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# REASON FOR HOPE

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Session II, Christ and Culture

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*“Evangelism in the West, however, commonly assumes that the simple presentation of the gospel message - - perhaps the simpler the better - - will create the least hindrance to the acceptance of Christian faith and that God will miraculously provide whatever other understanding is needed. This approach would be frowned upon on the mission field - - and rightly so - - but it is singularly inappropriate in the West as well. It appeals to our swift, technological, fix-it age: in no time at all, millions can claim to be “reached” with the gospel. But beaming gospel truths at the masses is not the same as “reaching” them. We cannot claim that Christian faith has been communicated until it has been understood, and most secular people are no longer in a position to understand Christian truth if they hear only a minimal, packaged version of the gospel and are asked for immediate assent.”*

*David Wells*

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# FOUNDATIONAL BIBLICAL TRUTHS

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1. Standards of morality, including those pertaining to sexual morality, are rooted in the attributes of our Creator rather than individual preferences or appetites.
  2. God is Trinitarian and personal. He is an eternally loving God ever giving and self-giving in relationships which is to say, among other things, that love is eternal. Humans created in his image will be created relationally at the depths of their being.
  3. God reveals his plan for human sexuality through his inspired and inerrant Word. For the prayerful believer, God's Word comes not simply as information, but rather with soul reviving, wisdom defining, life-giving power.
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# FOUNDATIONAL BIBLICAL TRUTHS (CONTINUED)

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4. Genesis 2 established the need for marriage and the plan for it as well: one man and one woman intimately and monogamously joined together for life (Genesis 2, Matt 19:4-6). Genesis 2 and Paul's reflection on it in Ephesians 5:22-6:4 are the foundational biblical passages for studying marriage and the family. These passages by themselves are sufficient to establish the traditional view of marriage.
  5. God's design is for children to be raised by a father and mother (Deut 6:4-9). The well being of children rests on their relationship with parents as stated in the 10 commandments (Exodus 20:12).
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# FOUNDATIONAL BIBLICAL TRUTHS (CONTINUED)

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6. In God's created world, there is an emphasis on corporate solidarity as well as the individual. Humans are bound together. The rights of individuals must be weighed against those of the corporate whole.
  7. Original sin twisted humanity and creation at the most basic levels including, perhaps even particularly so, marriage and sexuality (Genesis 3). Rebellion against God has consequences for the very heart of our identity.
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# FOUNDATIONAL BIBLICAL TRUTHS (CONTINUED)

**Table 1. How Original Sin Affected All of Creation and Human History<sup>15</sup>**

Aspect of "Image of God"	Legitimate Expression	Examples of How Sin Twisted
Worship: Relating to God	A love and desire for God that organizes every aspect of life.	Genesis 3:22-23: Idolatry: Substituting other gods, pride, selfishness.
Community: Relating to Humanity.	The marriage relationship and children	Genesis 3:16 / All forms of sexual sin / Pain in bearing children / Divorce and Troubled Marriages
	Relating within community.	Interpersonal conflict, racism, gangs, gossip, cliques, wars.
Vice Regency: Relating to Creation	Humanity is to represent God and exercise care and responsibility over creation.	Genesis 3:17-18: Thorns and thistles, toilsome nature of work, pollution.

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# FOUNDATIONAL BIBLICAL TRUTHS (CONTINUED)

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8. Sinful humans are prone to idolatry (Rev 20:4, I John 5:21, Jonah 2:8). Perhaps the three most common idols are, in this order, children, sex, and marriage. As a part of its disastrous consequences, idolatry may destroy the relationship between the idolater and the idol and/or it may destroy either the idol or the idolater.
  9. The Bible treats sexual sin with great seriousness (Lev 18, 19:20-22, 29-30, 20:10-21; I Thess 4:3-9). Scripture consistently and frequently warns and shows that a failure to be sexually self-controlled meets with disastrous consequences (David and Bathsheba, Proverbs, I Cor 10, I Thess 4:3-9).
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# KEY BIBLE PASSAGES RELATIVE TO HOMOSEXUALITY DISCUSSION

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- Gen 1-2, 19
- Lev 18:22, 20:13
- Romans 1
- 1 Cor 6:9-11, 2 Tim 1:8-11
- Jude
- Rev 2:19-21

“The great sifting of those who believe the Bible from those who don't is underway, and the mesh strainer in use is the same-sex question.”

Dr. James Hamilton

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*“I think it important to state clearly that we do, in fact, reject the straightforward commands of Scripture, and appeal instead to another authority when we declare that same-sex unions can be holy and good. And what exactly is that authority? We appeal explicitly to the weight of our own experience and the experience thousands of others have witnessed to, which tells us that to claim our own sexual orientation is in fact to accept the way in which God has created us.”*

*Luke Timothy Johnson,  
A NT scholar in favor of same sex marriage*

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*“This is an issue of biblical authority. Despite much well-intentioned theological fancy footwork to the contrary, it is difficult to see the Bible as expressing anything else but disapproval of homosexual activity, let alone having any conception of a homosexual identity. The only alternatives are either to try to cleave to patterns of life and assumptions set out in the Bible, or to say that in this, as in much else, the Bible is simply wrong in the light of modern knowledge and values, and a diverse but recognizable approach to theology.”*

*Diarmaid MacCulloch,  
A decorated historian and gay man who left the church over  
the issue of homosexuality*

*Quoted by Kevin DeYoung, What Does the Bible Really Teach About Homosexuality.*

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# FOUNDATIONAL BIBLICAL TRUTHS (CONTINUED)

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10. Biblical gender roles, which may be/are painful because of the fall, are to be redeemed rather than rejected (1 Tim 4:11-4:16).
  11. Given that the two become one flesh, the death of a spouse is a devastating consequence of the fall (Matt 19:4-6). Divorce, with its separation of what God has brought together, is also devastating.
  12. Christians, who are sinners saved by grace, should demonstrate genuine humility when relating to everyone. This includes when giving a reason for our hope in the context of same sex marriage discussions.
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# FOUNDATIONAL BIBLICAL TRUTHS (CONTINUED)

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13. In the gospel, we find both the power and pattern needed for the journey of marriage when we look to Christ our King who gave himself for his bride the church.
14. The Church is an extended family for believers. Christians are brothers and sisters. And the allegiance of the believer to Christ and his church is the basic commitment for the Christian, even above the nuclear family (Matt 10:34-39, Matt 12:46-50, 1 Pet 2:9-10).
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# FOUNDATIONAL BIBLICAL TRUTHS (CONTINUED)

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15. As Christians individuals seek to grow, and as families strive to work through their differences and difficulties, they should be reminded that sanctification (being increasingly conformed to the image of Christ) is a gracious process that takes place over time (2 Cor 3:17-18)
16. God calls all people to celibacy for a portion of their lives and some to singleness for life (1 Cor 7:7). Spiritual gifts, including the gift of singleness, are given for the benefit of the Body. The gift of singleness does not mean that the single person is freed from ever wanting marriage. Rather he or she has advantages in furthering the cause of Christ and serving the body.
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# FOUNDATIONAL BIBLICAL TRUTHS (CONTINUED)

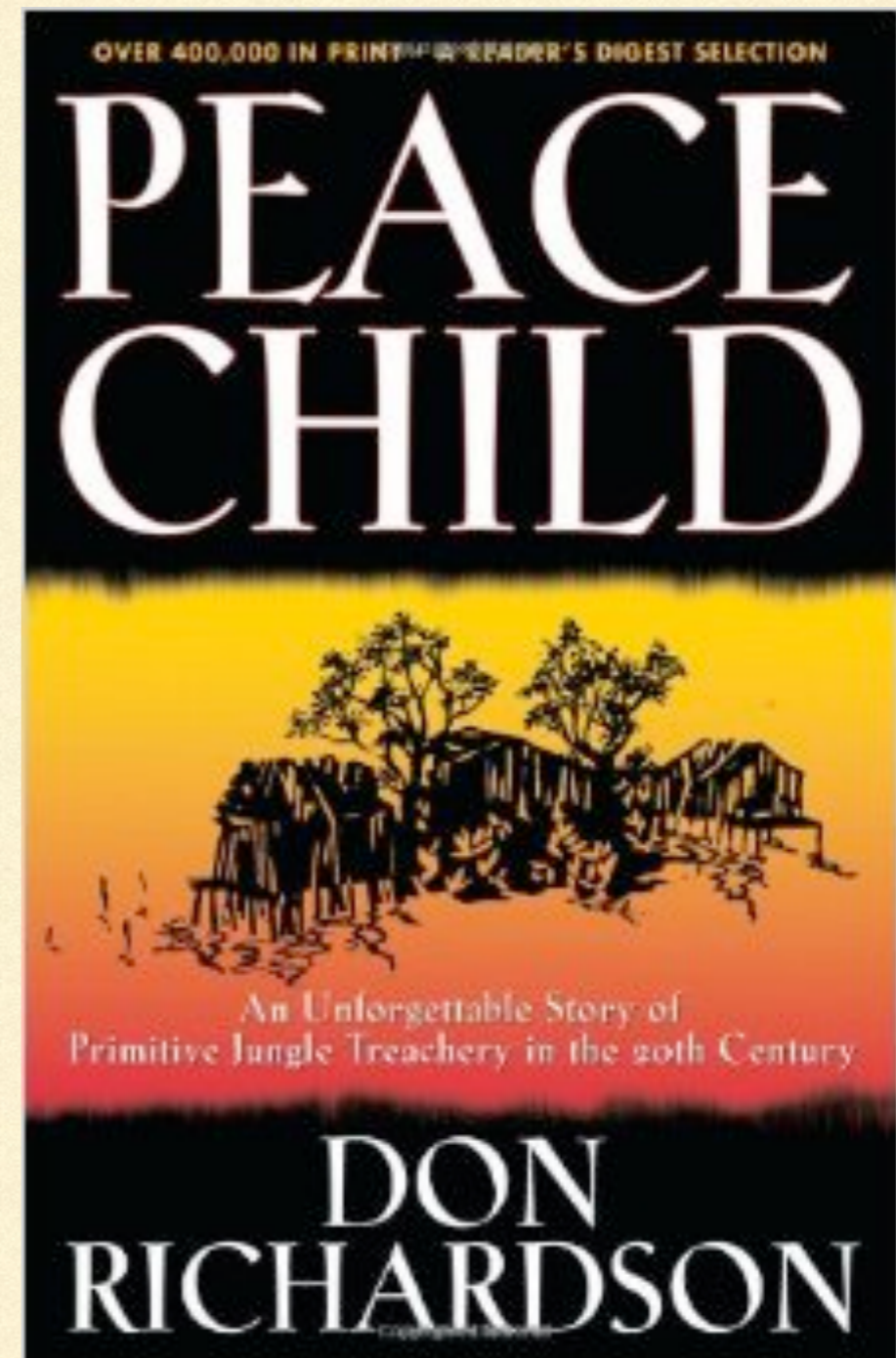
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17. Christians and local churches should prepare to be persecuted for their beliefs regarding marriage and homosexuality (Matt 5:10, 1 Pet 3:16, 4:12)

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# THE PEACE CHILD ...



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*David Wells*

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# THE BASIC COMPONENTS OF A PHILOSOPHY OR WORLDVIEW

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- **BEING** - What is the origin and nature of reality?
  - **KNOWING** - How do we know anything?
  - **DOING** - What is good? What is ethical?
  - **BEAUTY** - What is beautiful?
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# THE BASIC COMPONENTS OF A PHILOSOPHY OR WORLDVIEW

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- **BEING (Metaphysics)**- What is the origin and nature of reality?
  - **KNOWING (Epistemology)** - How do we know anything?
  - **DOING (Axiology / Ethics)** - What is good? What is ethical?
  - **BEAUTY (Aesthetics)**- What is beautiful?
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*One's worldview determines  
what one believes about  
sexuality.*

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# THE WORLDVIEW OF MODERN MAN

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- Matter exists and via the **big bang** life randomly happened and evolved
  - We know through **scientific enquiry**
  - **Secular humanism** - Humans reason to ethics on their own and there is no god. Humanity will eventually arrive at a new utopian existence.
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*The ancient man approached God (or even the gods) as the accused person approaches his judge. For the modern man the roles are reversed. He is the judge: God is in the dock. He is quite a kindly judge: if God should have a reasonable defence for being the god who permits war, poverty, and disease, he is ready to listen to it. The trial may even end in God's acquittal. But the important thing is that Man is on the Bench and God in the Dock.*

*C.S. Lewis, "God in the Dock"*

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# THE DREAMS OF MODERN MAN SANK IN THE 20TH CENTURY



- The Unsinkable Ship Hit an Iceberg
- Two World Wars Followed
- It Was the Most Murderous Century Ever

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# THE WORLDVIEW OF “POST-MODERN PABLO”

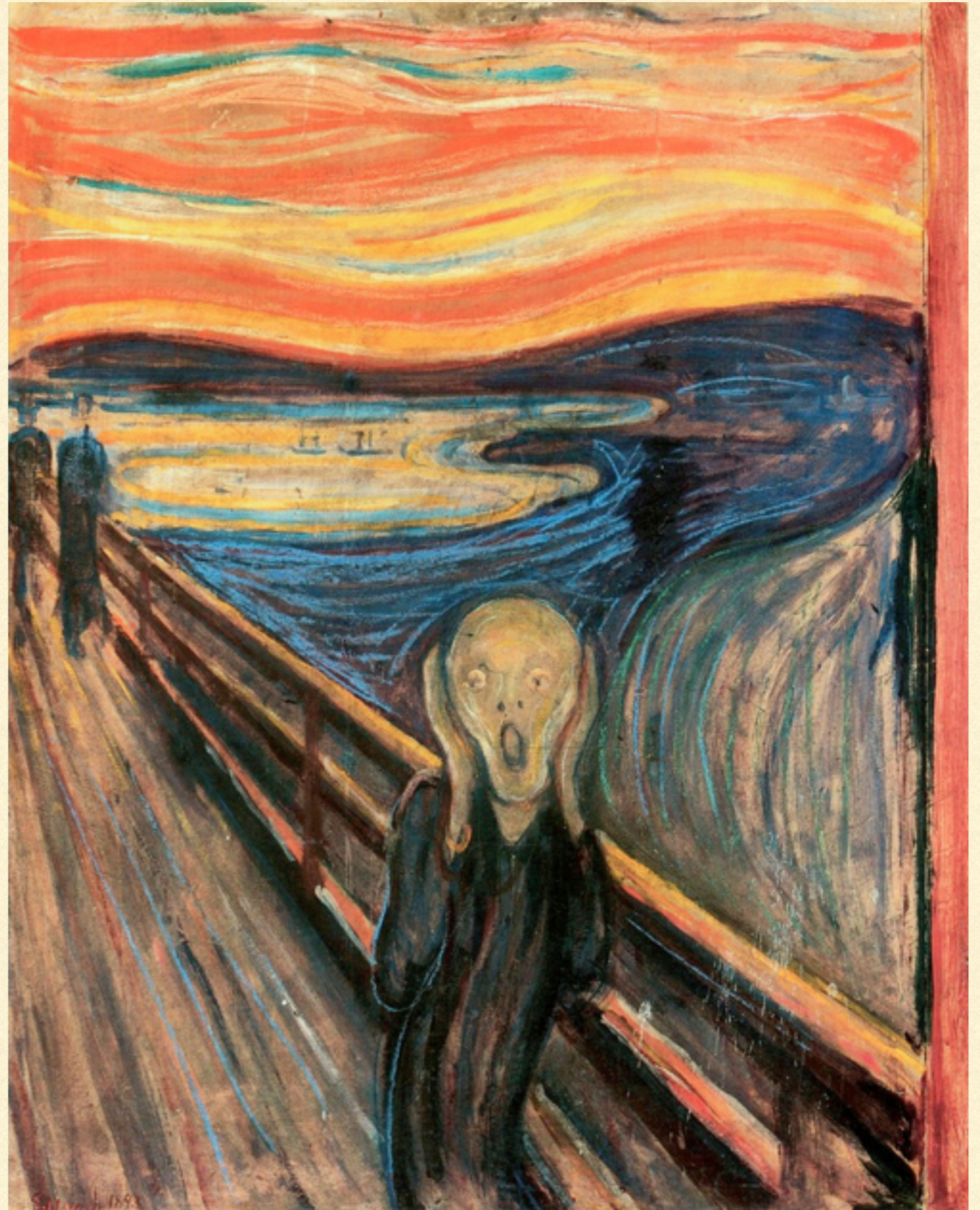
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- Matter exists and via the **big bang** life randomly happened and evolved
- We cannot really know
- **Nihilism** - the rejection of all religious and moral principles, often in the belief that life is meaningless



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AS FOR THE  
MEANING OF  
LIFE . . .





# MORALISTIC THERAPEUTIC DEISM\*

- Some “god” exists (deism)
- Only vague moral implications
- “God’s” basic purpose is to meet the personal needs of individuals



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# APOLOGETICS DEFINITIONS

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- **Defeater Beliefs** - “Common sense” consensus beliefs that automatically make Christianity seem implausible to people.
- When enough **defeater beliefs** combine, they become a **cultural implausibility structure** - - so that people no longer feel that it is even necessary to evaluate Christianity.

Keller, Tim. “Deconstructing Defeater Beliefs: Leading the Secular to Christ,” [http://www.case.edu.au/images/uploads/03\\_pdfs/keller-deconstructing-defeater.pdf](http://www.case.edu.au/images/uploads/03_pdfs/keller-deconstructing-defeater.pdf)

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# DEFEATERS TO DEFEAT

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- Counter with Community
  - Teach the Principle of the Rope!
  - Dismantle Deism -
  - Pluralism -
  - Speak to the Problem of Evil -
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# MORE IMPORTANT STRATEGIES

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- Equip the Equippers
  - Model Marriage
  - Use the New Media Wisely
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