he doesn't in prayer. God explains that prayer is talking to God, the Creator, and the He answers the prayers of those who believe the Word of God (the Bible) and pray for the salvation and spiritual growth of others. So, I hope you'll join me in praying for him and his family and his friends. Will AronRA come to Christ? Who knows. But, he seems to have had a Biblical background that he has walked away from, for money. And he's apparently made a name for himself in the atheist/evolutionist communities. But, he dodges questions just like he accuses God and Christians of doing. But, again, despite his track-record - pray for him. Pray for him to turn from sin, or get shown as a hardened liar. God knows how to do both. And even if he stays in the hardened position of lying to make a living, maybe he'll still get saved on his deathbed. Just pray for him.



Eric had some great conversations, despite the insults flung his way. And you can read those, here:

<http://creationtoday.org/creationists-lead-21-atheists-protesters-through-ark-encounter-on-opening-day/>

<http://creationtoday.org/how-to-protest-an-atheist-protest/>



I had other conversations, including with a lady that I think her name was Debbie, with the mocking-Noah sign. She was interesting, but very hardened in sin. It was in talking with her that I found out what definition of 'conscience' the atheists/evolutionists were working with. She even said that she didn't believe that there is a thought-police God out there.. which I now realize shows that she's conflicted in her intentional disbelief. ~ Anyway, simply put: pray for her and pray for her family and her friends, that some of them might turn from sin to Christ.



And there were other conversations, including the one who was a leader of the "Tri-State Thinkers". He had a sign that was criticizing any tax-dollars being used to teach Creation in school... I tried to remind him that teaching Creation in schools was what was happening in schools until about the 1950s, and that evolutionists barged in, forced both views to be taught, and then forced Creationism and the Bible right out. But, he didn't want to talk really. He just wanted to protest, and I could only assume make money doing it... Again, pray for him, his family, and his friends that some of them might turn from sin to Christ.

And the last one on my mind would be my conversation with Gracey and her Mom (a name I've forgotten). It was a very good conversation about the gospel and creation and judgment and why Christ came. Good conversation ~ that family was hurt by a mean former husband/Dad,

but Gracey appreciated realizing that God does love her and can help her heal and then help others. So, pray for Gracey, her family and friends.



Other than that, I think I just passed out some gospel tracts, greeted the Mally family and friends (volunteers from Ken Ham's ministry) and prayed for them as they had conversations, and apparently some good ones, from what I heard. Madre got a lot of pictures and had a few conversations. My brother had some good conversations. And my Dad had some interesting conversations. I think the atheists/evolutionists numbered between 70 and 100, and the evangelists/creationists were about 20. I don't know more details to share about other conversations, except for the conversations between my Dad and AronRA, and my Dad and David Silverman, so that's what I plan to describe in part 2.

So, that is the end of Part 1 of 2. See the second part for more links, pictures, including the details of my Dad talking to AronRA and David Silverman.

Thank you for praying for us! We really appreciate it! I do apologize that we aren't always able to tell about events ahead of time. Sometimes the door opens last minute, and sometimes the people leading the evangelism event don't necessarily want a head's up posted publicly.

Make sure you are aiming and growing in sharing the Word of God and the gospel of Jesus the Christ with those around you! Praying for God to open doors for you too!

a fellow fisherman,
a growing servant/life-slave of Jesus,
and a growing disciple whom Jesus loves,
SH (Steven Henry)

Ending links:

Pictures from Photobucket of sharing the gospel in the "Ark Encounter protest":
http://s1339.photobucket.com/user/follower4Christ/KY-convos-with-atheists/story?fb_ref=Default

Pictures from Photobucket that give something of a visual tour of the "Ark Encounter" - but a real tour is much better! This is just a intro:
<http://s1339.photobucket.com/user/follower4Christ/library/KY-Ark-Encounter-Stevens-pics?sort=2&page=1>

I do apologize that I can't just give you the facebook link where I originally uploaded the pictures - FB isn't most people in the US or outside the US see those pictures. So, I had to upload them to Photobucket too. You shouldn't need a password or account. And if you need help with the link, just email me: Steven.H3(at)gmail.com.