



Fishing Stories: Ark Encounter episode (2 of 3)

Part 2 of 2 -- Sharing the gospel with "atheists" and "atheist leaders" who were protesting the opening of the Ark Encounter
(Date July 7, 2016) - Date of this article: July 31, 2016

Greetings and welcome to this episode of "Fishing Stories" where we follow the gospel-adventures of 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.

This is part 2 of 2. So, here's a quick catch-up and review. My family and I got a chance to share the gospel with some atheist leaders on July 7th, 2016. It was really cool... but also very hard! Normal everyday-atheists are fairly easy to talk to, because they aren't making profiting 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 on their hearts. "Atheist" leaders?... That's a totally different story :) ~ In this case, Christians and professing "atheists" were both here at this gathering. ~ If you didn't see Part1, I encourage you to check it. You can find that link here:

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/notes/steven-henry/talking-with-the-atheists-at-the-ark-encounter-opening-/10153754748076045>

Or website: <http://www.incpu.org/Fishing-Stories-Ark-Encounter-1of2.htm>

Now, back to Part 2 or 3. So, after posting Part 1, I got to hear some stories of conversations that my brother had and conversations that my Dad had. But, when I tried to write them out, I apparently didn't retain or get all the details written down. So, because it's such a cool conversation with lots of little examples and things to learn from, I'll let Paul tell it, since he was there :). Here's Paul.

Fishing Stories with Paul

The gentleman with his flag (I cannot remember his name) wondered out loud that we could have both Christians and atheists protesting on the same traffic island. He then shook his head and said, "Only in America." He understood from my reaction that I was not an atheist, so he proceeded to explain their problem with the state tax break for the park which totally contradicts modern conventional science. He then explained contradictions that he felt existed between science and the Biblical account of the flood, like multiple 'Ice Ages' for example. Then he explained the **Big Bone Museum** that is nearby that would be better for



kids education in his opinion. He felt that the kids are being destroyed by having myth and religion forced on them before they are able to understand the competition with science. He is very passionate about his point of view which you will also notice if you see him shouting at my Dad. So I was not really able to say anything before we were suddenly interrupted with the group making chants at Eric Hovind and his friend Jake McCallay.



Later I was able to have some useful conversation with Tony and his friend who are organizers of the Tri-State Freethinkers. I was actually just wandering over to see the cardboard cut-out of a drunk, crazy Noah with a book of *Ark-building for Dummies*. Tony asked which side I was on to which I responded that I was actually just there to observe, not to protest anything. So he explained to me his frustration with the seemingly corrupt political practices of the state of Kentucky which preceded the gifting of the tax-incentive. He believes that Ken Ham got his followers and the Christian populace in Kentucky to force out the previous governor and put in a Christian governor who then fired three state officials and replaced them who then replaced the guy who decides financial grants. He also complained about the use of incentives to a park that began to build before applying for incentives, suggesting that they didn't need any incentive. He also complained about using funding from secular government for a park that filters its employees through a discriminatory Christian application process, where they have to agree to all of the beliefs of Ken Ham.



So as you can see I let him do a lot of talking, because I wanted to know what he thought about it and let him vent, so he understood that I know my position but I am respectful of his heart. I explained that I do everything that I do for the sake of explaining the gospel and teaching the Bible. That I travel with my family for this purpose, but I also do my work this way, and I help people when I see a need and I look for strangers to meet to start conversations with. So at this point he wanted to further test my level of knowledge and see if he could corner me into a box. So he asked if I believe that homosexuals should be put to death, which I do not. He asked if I eat shellfish or am aware of the law about mixing two types of



cloth. There was probably another one or two, and I explained that I know the Scriptures pretty well. So he said that I'm not a literalist since I don't obey those commands. He said

that a *literalist* (otherwise known as an *extremist*) blindly follows all of God's commands, but that he felt that since I divide the Scriptures differently then I would be called an *apologist*. So I differed with his use of terms and explained very clearly that I am the furthest thing possible from *extremism*. However I do read the Scriptures and obey them as they are, and that he is quoting a misunderstanding of the Scriptures. He persisted that the Scriptures say extremist, dangerous teachings and that if I do not follow all of them, then I am the one who doesn't understand or am reinterpreting it however I feel like.

So I finally realized what Tony was saying and I clarified saying that ***"Whereas God does not change, He does change how He interacts with man based on the level of rebellion in the land and based on what agreements the people make. So for him to suggest his way of interpreting the Bible is to suggest that you can read the Bible and disregard who it is written to. You wouldn't read a document written to Jewish people and assume that it could be understood the exact same way if read to the people of Egypt. You have to understand the object of the commands."*** And I said that ***"What you are suggesting as a way to read the Bible is really just what you get if you were to read the Bible from beginning to end without trying to understand it."*** At this point he wasn't very interested in talking further. It seems that someone had sent the other young woman to join the conversation in order to free him to leave. But I said that I enjoyed the conversation and asked his name. And he said that he wasn't leaving and that he would be right back, but he clearly lied.

Anyway at this point his friend said that she thought that the Bible would have to apply to everyone the same. So I explained that it does not apply the same because God works through covenants with people based on how much they are willing to obey Him and choose to make a covenant with Him. He does not force those same laws on a secular nation. We are not like the nation of Israel through which God would bring His Son into the world. But God uses these things to allow people to find Him when they want to. I then explained, by example, the purpose of animal sacrifices and how the secular nations around thought that they could duplicate it by sacrificing to their false gods. When they discovered that their false gods could do nothing, they would then understand that there is only one God and He is God whom the Israelites have chosen to obey. I also pointed out that if the effect of the sacrifice had been useless and a superstition entirely, then animal sacrifice would have died out thousands of years ago as being a useless superstition. However there was a reality to it and that should be an evidence to her. She complained that she didn't understand what I was saying, so I decided I'd better get to the point. I explained that not to be gross, but there was an actual reason for the animal sacrifices. There is a death requirement for breaking the law and denying truth. As the Scriptures say that ***"the wages of sin is death"*** (Romans 6:23). And also when God told Adam and Eve not to eat of the fruit, He said that on the day that they did, they would surely what? ... die. So God had mercy on them and provided a temporary covering for sin and also a temporary death in place of their deserved death... by the means of sacrificing an animal. But this animal can not take away sin, since it is only an animal. However, God sent His Son who fulfilled the law perfectly by His obedience and then died to be the permanent sacrifice that the animal sacrifice was pointing toward. So I explained that only through Christ's death can we have a substitute for the death that we each choose for ourselves when we willfully break God's commands. God is the One that we have wronged and yet He provided the way through Jesus to be reconciled to truth and to Himself which are one and the same. So I said that the only way someone gets to atheism is by deciding that they do not want to obey God, which she disagreed. So I explained that at some point she has decided that there was something about God that she would not obey and decided that she

didn't even want to know what God says about it. As you might imagine, her mind was full of thoughts and wanting to leave the conversation at this point, so she said that she wanted to get back to other stuff and so we introduced ourselves and that was the end of the conversation.

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So, that is the end of Part 2 of 3. Stay tuned for Part3 - I hope to be able to share Dad's fishing conversations just as soon as they get finished :) - We hope reading these stories helps encourage and equip you to share the gospel with those around you, yes - including "atheists".

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.

Please 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/library/Ark%20Encounter%20Conversations?sort=2&page=1>

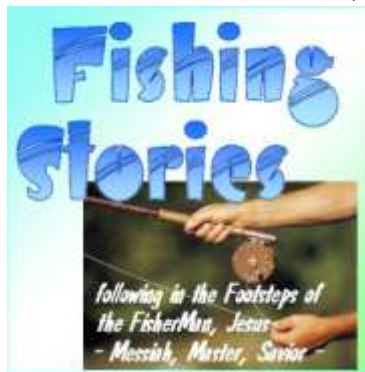
Pictures from Photobucket that give something of a visual tour of the "Ark Encounter" - but a real tour is much better! This is just a intro:

<http://s1339.photobucket.com/user/follower4Christ/library/KY-Ark-Encounter-Stevens-pics?sort=2&page=1>

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/about/>



I do apologize that I can't just give you the facebook link where I originally uploaded the pictures - FB isn't letting 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.