



Closed Minded



Open Minded

Two Kinds of Skeptics

Open-minded skeptics are willing to look carefully at the evidence, meditate on it, and maybe pray, "God, I'm not sure if You are hearing this or not. But if you are, I'm willing for you to help me see that You are real and that I can trust the Bible." An Open-minded skeptic might be willing to try reading a chapter of John each day, and pray, "God, if this is your Word, help me understand it."

On the other hand, it is important to recognize that some skeptics cannot be convinced regardless of the evidence. They are like the man who thought he was dead. His family tried mightily to convince him that he was not dead, but he would not be persuaded. Finally, in desperation, they took him to a psychiatrist. The psychiatrist tried various tactics, but nothing worked. Finally he decided, "If I can convince him of one fact that contradicts his belief that he is dead, that should cure him." So he decided to use the simple truth that dead men do not bleed. He gave the man some medical texts to read, had him observe some autopsies, talk with embalmers, etc. Finally, after several weeks, the man said "O.K.!, O.K.!, You've convinced me! Dead men do not bleed!" Immediately the psychiatrist stuck him in the arm with a needle, and the blood flowed. The man looked down at his arm with a shocked look on his face and said "Good grief!... Dead men DO bleed after all!" Some have simply made up their minds that they *will not* be convinced regardless of the evidence!

Perhaps a helpful approach with this type of skeptic is a brief statement of my personal experience with Jesus Christ, backed up with a consistent Christian life full of joy, peace, love, and a zest for living. In the Bible there is the story of a blind man who was healed by Jesus. Afterward he was questioned antagonistically by unbelievers who demanded that he give an answer. He said, in essence, "I don't know all your answers. But I do know this: Once I was blind and now I can see." What could they say? Who can argue with someone else's personal experience?

So, to our more argumentative friends we can say, "I may not be able to answer all your questions, but I do know this: Life makes sense to me. I have an inner peace that most people only dream about. I have joy and a purpose for living that I would not trade for anything. I do not have to live with guilt anymore. I do not have to fear death anymore. Life for me is an incredibly exciting adventure that will someday culminate in my "graduation to glory." And all of this is because of Jesus."

Words of that sort, backed up with a consistent life, can, in time, whet even the most hardened skeptic's curiosity!