

The Atheist & the Christian

CHARACTERS: 2, atheist and Christian

COSTUMES: None specified

PROPS: Magazine, Bible, lunch on trays

SETTING: Workplace break room

RUN TIME: 1-2 minutes each, 8 total

The Atheist and the Christian: Noah, part 1

At rise: A is reading a magazine

C: Is this seat taken?

A: Nope. *(They both proceed with eating and Christian takes out his Bible to read)*

A: Is that a Bible you're reading?

C: Yup

A: Don't tell me you believe all that nonsense?

C: I believe everything in the Bible is true.

A: Not me. I believe in science, not a bunch of fairy tales.

C: These aren't fairy tales.

A: Right. You believe it all happened just the way it's written in the Bible?

C: I do

A: Like Noah and the flood and all those animals on board the ark during the flood?

C: Yup.

A: How did they all fit? What did they eat? They were *(sarcastically)* "supposedly" in there for months.

C: Let me ask you how the food, weapons, supplies and 561 officers and men fit on the USS Brooklyn when the USS Brooklyn is 47 feet shorter and 10 feet less wide than the ark? And the navy doesn't have to resupply anything but fuel - which the ark did not need - for months?

A: *(Confused)* Are you sure of those figures?

C: Yup. I was in the Navy and I read the Bible. *(Starts to open Bible)*

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A: No, no. I don't need to see anything in the Bible. *(Standing and getting try to leave)* If they did all fit, which I don't see how they could, but IF they did - how did Noah keep the lions and tigers from eating the other animals?

C: Let me get back to you on that one.

A: Ok, but it has to be SCIENTIFIC evidence, not religious mumbo jumbo. *(exits with tray)*

The Atheist and the Christian: Noah again, part 2

C: What's the special today?

A: Ham and Swiss on wheat. So did you find any SCIENCE stuff to back up the fairy tale of Noah's ark?

C: Sure did. Maybe the animals hibernated? No fighting, less food needed.

A: *(Contemptuously)* Animals hibernate in the autumn.

C: True. But according to SCIENCE there is a rare state of dormancy similar to hibernation called estivation. It allows animals to avoid contact with other species that they may otherwise be in competition with, or for which they are prey. Some animals, including the California red-legged frog, may estivate to conserve energy when their food and water supply is low.

A: That's frogs.

C: North American desert tortoises, crocodiles, salamanders, and lungfishes also estivate. The lungfish estivates by burying itself in mud formed at the surface of a dried up lake. In this state, the lungfish can survive for many years.

A: *(Conceding a tiny bit)* Ok, reptiles, fish and amphibians

C: And insects. From National Geographic - Very SCIENTIFIC - Cicadas can spend 2-9 years buried underground on a diet of almost pure water then emerge as adults. The Magi cicada species does so on a 17 year cycle.

A: Yeah, but no mammals.

C: *(Whipping out a clipping with relish and reading)* Until recently no primate, and no tropical mammal, was known to estivate. However, animal physiologist Kathrin Dausmann of Philipps University of Marburg, Germany, and coworkers presented evidence in the June 24, 2004 edition of Nature that the Madagascan fat-tailed dwarf lemur hibernates or estivates in a small cricket hollow for seven months of the year. *(Handing it to A)* You can keep it.

Online resources

<http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v429/n6994/abs/429825a.html> Lemur

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<http://library.thinkquest.org/TQ0312800/estivation.htm> Several examples
http://fwf.ag.utk.edu/mgray/wfs493/lectures/students/hibernation_estivation.pdf Scholarly slide show presentation

The Atheist and the Christian: Da Vinci Code, part 3

A: (*Glancing up.*) You again. Might as well sit here. The seat's not taken.

C: Thank you.

A: Why do you read the Bible all the time?

C: So I'm ready.

A: Ready to die?

C: I'm ready to die anytime. I want to be ready to give an answer.

A: To people like me. (*C nods*) Very funny. Since I've been reading this (*holds up book*) I can concede that maybe there is a God. But the Bible is full of errors. I read all about it in this book - The Da Vinci Code. Did you know the Bible was written the way it was written because of some emperor named Constantine?

C: No, I believe the Bible was written the way it was written because that's how God wanted it written.

A: (*Superiorly*) Not according to the da Vinci Code. And I read on the internet the Bible is full of errors and contradictions and covers stuff up.

C: Like what? (*Taking bite of sandwich*) What does the Bible cover up?

A: Jesus' marriage.

C: Where did you get that from?

A: (*Holding up a copy of The Da Vinci Code*) This. Did you know that if Jesus was a real person, Mary Magdalen was probably Jesus' wife and they had a child? There's been a cover up all these years but finally someone has unlocked the Da Vinci code.

C: The code?

A: Yes, that Mary Magdalen was Jesus' wife and chief apostle and had his baby. And there's proof. She appears next to Jesus in Leonardo Da Vinci's painting "The Last Supper".

C: Let me make sure I understand you. Even though Da Vinci was not an eye witness, even though he painted the picture over one thousand 400 years later, you think that proves Jesus was married to Mary Magdalen and that the Bible is full of lies?

A: *(Triumphant)* Yes!

C: Hmmm *(pause)* Do you believe dogs play poker?

A: *(Like he's utterly ridiculous)* No.

C: But I can prove it using your very own logic.

A: That's absurd.

C: What about the picture over the microwave?

(Camera cuts to that rather well known picture of dogs playing poker)

A: *(Put out)* Ha ha ha. The Da Vinci code says it's Mary in the painting of The Last Supper and there is modern scientific proof to back it up.

C: The Da Vinci code is a work of fiction. The author Dan Brown even said so. In the forward of the book. But don't take my word for it...read it for yourself. *(Checks his watch)* Gotta go. *(Exits)*

A: *(Makes faces at him as he leaves. Turns to the forward of the book. Reads aloud that part of the forward and looks puzzled.)*

Dogs Playing Poker picture links

<http://colinpantall.blogspot.com/2011/02/dogs-playing-poker.html>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dogs_Playing_Poker

The Atheist and the Christian: Dogs, part 4

Setting: Same break room except we can see the picture of the dogs playing poker

A: You still a Christian?

C: Yup, you still an atheist?

A: Yes. That dog picture thing was pretty funny but speaking of dogs..... If Noah took two of every animal on the ark, how do you explain all the dog breeds? I found out on the internet there are over 400 breeds of dogs. How did Noah get all those dogs as well as all the other hundreds of animals on the ark? Even if the ark was bigger than a navy cruiser boat thing.

C: Good question. Did you know that in 1878 Professor Fitzinger of Germany recognized only 180 breeds?

K: *(Skeptical)* Are you going to try to tell me in less than 150 years over 200 new dog breeds came about? I don't believe it.

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C: (*Continuing on unflustered*) The Irish Setter dates back to the 1700's. Yorkies originated in the 1800's because miners wanted a terrier they could carry in their pockets that would get the rats in the mines.

A: (*A bit antagonized*) I think you're making that up.

C: (*Continuing unruffled*) The boxer was considered a great success of "designer" dog breeding in Germany in the 1850's. The Rottweiler in the 1820's - also from Germany

A: (*Accusing*) No way.

C: In fact the following breeds have only appeared since the 1960's - the cockerpoo, bull boxer, labra doodle, Shiloh Shepherd....

A: (*Had enough*) Enough! Where are you getting all these "Facts"?

C: (*Holds up dog breed book*) I read things besides the Bible too.

A: Can I borrow that? I want to check it out for myself.

C: Sure. (*Hands over the book*)

The Atheist and the Christian: Dogs again, part 5

A: Ok. So I checked out the stuff about dog breeds. I guess you're right. A whole bunch of them were bred in the Middle Ages or after. So maybe, just maybe all the dogs we have today could have come from just a couple of dogs. (*Pause*) I said maybe. That's all. It would have been an accelerated case of evolution.

C: (*Just listening and eating*).

A: Ok, Mr. Walking Encyclopedia, If you're so smart how do you explain the missing link? Its evolution just like the dogs only it took longer. (*Matter of factly*) Two apes produced offspring that slowly became man.

C: You can't "miss" something that was never there. Two dogs produce dogs. They may look different, vary in size and abilities but they are still dogs. Two apes produce apes. Two humans produce humans (*Playfully*) My two smart parents produced smart offspring. (*Indicating himself with a smile*)

A: (*Sarcastically*) And if your mother was a moron and your father was a moron I suppose that would have made you a moron.

C: No, that would probably make me an atheist. (*A glowers, C just smiles, raises his eyebrows and takes a bite of his sandwich*).

The Atheist and the Christian: Dinosaurs, part 6

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Setting: Lunchroom or work break room as before.

C: *(Bringing tray to table)* Anything good for lunch?

A: Yup, chocolate cupcakes. It was so good I ate it first. *(Notices C has opened his Bible to read as he eats).* You reading that Bible again?

C: Yup.

A: I'm reading *(Holding up magazine)* science. New stuff. The world of science changes so fast you pretty much have to read magazines to stay current. Science books, even textbooks have to change every 2-3 years. Unlike your old stale Bible. *(Pauses to try to get a rise out of him but he doesn't take the bait)* This article is about dinosaurs. Since you're a Christian I bet you don't believe in dinosaurs, do ya?

C: Sure I do. There's fossil evidence everywhere.

A: Yeah, but the Bible doesn't have the word dinosaur in it.

C: No.

A: Ha!

C: The Bible doesn't contain the word "dinosaur" because it wasn't coined until 1842 by Richard Owen. *(Making eye contact)* A scientist.

A: *(Still wanting to argue about something)* Well, there isn't anything in there about dinosaurs by any other name, is there?

C: *(Flipping through his Bible)* Actually Job chapter 40 talks about "Behemoth" a creature who's tail swings like a cedar, has bones like tubes of bronze and rods of iron. Right here. *(Shows the page, pointing to the verse and atheist looks at it)* "He ranks first among the works of God." Sounds like a dinosaur to me.

A: So now you're going to tell me the Bible is a science textbook?

C: No, if it was it would have to change every 2-3 years.

The Atheist and the Christian: Jonah Part 7

Break room. C enters and sits down. C is sunburned.

A: Nice face. They have a scientific breakthrough called sun block. Ever hear of it?

C: Yes

A: I sure wouldn't want you dying of skin cancer before I win this argument once and for all. Which reminds me.

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I've got another really good question for you. Do you believe Jonah was swallowed by a whale?

C: Actually the Bible says it was a big fish, but yes, I believe Jonah was swallowed and spit out alive, three days later.

A: (*Triumphant*) Then explain how he'd fit since a whale's stomach is only the size of a man's head?

B: Again, the Bible says big fish, but as far as details go, I don't know. When I get to heaven I'll have to ask Jonah.

A: (*Smug*) What if he's not there?

B: (*Playfully*) Then I guess you'll have to ask him. (*Takes bite of lunch. A just glowers at him*)

The Atheist and the Christian: Gravesite Part 8

(*Atheist is at a gravesite. Tears up off and on. Mostly serious except where noted.*)

I'm really going to miss you at work. I can't believe you're gone. Dead. Just like that. But you always said you were ready. I really never understood that.

(*Lighter*) Breaks just won't be the same. I don't know who I'm going to argue with now. (*Pause*)

I went to your funeral. There was a lot I didn't know about you. After all, I only saw you at work for the most part. I was kind of surprised to find out you worked in nuclear medicine but now I know where all the science stuff came from. Funny we never talked about what we did at work; we never talked about much except arguing about the Bible.

But what I learned about you at your funeral surprised me. When they talked about you with your family, your church, community activities, it was all the same person. That part was surprising. Not many people are the same in all parts of their life.

Your brother started talking about God and I realized, somewhere along the way, I had become a believer. I don't know when. I just knew I was. But I knew believing wasn't enough so I talked to your brother after the funeral service.

I want you to know I got baptized. (*Chuckling through tears*) I bet you're rolling over right now. (*Seriously again*). All my questions aren't answered about God and the Bible and the past. But the question of where I'll spend the future is.

I'll really miss seeing you at work but I realize this isn't the end. I will be joining you whenever God decides it's time. I understand now about being ready to die. About eternal life. About the unseen. About faith.

(*Lighter*) So I have a favor to ask. Could you hold up on asking Jonah anything until we can do it together?