How to *UTTERLY* Defeat Skepticism Forever!

(The Sure Fire Method For Defeating Modern Atheism!)

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Dedication:
To my Family,

Sarah: For putting up with having a philosopher for a husband
Aaron: For always asking so many great questions
Adeline: For reminding me that there is more to life than books

I love you with all my heart.

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Introduction

Congratulations for buying this one-of-a-kind e-booklet on defeating **Skepticism**. [1] Whether you are a staunch atheist, a curious agnostic, a struggling Christian, or a mature believer who wants to be better equipped in their evangelism, this booklet is for you. In it you will find an argument against religious skepticism that has never been discussed by Christian Apologists before. There is literally nothing like it anywhere, and the broader implications for it are extremely powerful.

But first, before we get started, I'd like to share a bit of my story...

"How Did This Happen?"

I was in the middle of a lengthy 25 year journey with God. I had attended seminary, pastored and had now preached full-time for over 5 years. Yet there I was, feeling confused and skeptical about my own faith. I kept wondering: "How in the world did this happen to me?'' I never would have seen it coming just a few years earlier. Yet the spiritual vertigo of the doubt I was experiencing was becoming daily more and more difficult to resist.

Up until then, I had faithfully followed in the path which I had believed God had laid out for me. I had gone into the ministry in response to a sense of personal calling to the Lord. The problem is that I had done it without any training in how to rationally defend my faith. In fact, the seminary that I had graduated from literally offered no modules in Christian Philosophy or Apologetics.

As a result, I now found myself looking around at the people in the churches who surrounded me wondering what they were thinking. Didn't they know what I was experiencing? Couldn't they see the struggle just by looking at my face? I felt that even if I managed to be charged with one more "spiritual high," I would nonetheless wake up with all the same feelings and questions the next day. So with barely enough strength to pray or read my Bible, I was now struggling daily with my faith, plagued with increasing fears and doubts.

So that was when I made one of the most important personal commitments I've made since choosing to follow the Lord Jesus. I decided I was not going to simply

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[1] For definition of all bold-faced terms, see glossary.

read the Bible anymore. I was going to research and study the problem of skepticism in search of a defeater.

Now initially, the idea just sounded crazy to me. "Defeat skepticism?" I thought. "Is that even possible?" Skepticism, as a system of thought, has held its entrancing and hypnotic effect over the human imagination for longer than the Church has even existed. So how was I to find a defeater for a problem this huge? Yet to my profound shock and amazement, just two years into my research, the problems began to yield to my solutions as they came.

Since that time, it has been my goal to share my answers with the world. It is my firm belief that the argument that you hold in your hands contains the potential to systematically defeat religious skepticism forever. But before I move into the meat of my book, I want to say a bit about my overall approach to writing it.

Basic Method

First, I want to point out the obvious: *This book is really short.* To some readers (particularly to atheists and agnostics) it will seem too short. After all, how can anyone claim to have found a defeater to religious skepticism which can be entirely explained in under forty pages? Isn't it silly to think that something so perplexing could be so shortly resolvable?

For that reason, I have created a host of other resources which provide me with the ability to do just that. I've created a sizable library of free materials which are available at my website: benfischerministries.com. I've also spent years in the context of higher education creating a full, university-level video course on the subject of Christian Apologetics. (Click here get access.) Most of my students find the content to be mind-blowing. So if you decide to take my course, you'll have ample opportunity to grasp the reasons why I can so confidently announce the death skepticism in a booklet the size of a pamphlet.

Second, I want to explain something about the technical approach of this book which sets it apart from most other resources on the market dedicated to defending the faith.

You see, while there are hundreds of other resources which do offer good defenses for Christianity, almost none of them takes the approach that you will find here. The reason is that virtually 99.9% of them seek to defend the Christian faith by defeating various skeptical appeals against it. My approach however is more

fundamental than this because it focuses on defeating the whole philosophical basis for the skeptic's appeals.

In other words: *This book is a short-cut.*

The third thing to understand about my approach is that I am not making my appeal to faith by presupposing that the Bible is true. This means that nothing about my argument requires that the atheist or agnostic reader believe the Bible in order to accept the conclusions I offer here. In fact, that is entirely unnecessary for the moment. All that is needed is an open mind to reason and a willingness to evaluate your own belief system.

So to wrap up my approach, let me point to the work of noted secular philosopher, Peter David Klein. In a book released around four decades ago (which may yet prove to be one of the grandest achievements in secular philosophy of the twentieth century), the editors at University of Minnesota Press wrote the following comments about Klein's work:

> "Philosophers have traditionally used two strategies to refute the skeptical view that … our beliefs cannot be adequately justified. One strategy rejects the skeptic's position because it conflicts with the supposedly obvious claim that we do have knowledge. The other defends an analysis of knowledge limited to a weak set of necessary and sufficient conditions specifically designed to be immune to skeptical attack…. Peter D. Klein uses a third strategy. He argues that skepticism can be refuted even if it is granted that knowledge entails absolute certainty." [2]

For years now, I have sought to create an argument that mirrors Klein's approach. The reason is that like him, I believe that Christians tend to defend their faith by using means which, in my opinion, are poorly conceived. That is, they tend to either:

- Refuse to admit religious skepticism because doubt is biblically forbidden, or...
- Defend an analysis of doubt which presupposes the Bible is true in order to make theology immune to skeptical attacks.

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[2] Peter D. Klein, Certainty: A Refutation of Skepticism, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1981.

However, I have discovered that there is a third approach, a better one, which can be summarized precisely as Klein has put it; namely:

"Attack skepticism on its own ground by granting as much as possible to the skeptic while at the same time showing why what can be granted does not lead to the skeptic's conclusion!" [3]

So if that thought excites you, then my friend, you are in the right place. You are going to have a blast digesting this book. So as we conclude this introduction, let's look at a few of the practical benefits that you'll glean from reading this book.

Practical Benefits:

Benefit #1:
Defending Faith Without Presupposing It

First, as a result of reading this book, you will gain valuable tools for removing the common accusation that Christians always argue for faith on the basis of special pleading (i.e. the Bible). The truth is, most skeptical people assume that Christians are guilty of doing this. We simply "presuppose" that the Bible is true in order to somehow defend it. While that approach may seem valid to the believer, it isn't persuasive to most skeptical people. But the argument here does not do this. So it's a good way to appeal to faith in God as a rational start for our other beliefs.

Benefit # 2:
Equipping the Religious Young

Second, the argument contained here will equip impressionable young believers with the tools they need to defend their faith from doubt in the context of secular academia (i.e. college). So, if you either have a young student preparing to enter the university, or you are a young student preparing to enter the university, the content in this book will equip you to resist doubt because it teaches you the secret to defeating the universal basis for religious unbelief.

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[3] Ibid, pg. 3

Benefit # 3:
Equipping For Evangelism

Third, the argument in this booklet will be useful to you in your own personal evangelism. That is, it will give you powerful tools which you can use to defeat religious skepticism, regardless of the domain of the skeptic's appeal, be it philosophy, science, history (etc.).

Benefit # 4:
Equipping For Preaching

Fourthly, and finally, the argument in this booklet can equip pastors with tools which will be useful to dispelling doubts in the context of preaching. As a preacher myself, I have found the argument here to be almost universally useful to the utter dominance of religious doubt. In my opinion, it's almost never irrelevant to detangle the Bible from various claims rooted in religious skepticism while engaged in preaching. Therefore, the argument summarized here can be applied to almost any sermon, any Sunday of the year. And that is a good thing!

So with those few comments by way of introduction, let's move forward together to make good on the promise printed on the front cover of this booklet.

I'm very excited to join you at this stage of your journey so that you can learn how to utterly defeat religious skepticism forever.
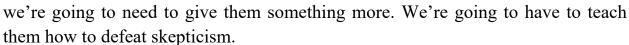
Chapter 1:
The Problem of Skepticism

Some time ago, I was sitting at the dinner table with my family. I was enjoying a meal with my wife and two children. Suddenly, out of nowhere, my six year old son, Aaron, piped up and asked: "Dad, if God made the world, then what made God?"

Immediately, my wife was shocked by the question. "How in the world did he think to ask that?" she asked. "He hasn't been exposed to that sort of thing." I therefore glanced over at my son Aaron and replied: "Son, what you need to see right now is that you wouldn't be able to understand the answer, even if daddy told you. But you also need to know that daddy gets invited to debate atheists and to speak about these sorts of questions all the time. And, as of today, no one has ever defeated your daddy's arguments. So for now, I just need you to trust me that I know exactly how to answer your question and I'll tell you when you get older."

Instantly, my son Aaron leaped up from his seat at the dinner table and hugged me as hard as he could. It seemed that for him, even though he didn't know the answer to his question, the very thought that daddy knew the answer was all the assurance he needed.

Sadly, that sort of childlike confidence will not last forever. What we need to see is that answers like this will only hold our children for so long. As they grow, we're going to need to give them something more. We're going to have to teach them how to defeat skepticism.

That is what this book is about.

So, let's not waste any time. Let's start by identifying some of the most common myths generated by skepticism which need to be soundly refuted.

Myth # 1:
Religious skepticism and philosophical skepticism are different!

This is one of the ways I have seen skeptics attempt to dodge the argument I am offering here. Religious skeptics often try to weasel out of the message of this book by using precisely this sort of appeal. "Sure," they say. "Philosophical skepticism has been defeated. But that doesn't mean religious skepticism has!"

In point of fact, this reply is ill-informed. For virtually all forms of skepticism proceed from the same basic argument. Moreover, that argument has been entirely refuted by secular philosophers since the early 1980's. So, no—religious skepticism is not substantially different from philosophical skepticism as we will show in a few short minutes.

Myth # 2:
Refuting skepticism leads to the death of the scientific method.

Again, nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, people in my field who understand argument theory do not normally confuse or conflate religious skepticism with the scientific method. Instead, the scientific method is based on forming hypotheses and making novel predictions while skepticism is based almost entirely on something philosophers call the **principle of deductive closure**. So no—the two are not the same thing.

In fact, the truth of the matter is precisely the opposite: Most philosophers know that refuting skepticism immediately leads to the timely vindication of all our **empirical beliefs**. So it's probably time for believers to educate their atheists objectors on this point.

Myth # 3:
If Christian evidence can't show that a given religion—say Taoism—is false, then it cannot be used to prove that Christianity is true.

Again, this idea is woefully mistaken and can easily be shown to be false on the basis of contemporary **epistemology** (which would be our study of the proper basis and foundation of knowledge). In fact, to demand that Christian evidence behave

this way is practically to demand that we amputate roughly two thirds of our traditional methodologies normally used for establishing proportions. So in short, this argument is a form of special pleading on the part of atheists, and we're going to see that very clearly by the time this book is done.

Myth # 4:
Self-referential forms of proof are invalid, or lazy (or both).

(Sigh) Most philosophers know that the very opposite is true. In other words, if we relentlessly cling to the demand that everything must be proven, then what we quickly discover is that nothing can be proven. As remarkable as this claim may sound, it has been generally accepted by philosophers for roughly two thousand years! So once again, it is high-time for modern atheism to come of age and wake up to the findings of secularism's best thinkers.

Better yet, it's time for us to utterly defeat religious skepticism forever.

The Emergence of Skepticism

So now that we've identified a few of the skeptic's most common myths, let's ask the more basic question: How in the world can all of these myths be false? Better yet, how can they be false given our own intuitions which practically demand that they *must* be true?

Let's answer that by setting the stage on what caused the problem of skepticism to first become such an issue in western civilization to begin with.

Skepticism essentially broke onto the scene of history at a time when ancient Greek philosophers were starting to become prolific at asking questions; questions like:

- How do we know anything?
- Can we know anything?
- If we can know anything, what is the method for knowing it?

Other questions were also asked which were aimed at even more fundamental issues, such as:

- What is knowledge to begin with?

- Is it something that we can define?
- If we can define it, what are the necessary characteristics of it?

Amid the sea of swirling questions, two main inquiries emerged which drew the most attention from early Greek philosophers. They were:

1. What is knowledge? and
2. How do we get it?

The first question was considered for some centuries to have been decisively answered by the early Greek philosopher Plato who held that knowledge contained three essential ingredients:

1. Proof
2. Truth, and
3. Belief.

For Plato, there simply had to be something more to knowledge than a person's mere belief that something was true, joined together with the fact that he was right. Instead, there needed to be some sort of proof, or justification for that belief. Thus, according to Plato, justification was the needed ingredient to properly bracket truth and belief together under knowledge. And for centuries, most philosophers thought that Plato was right. Almost no one questioned his views.

But in 1963, American Philosopher, Edmund Gettier, published a brief paper which challenged Plato's classical definition of knowledge. Using a set of counter-examples, Gettier demonstrated that Plato's definition had been incomplete all along. Instead it was possible, said Gettier, for a person to believe something which was true, and to have a reasonable justification for that belief, without that belief counting as knowledge. The result of Gettier's paper was a tremendous upheaval amongst modern philosophers to identify what had been missing from Plato's classical definition. Precisely what was it? Was it warrant? Was it vindication? Was it something else we'd never thought of before? No one was able to answer.

Of course, the reason why this was such a problem for modern philosophers is that unless we had a working definition of knowledge, we could have no assurance

on how to get it. It is therefore a somewhat comical joke of western academia that to date, no one has ever offered a convincing reply to Edmund Gettier's paper.

So, in response to the first question:

- No, modern philosopher's don't really know how to define knowledge.

So then what about the second question?

The second question is: *How do we get knowledge?*

For most of us, this is probably the more relevant issue. How do we decide, for example, that we really know that God exists? Is there some sort of a rational way to settle a question like that?

Classically, skeptics have argued (again, due to Plato's influence) that it is impossible for human beings to know anything. While the mere mention of the idea tends to elicit roaring laughter from some people, it is nevertheless a belief which has historically been immensely successful. The reason is that it seems to be based on a principle which virtually all philosophers agree is true called the **Closure Principle**. The Closure Principle essentially states that in the case of any pair of opposing claims,

- if we know that one is true, we also know that the other is false.

For this reason, the skeptic's argument winds up looking surprisingly true as we go about the business of simply "minding our P's and Q's." Observe:

1. If I know that (P) is true, I also know that (Q) is false.
2. I cannot know that (Q) is false.
3. Therefore, I cannot know that (P) is true. [4]

Now, notice that we are already seeing here the very core inspiration for religious skepticism taking shape. If you don't see it yourself, simply watch what happens when we rewrite the argument like this:

1. If I know Christianity is true, I also know that Hinduism is false.
2. I cannot know that Hinduism is false.

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[4] To see the meaning of the symbols, see Table of Symbols.

3. Therefore, I cannot know that Christianity is true.

For this reason, we can see that the skeptic will not succeed in defending his views if he argues that religious skepticism is somehow different from philosophical skepticism.

Moving on, the argument of skepticism has been powerful and perplexing. Almost no one in history has been able to soundly address it. But through an unexpected series of events (probably triggered mostly by Gettier) the chief premise of the argument was brought into question. This occurred as another American Philosopher by the name of Robert Nozick set about trying to repair Plato's original definition of knowledge. What happened next inadvertently became the basis for refuting skepticism.

Here's how Nozick did it.

Refuting Skepticism

First, let's look at the most vivid example of skepticism ever conceived. It's a story-film depiction of the now infamous "brain-in-the-vat argument." The movie was released in 1999 by the famous film director duo, the Watchowski brothers. It later went on to become their biggest smash hit. The film was entitled *The Matrix*, and it told the story of a man who is suddenly unplugged from a computer, only to discover that up until the present time, his entire life has been nothing but a dream.

The film portrays the struggles of the character (named Neo) to adjust to the world as it actually is. His life lived as a "brain-in-a-vat" had deceived him regarding the true nature of his existence. Sentient machines had cleverly wired his cerebrum to stimulate his brain to accept his false experiences. Of course, this only raised the question for most moviegoers:

- *How can we be certain that the Matrix does not exist?*

Naturally, few of us tended to be detained by the Matrix question for very long. (Most of us probably dealt with it by shrugging our shoulders and having a sandwich.) But for Nozick, stories like the Matrix proved an extremely invaluable point; namely—they showed that the argument of skepticism is utterly baseless.

To see why Nozick thought so, try imagining the following scenario: What would happen if the machines themselves had decided to tell Neo that his body lay

envatted in a tube of biodegradable goop? (Assuming that machines can decide to do anything!)

If this had happened, Neo would immediately be in a position to know that the real world lay utterly beyond his present empirical borders. But the question which naturally follows is: *Does this count as knowledge?* The problem was that under Plato's classical definition, it did! In fact, this point becomes all-too-easy for us to see as we simply reconsider Plato's criterion for knowledge alongside the present case under discussion:

1. **Belief:** Did Neo believe the machine? By supposition, he did.
2. **Truth:** Was the machine's story true? Yep. Neo was plugged into a computer.
3. **Proof:** Was Neo's belief justified? *The machine was the one who told him!!*
4. Was this knowledge? (?)

Our hesitation to answer yes, said Nozick, was a sign that something was wrong. Recall here that Gettier had argued that something was missing from Plato's classical definition. Scenarios like this one seem to show that Gettier was right. But that wasn't all that they seemed to show.

They also purportedly pointed to the need for a new criterion for knowledge. In other words, they seemed to show that the canonical rule (if P, $\sim$Q) is not a reliable method. For Neo could readily affirm that he was in the Matrix (P) as well as deny the claim that his senses were not deceiving him (Q). The problem was that Neo's awareness wasn't due to his personally sensing it. Therefore, the rule (if P, $\sim$Q) cannot be trusted to always lead us to knowledge.

Before we go any further, it's probably important for us to chase down a distracting question: *Why be concerned in the first place about whether or not the rule (if P, $\sim$Q) will always lead us to knowledge?* Isn't this unnecessary?

The answer, however, is that the first premise in the skeptic's argument flatly presupposes that it is necessary. To see why, try rewinding your memory to any conversation you ever had with a skeptic. In virtually all cases, whenever you attempted to explain your Christian beliefs, **didn't your skeptic friend simply invent some sort of a plausible sounding contradiction to one of your beliefs out of thin air—then immediately suggest that unless you could refute his contradiction, you couldn't really know if your belief was correct?**

In such cases, it probably would have been handy for you to know that denying (Q) will not always lead us to a knowledge of (P). Instead, there will be times in which the principle (if P, ~Q) will fail to lead us to knowledge. This will invariably occur whenever we insist that knowing something is true entails our personally sensing it. So, with this in mind, let's return to the religious skeptic's model argument and see for ourselves how this begins to affect things:

Model Argument: *I cannot know that Christianity is true.*

1. If I know Christianity is true, I also know that all other religions are false.
2. I cannot know that all other religions are false.
3. Therefore, I cannot know that Christianity is true.

As we read through the above argument, it is obvious that the entire abstraction turns on the second premise. In other words, premise 2 is the central premise which most directly determines the outcome of the skeptic's argument. The question for us is:

● Is it *really* true that we cannot know that all other religions in the world are false?

Skeptics who answer yes usually insists that the reason that we cannot know that other religions are false is because we are not in a position to personally sense it. For example: We can't *see* spiritual things. These sorts of realities are not empirically beholden to us. Therefore, we can't know that all other religions in the world are false. (Or so the skeptic claims!)

The problem is that we've just seen that making "sensitivity" a requirement for knowledge causes the rule (if P, ~Q) to fail to lead us to knowledge! Therefore, by defending the second premise of his argument in this way, the skeptic has imploded the first premise of the argument which means that the conclusion is now invalid.

At this point, if you can't see why this is significant, you're just not paying attention. The reason is that virtually all arguments from religious skepticism assume that Nozick's sensitivity requirement is a necessary requirement for religious knowledge. So to see how all encompassing this objection really is,

consider the following additional arguments to the one featured above, along with their respective negations:

Additional Argument 1:
I can't know if the Bible is reliable.

1. If I know the Bible is reliable, I know that Constantine never destroyed early editions.
2. I cannot know that Constantine never destroyed early editions.
3. Therefore, I cannot know that the Bible is reliable.

Negation: Atheists often view Emperor Constantine as the one who founded the Catholic Church by forcing its bishops into theological agreement. It is sometimes alleged that one of the ways he did this was by burning early editions of the Bible which differed from his theological vision for the Church. Sadly, this argument is very common.

The problem with it is that the second premise plainly assumes Nozick's sensitivity requirement as a necessary condition for knowledge. Think about it!

Can we sensibly (i.e. by using our senses) know that Constantine never burned early editions of the Bible? Of course not. And why not? Because our belief that Costantine didn't do this isn't empirically verifiable. But making this a requirement for knowing the Bible is reliable implodes the first premise in the argument (if P, ∼Q) which also invalidates the conclusion. Therefore, the very basis of the argument is undermined and the conclusion, vanquished. Presto!

Additional Argument 2:
I cannot know if Jesus was bodily raised from the dead.

1. If I know Jesus was bodily raised, I know that all natural explanations to Easter are false.
2. I cannot know that all natural explanations to Easter are false.
3. Therefore, I cannot know that Jesus was bodily raised.

Negation: Atheists often claim that the resurrection of Jesus is naturally explainable. Perhaps the Romans tossed the body of Jesus into a mass grave. Maybe the disciples stole the body. Or maybe one of a hundred other natural possibilities explains why the body went missing. But because the evidence for the case cannot be empirically accessed, we cannot sensibly falsify these numerous counter-explanations. Therefore we cannot know that Jesus was raised.

Sound familiar?

The problem is that again, the second premise of the argument plainly assumes Nozick's sensitivity requirement as a necessary condition for knowledge. Think about it! Can we sensibly (i.e. by use of our senses) test every naturalistic alternative? Of course not. And why not? Because we can't empirically access the past, which means that the Christian's belief that these naturalistic alternatives are unsatisfactory isn't sensitive.

But by making sensitivity a requirement for knowing Jesus was bodily raised, the first premise in the argument (if P, ∼Q) is invalidated. Therefore, the very basis of the argument is once again destroyed and the argument is vanquished.

So at this point, we've seen that in the case of at least three familiar arguments (Christianity vs. Other Religions, Bible Certainty, the Resurrection of Jesus) the argument of religious skepticism is straight-fowardly

dismantled. We also can see how easy it is to repeat this same response to similar arguments over and over again, all while getting precisely the same result. We are therefore arguably making good on the promise featured on the front cover of this book. We are defeating the universal basis for religious skepticism.

But let's now go on to address other issues. How can we argue that (P) is knowable? For refuting the universal philosophical basis for the argument of religious skepticism doesn't mean that the antecedent featured in the first premise of these arguments is knowable. Does it?

The answer to the question is of course, *no*. But this naturally raises the follow-up question: So what is the proper basis for knowledge? How can we know that something is true? Or how can we show that any Christian belief counts as valid knowledge?

Let's deal with that question along with several other pertinent issues in the next chapter.

Chapter 2:
The Proper Basis for Knowledge

Skepticism has been the dominant approach to engaging in religious discussion for over twenty centuries. Yet from what we have seen in the previous discussion, the kinds of views offered in defense of it are weak. Therefore, a relevant question is this: What is the proper basis and foundation for knowledge? Or put another way:

- How do we ground our knowledge of (P)?

Perhaps the most exhaustive approach to answering that question was undertaken by the early Greek thinker, Sextus Empiricus. Therefore, it will be useful for us to spend time in this second chapter examining his arguments.

Let's jump in.

The Argument of Infinitism

Sextus Empiricus was an early critic of Plato's teaching. He lived and wrote in roughly the mid-second century. He thought that there were three main challenges to grounding our knowledge of (P). The first one we'll discuss is called the problem of the infinite regress.

Essentially, the problem of the infinite regress is a difficulty which naturally arises due to the philosopher's demand that everything must be proven by something other than itself. In other words, justifiable proofs are demanded for everything, without limitation. Therefore, the need to search for proof is never fully satisfied.

Of course, this sort of demand seemed to be too extravagant, a point which eventually gave rise to more conservative and rational philosophical positions within the western tradition. For as the ancient Greeks quickly recognized, if everything must be proven, then nothing can be proven.

To see why this happens, think about the question: "Does God exist?" How do we go about answering it? We might suppose that the way to settle a question like this is by using something called the **rule of independence**. The rule of independence essentially says that in the case of any contingent proposition (i.e. any proposition which awaits our conferring evidence upon it), what we need to do is defend the proposition by using something other than the proposition itself. (Keep in mind that the skeptic takes it as a sheer given that all propositions are invariably contingent.) So, based on that assumption, we reason forward as follows:

- contingent proposition (A) is proven by contingent proposition (B),
- contingent proposition (B) is proven by contingent proposition (C),
- contingent proposition (C) is proven by contingent proposition (D), and so on, and so forth, until we reach contingent proposition (Z).

The problem, however, is that once we reach contingent proposition (Z), we are now faced with a serious question. How precisely do we determine the status of (Z)? Traditionally, the argument of infinitism holds that we show that (Z) is proven by making it contingent upon proposition (A1). So:

- contingent proposition (A1) is proven by contingent proposition (B1),
- contingent proposition (B1) is proven by contingent proposition (C1),
- contingent proposition (C1) is proven by contingent proposition (D1), and so on, and so forth, until we reach contingent proposition (Z1).

However, once again, we are now faced with the same question as before. How do we show that proposition (Z1) is no longer contingent? Infinitism predictably holds that we simply continue our string of proofs by arguing that (Z1) is now contingent upon (A2). So:

- contingent proposition (A2) is proven by contingent proposition (B2),
- contingent proposition (B2) is proven by contingent proposition (C2),
- contingent proposition (C2) is proven by contingent proposition (D2), and so on, and so forth, *ad infinitum*.

Thus the problem that we're seeing here is there seems to be no proper stopping mechanism for our inquiry. The string of proofs just continues onward, forever. This means that we are essentially saying that our initial contingent proposition (A) is eternally contingent, which means that it cannot be proven. And that is obviously a major problem because it raises some significant questions about the overall, universal foundations for all human knowledge.

So with the absurdity of the first problem firmly settled in our minds, where do we turn next? Sextus's answer is that we must now move on to door number two!

The Argument of Coherentism

Thus the second possibility Sextus explored was the argument of Coherentism. Here, Sextus suggests that perhaps we should have responded differently to the previous challenge when we reached contingent proposition (Z). So, rather than making (Z) contingent upon (A1), we should have argued that (Z) was contingent upon some previous member of the original set of proofs. In that case, we should have responded by saying something like this:

- Contingent Proposition (Z) is proven by (Contingent?) Proposition (Y).

However, this really does seem to be an unacceptable solution. The reason is that it has all the appearances of radically adjusting the overall goal of our inquiry. For the inquirer is now being offered something called a circular answer. In other words, we are simply circling back to the previous proposition in the set. Of course, this immediately raises the additional question, how is this different from claiming that (Z) is contingent upon (A)?

To this, Sextus replies that what we are discussing here is whether coherency rather than independence is to be favored when settling a matter as probative. In other words, we are inquiring whether the fact that the list of proofs coheres well with one another forms a better end to our inquiry than the idea that nothing can be proven. But this ultimately seems to be unsatisfying as well. For, how does this show that we have identified a proper ground for knowledge?

As a result, our inquiry has thus far seemed to prove that all philosophical systems are doomed to be based upon flimsy, tottering, self-defeating arguments. For, as we are seeing, in the case of Coherentism, the theory becomes the proof of the argument. Without a proper footing, it simply folds like a house of cards.

So where does that leave us?

Sextus concluded that it left us with only one viable option: An agreed upon foundation.

The Argument of Foundationalism

Thus, the third and final trope in Sextus's argument is an agreed upon foundation. In other words, we must agree to some sort of acceptable foundation upon which we rest all our final arguments and conclusions. These would be things that we deliberately CHOOSE not to question. For without settling upon some kind of a premise which we exempt from proofing, we cannot escape from the dilemma caused by the first two arguments.

At this point, we should probably mention how troubling this is for skeptics. For we are essentially suggesting that maybe we should have responded by claiming that proposition (Z) wasn't contingent upon anything! In other words, maybe we should have responded by saying:

- Proposition (Z) is proven by Proposition (Z)!

So in the event that such an answer is unacceptable to us (as it in fact was to Sextus), how should our inquiry conclude?

In answer, Sextus surmised that our investigation has left us with no ability to properly ground human knowledge. In other words, it shows us that it is baseless for us to say that we can know something, as well as it is to say that we can know nothing. But there are a few good reasons for thinking that Sextus had reached the

wrong conclusion in his argument. So to wrap up our discussion of Sextus's work, let's examine the two major approaches that Foundationalism has historically taken to grounding (P).

The Basis for Knowledge

Foundationalism has traditionally taken on two characteristically distinct forms. Historically, it has either argued:

1. we must presuppose that (Z) doesn't need to be proven, or…
2. we must demonstrate that (Z) may be axiomatically proven.

The difference between these two options, of course, is that a **presupposition** is blindly assumed while an **axiom** is self-evidently true. In other words, an axiom proves itself to be true by being something which we are never justified in questioning. Take this argument for example. It is axiomatically certain that there are only three ways to settle the status of (Z). We can either argue that (Z) is proven by:

1. (A1)
2. (Y) or
3. (Z) itself.

Notice that there are no other options for us to choose from beyond our pointing out that it in the case of the second option, it is just as valid for us to say that (Z) is proven by (Y) as it is to say that (Z) is proven by (A).

An axiom is therefore, properly speaking, a self-evident irreducible prime. It is something which, upon inspection, must necessarily be true and cannot be false. This means that no independent proof can be reasonably demanded of an axiom, since to do so would be practically tantamount to denying the status of the thing under question.

So now that we have seen that axioms are necessarily true, we have arguably discovered (contra Sextus) that we really do have a philosophically acceptable

basis for grounding religious knowledge. That is, provided that (P) is established on the basis of some sort of axiom, whatever logically follows from (P) is equally as certain as (P).

Of course, if this is true (and it hardly seems that it could be false!) we would now be in a position to do precisely what the skeptic has denied. In other words, we would now be able to rationally ground religious knowledge, which would lead us to a welcome response to the various skeptical arguments reviewed in the previous chapter.

So with these things in mind, let's return to the skeptic's main objection in order to survey the fruit of our findings. As we do, we will quickly see from what follows that the skeptic has now been philosophically check-mated.

Let's start by setting up a model argument.

Model Argument: *I cannot know that Christianity is true.*

In the above argument, simply let (P) stand for the proposition: "Christianity is true." Then let (Q) stand for the contrary proposition: "Hinduism is true." From here, we can lay out the premises of our model argument as follows:

1. If I know that (P), I also know that ∼(Q).
2. I cannot know that ∼(Q).
3. Therefore, I cannot know that (P).

As we saw earlier, it is not possible for the skeptic to defend the second premise of the argument by using Nozick's sensitivity requirement. The reason is that if he does, the rule featured in the first premise (if P, ∼Q) will fail to lead us to knowledge.

But that naturally raises the question: Does this mean that the Christian cannot know whether Hinduism is false? From what we have seen, the answer is a provisional *no*. So long as the Christian has an axiomatic grounding for (P), there is no rational reason why (P) itself should be excluded as a basis for concluding ∼(Q). The critical question is:

● Does the Christian have an argument like that?

It is obvious that virtually all challenges to Christian truth will unavoidably have in common the denial of the Christian's knowledge of God. In that case, a thorough refutation of every argument from religious skepticism will necessarily include our axiomatically establishing that single-most important point. So in that case, what arguments might we use to show that God's existence is axiomatically certain?

Consider the following argument as a good possibility.

The Lord of the Matrix

Let's start by imagining for the sake of argument, that you are a brain in a vat. (As this is the classical skeptical argument, we will aim to start here.) An evil mad scientist has cleverly wired your cerebrum and is now controlling your every sensory experience. Would it perhaps surprise you that you could still deduce, even in such straits that God exists? In fact, the argument is virtually irrefutable. Come what may, the divine conclusion will persist.

The case here, however, will ultimately hinge upon our previous discussion, since the key to the whole windup will be connected to mathematical axioms. For it is self-evidently true that whether we are awake in the real world or asleep in the Matrix, $2 + 3$ will always equal 5. For from what we know of math, it is flatly impossible for mathematical truths to somehow wind up being false. Thus we can safely conclude that the rules of math are axiomatic, even if it turns out that we are just sleeping in the Matrix.

Now this in turn prepares us to answer the skeptics challenge. It leaves the proponent of atheism without a founding case. For if math is truly trustworthy (as we have in fact argued that it is) then time in the Matrix must be finite and not beginningless. As noted philosopher of time, professor William Lane Craig has

claimed, if the past were beginningless, then the present could not have occurred. [5] But surely that's absurd! We would therefore have to conclude that the Matrix world itself must necessarily have a beginning.

To explain this a bit further, consider the following illustration. I refer to it here as the "Ever-Pending Birthday." Imagine that you have walked into a room only to encounter an infinite row of tumbling dominos. Each falling tile collapses the subsequent member, causing the proceeding domino to plummet towards the earth. Each successive domino takes all of one second to accomplish its inevitable collision with the floor.

Now imagine that the row of dominos is utterly beginningless, leading to a final domino standing near your foot. Bending down, you notice that the domino bears an inscription which reads the exact date of your birth. You then begin to wonder: If the set of dominos is infinitely long, how much time will it take for my birthday to arrive? The answer is unavoidable: Your tile would never fall. Consequently, this would imply that you could never be born.

For this reason, the Matrix world *cannot* be eternal. Some initial trigger had to set the world in motion. For since a brain could not be envatted if it's person were never born, some inaugural set of affairs is necessary for us to create the story. Moreover, the initial cause would have to exist eternally, since any finite cause would itself require some "causal parent." From this point, only one additional proof is needed to demonstrate that God is indeed, Lord of the Matrix.

Thus our final query is truly the capstone for our case. If the Cause has triggered the other causes, then what is the founding reason? If we say that the reason is something which lies outside of the Cause itself, then it—and not the Cause—is the real reason why the Matrix world exists. Thus, the parent-Cause of the world necessarily causes itself to cause the other causes to be set into motion. This doubtlessly implies a conscious will at work in the creation of any world we might imagine would exist.

From here, refuting (Q) becomes a mere matter of child's play, since our case for God's existence surely applies to life outside "the vat." For no matter the world the skeptic imagines, God would be the cause, which means that God exists in every possible world that we conceive of. Therefore, since it is not possible to conceptually erase God, the force of skeptical doubts are effectively neutralized.

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[5] William Lane Craig; Reasonable Faith; Crossway Publications, Wheaton Illinois; 2008; pg. 122.

Nothing seems to be gained by them since God's existence is axiomatic, which would directly imply that God cannot fail to exist.

For this reason, we can see that our overall approach to this problem should arguably be acceptable in the eyes of most skeptics. For in the words of Peter Klein, we have attacked skepticism on its own ground by granting as much as possible to the skeptic while showing the reason why what can be granted does not lead to the skeptic's conclusion. In fact, a simple review of my argument will show that I have in no way denied the rule (if P, $\sim$Q)—or any other rule of reason for that matter! Instead I have employed this rule in the present case to show that the negation of (Q) is possible precisely because (P) may be axiomatically established.

Therefore, I am in a position to suppose that I have made good on the overall intent of this book. I have revealed a simple strategy which anyone can use to defeat religious skepticism forever.

So let's close this booklet in the next section where I will offer a few more tips for trouble-shooting and overall maintenance. As we shall see, even shorter, more consolidated explanations of these arguments are possible. So let's hurry to our close as we discuss several more key strategies for defending your faith.

Chapter 3:
Objections and Conclusions

When I first became an evangelist, I never thought that I would step into a life-long call in the area of Christian Apologetics. Prior to that time, I had no interest in the subject what-so-ever. Instead, I had previously been a pastor, a preacher, and a revivalist. So for me, the idea of offering a reasonable case for God seemed silly. (Can you relate?) I thought, "Argue for God? What a waste of time! I'll just pray hard, preach hard, and trigger a massive revival."

But the strangest thing has happened since stepping into my calling in apologetics. I have become a success in evangelism at a level much greater than I had previously experienced. I've found that I have a new level of credibility whenever I stand to preach at a service or at an event. I have become a scholar in my field, a leader of leaders, and I have developed a deep intellectual life with God (and my dense academic work is the proof!).

I've had hosts of visitors come to my website (and as you are reading this, that number is probably increasing). I have had the opportunity to partner with amazing national ministries like Campus Crusade for Christ, Teen Challenge, and I have preached in local churches in my part of the country, spreading the message of Jesus wherever I have visited.

In short, I have greatly broadened my impact for Christ, just by getting equipped in the fine art of defending the faith.

But do you want to know the best part?

The best part is that I have developed a deep personal peace of mind that has come from seeing my faith overwhelm the questions and doubts I was facing. I have watched my confidence as a believer, a leader and as a father grow significantly. Now, when my kids ask me questions (and boy do they ask questions!) I don't inwardly freak out because I know I have the answers. Not only that, but I've also entered into a calling in which I am equipping other believers to do the same thing in their families.

And that is certainly a wonderful reward!

So before I close this book, I would like to offer several more important points to you which I see as critical for the overall growth and defense of your faith.

(1). Get Involved At A Local Church

First, if you are not already a part of a good local church, I want to implore you to become part of one. There simply is no substitute for growing in your faith than the vital benefits you get from being a part of a strong, vibrant, life-giving, local church. The local church is a place where you can ask questions, hear preaching, experience rich corporate worship, be a part of life-giving small-groups, receive prayer, and discuss problems in your overall faith-life. It is a place where you can (ideally) discover the best possible context to succeed in your relationship with God.

(2). Get Equipped In Apologetics

Secondally, I want to exhort you that if you haven't already done so, you need to set some plans in place to become seriously equipped in Christian Apologetics. There simply is no better way to ensure your perseverance in your faith in the face of the intellectual objections against it. Christian Apologetics can give you the tools you need to deconstruct arguments which would otherwise stifle you. Speaking from personal experience, the content I have offered here has proved enormously helpful to me in ballesting my faith with sound reason.

(3). Sign-Up For My Course!

Thirdly, I want to give you the opportunity to enroll in my on-line master-class in Christian Apologetics. My course broadly covers a diverse plethora of topics and deals with a host of fundamental objections to the faith which are frequently delivered by modern skeptics. If you sign-up for my course today, you'll receive:

- 13 video sessions filled with hours of video content which you can view at your own pace to keep you growing in your faith.

- An 87 page course-workbook filled with over 100 citations from scholarly journals, monograms and books.
- Personal email correspondence and contact with me, the course-creator and instructor so that you can be mentored in your development.
- A massive cost break on the class itself which is being offered by our ministry at $35—quite literally, a mere fraction of the university (or seminary) cost.

My friend, there simply is no better way to ensure the development of your faith and the faith of the children which God has entrusted to your care than for you to become equipped in Christian Apologetics. In fact, I am so confident in the material that I am offering that I am personally guaranteeing it. So if you don't like my insights, or you think they are mistaken, you get your money back on the course and the book you hold in your hands is refunded—no questions asked. Moreover, if that deal doesn't doesn't seem like a good enough deal, then there's an additional offer that you get, just for reading this book today.

If you enroll in my course in Christan Apologetics within five days of purchasing this book, you'll be receiving your money back on the book. In other words, all that you will be paying for is the cost of the on-line course itself. That's a whole lot of value for a very low price. The reason I am doing this is because I am passionate about helping people like you to learn how to defend their faith in God. Not only so, but if you happen to be a pastor of a local church, there are some additional treats which are available, just for you as well. So simply email me at info@benfischerministries.com, tell me what church you pastor, and I'll get you connected to my broader offers.

So with those things in mind, let's close this book by identifying a few roadblocks which you can expect to encounter when using the arguments I've described here to defend your faith in personal evangelism. No doubt there could be others, but feel free to write if you encounter any and I'll send you the answers so that you're not needlessly detained by them.

Roadblocks to Religious Knowledge

Roadblock 1:
"Your Argument isn't 100% certain!"

The first roadblock that you can expect to encounter would be a clever variation of the same basic skeptical argument I've just spent the last two chapter dismantling. For example, a skeptic may grant you after hearing my argument that it presently appears to be true that Nozick's sensitivity requirement creates odd exceptions to the rule (if P, ~Q). Some may even capitulate to the point that (P) can be an acceptable ground for ~(Q), provided it is some sort of an axiomatic proposition.

But what if future discoveries in epistemology upend Nozick's novel exception to the rule (if P, ~Q)? After all, everyone thought that Plato's definition of knowledge was correct for over two thousand years. Yet it was later challenged! For reasons like this, it is never safe to conclude that any discovery in philosophy is final, which also means that no one—including Ben Fischer—can be 100% certain that this argument is correct.

However, this objection commits yet another crime against reason, a point which becomes obvious as we view its various premises. Consider:

1. If I know that Ben's argument is 100% certain, I know that no future discoveries in philosophy will ever upend it.
2. I cannot know whether future discoveries in philosophy will upend Ben's argument.
3. Therefore, I cannot know that Ben's argument is 100% certain.

At the risk of sounding pedantic, the second premise of the argument plainly assumes Nozick's sensitivity requirement as a necessary condition for knowledge.

Think about it! Can we sensibly know (i.e. by use of our senses) that no future discoveries will arise against my argument in the future? Of course not. And why not? Because we can't empirically access the future. Our belief that this will not happen isn't sensitive.

But by making sensitivity a requirement for knowing my argument is correct, the first premise of the argument (if P, ~Q) is once again invalidated. Therefore, the very structure of the argument is undermined and the argument is upended.

So if this objection comes up, defending yourself against it should be pretty easy by now. If you still feel unsure, just use the following four-step approach as a handy guide:

- Step 1: Note that the first premise in the skeptic's argument plainly assumes the rule (if P, ~Q) as a general rule for establishing knowledge.
- Step 2: Remind your objector that Neo could know he was in the Matrix (P) as well as deny the claim that his senses were not deceiving him (~Q), provided the machines had told him.
- Step 3: Mention that if knowing (P) is partially contingent upon Neo's personally sensing that (P), then the rule (if P, ~Q) implodes, and Neo cannot know of his own condition.
- Step 4: On this basis, show that the rule (if P, ~Q) will fail to lead us to knowledge in all instances in which we make sensitivity a necessary requirement for knowledge.

Before moving on, a quick word of caution: My argument does not justify the claim that the Christian knows the future.

Naturally, it is quite possible that some future philosophical development could unseat my argument entirely. The point, however, is that the skeptic cannot claim this as a reasonable cause for denying my argument. Instead, the skeptic must find some sort of primitive logical fault within the argument itself in order to show why my conclusion is invalid.

What is helpful to keep in mind here is how important it is to distinguish between philosophical doubt and psychological doubt. I would argue (as have

others) that philosophical doubts arise due to obvious violations of known rules and principles of epistemology. Psychological doubts however would be based on non-evidenced reasons or grounds. Therefore, I would argue that we are justified in ignoring psychological doubts so long as doing so would not violate any known rule or convention of epistemology.

So, with that said, let's move on.

Roadblock 2:
"Unless you eliminate all psychological doubt, you cannot defeat skepticism!"

The second roadblock you may encounter is that the skeptic may attempt to change the rules of the game. That is, the skeptic may attempt to argue that unless you can show that all psychological doubt is vanquished, you cannot claim that skepticism has been defeated.

The problem with this second approach is that it is based on a principle called the **Eliminate All Contraries First Principle**. As the name clearly implies, the principle holds that (P) has not been justified unless we show that all contriaries to it (be they philosophical or psychological) have been effectively neutralized or defeated.

The problem with this approach is that the skeptic is unknowingly claiming that only deductive arguments can lead us to a knowledge of (P). Or, put another way: Only deductive certainty is admissible in the battle for knowledge.

But if this approach were accepted, it would cause most of what we normally think we know about the world around us to be consigned to skepticism and uncertainty. To see why, consider the following argument:

1. If I know that (P), I also know that ∼(∼P).
2. I cannot know that ∼(∼P).
3. Therefore, I cannot know that (P).

Now clearly, it is the case that the proposition ∼(∼P) is logically identical to the proposition (P). In fact the only way for (∼P) to be false is if (P) is true!

Therefore, the proposition ∼(∼P) would have to logically entail that (P) in which case the skeptic is arguing that only deductive arguments can lead us to knowledge. That, however, would consign most of our empirical knowledge to utter uncertainty. Or in other words: *This objection would implode modern science itself.*

About this, eminent philosopher, Roderick Chisholm, wrote the following:

"Any adequate theory of evidence must provide for the fact that a proposition (e) may make evident a proposition (h) for a subject (S) even though (e) does not [deductively] entail (h). We reject the skeptical view according to which there is no reason to believe that the premises of an inductive argument ever confer evidence upon the conclusion. If this skeptical view were true, then we would know next to nothing about the world around us. We would not know, for example, such propositions as are expressed by 'There are nine planets,' 'Jones owns a Ford,' and 'The sun will rise tomorrow.'" [6]

It seems quite evident to most of us that Chisholm is right. The Eliminate All Contraries First Principle is simply too strong a condition for knowledge of almost any kind. For this reason, I concur, once again, with Peter Klein that we must be willing to agree to two main inarguable points at the very outset of the discussion with the religious skeptic:

1. We need to agree that any claim to know that (P) will minimally entail that we have a true, justified belief that (P).
2. We need to agree that in order to know that (P) on the basis of some evidence (e), it is not necessary to the discussion that (e) deductively entail (P). [7]

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[6] Chilsom, "On the nature of Empirical Evidence," in Empirical Knowledge, ed. Roderick M. Chisholm and Robert J. Swartz (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1973), p. 232.)

[7] Peter D. Klein, Certainty: A Refutation of Skepticism (University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1981) pg. 15.

What will immediately take place if these two criteria are accepted is that your skeptic friend will see the need to surrender his demand that all psychological doubt be eliminated. But if your skeptic friend refuses to accept this, then simply respond to him by saying something like this:

"Well I guess it's no great wonder that you doubt God's existence! After all—your criterion for proofing knowledge is so incredibly high that we can't even be sure about the existence of the moon!" From here, any complaining he makes is simply an emotional outburst of anger at the sudden discovery that religious skepticism is mostly psychological in nature.

Roadblock 3:
"What if Nozick's Sensitivity Requirement is right?"

At this point, some skeptics may attempt to argue that you have not ruled out the possibility that Nozick's sensitivity requirement is indeed a valid criterion for knowledge. After all (the skeptic might suggest) who cares if the rule (if P, $\sim$Q) fails to lead us to knowledge—at least we could still argue that God's invisibility is a valid reason to deny his existence!

This objection is a bit more sophisticated than I wish to address in such a short format as a small book like this one. However, in order to avoid the appearance of my somehow dodging a "valid" objection, I would advise the ambitious reader to simply go to my website and pull up my article showing some of the problems associated with Nozick's overall theory of knowledge. The article is entitled: "God and The Challenge of Skepticism."

Suffice it to say, for the time being, the general rule (if P, $\sim$Q) carries such an overwhelming appeal to both logic and reason that most secular philosophers are utterly unwilling to deny it—even if doing so would defend the cause of atheism.

Therefore, my advice to the Christian reader is that if this roadblock comes up in your personal evangelism, simply respond by incredulously saying to your skeptical friend: "So you are willing to deny a principle canon of deductive logic just to establish your atheism?"

Roadblock 4:
"Your evidence for (P) doesn't disprove (Q)!"

Finally, the question sometimes comes up from my readers: "What if (P) isn't axiomatic? Surely that is possible!" And of course it is! Consider:

1. It is not *axiomatic* that the text of the Bible has been preserved.
2. Nor is it *axiomatic* that Jesus has been raised from the dead.

So, how in such cases should the Christian argue?

My advice to the Christian reader would be to respond by arguing that so long as we can show that the evidence for (P) may be grounded or justified by some axiomatic proposition, then (P) itself can be used to demonstrate that ∼(Q), since anything that follows deductively from such a proposition becomes as certain as the proposition itself. Case Closed!

Conclusion:

In conclusion, I think that I have shown in fairly persuasive terms that religious skepticism can be reasonably defeated. So long as I have good evidence for (P) I can conclude that (Q) is false. Religious skepticism has therefore been collapsed because it is utterly similar to what is sometimes called the Canonical Argument for Classical Skepticism. Thus without some other reason to plead for skepticism, the skeptic is left without a defense for his own argument.

So thanks once again for reading my book. Now go ahead and get signed up for my course so you can learn how to defend your faith in even better ways! Just click here, and I'll see you on the inside! The journey continues from there! God bless my friend! And always remember to be prepared to give a reason for the hope that is within you! (1 Peter 3:15)

Glossary:

Skepticism: A common approach to acquiring knowledge which systematically uses doubt to question beliefs in order to establish them. Classically, skepticism holds that we cannot have knowledge about some belief (or set of beliefs) we normally think we have knowledge of.

Principle of Deductive Closure: See entry for: "The Closure Principle."

Empirical beliefs: Those beliefs we view as established based on the testimony of our senses.

Epistemology: A field of study in modern philosophy which is concerned with what knowledge is and how we can acquire it.

The Closure Principle: A rule in epistemology which virtually all philosophers affirm is true which holds that if (P) and (Q) are contrary propositions, then, if person (S) is justified in believing (P), person (S) is also justified in denying (Q). The Closure Principle was challenged by Robert Nozick in 1981 by certain odd features of the rules of counterfactual conditionals. But Nozick's subsequent theory of knowledge has never been generally accepted by philosophers.

The Rule of Independence: A debated rule of knowledge which assumes that the only way to show that a given proposition is true is by something independent from the proposition itself.

Presuppose: To believe something without having any proof.

Axiom: A proposition in logic or mathematics that is assumed without proof for the sake of studying the consequences that follow from it.

The Eliminate All Contraries First Principle: A highly debated rule of knowledge that assumes that the only way to show that a given proposition is true is by refuting or neutralizing every possible alternative.

Table of Symbols:

(S): A canonical symbol for a subject, such as a person.

(P): A proposition of any kind.

(Q): A contrary proposition to (P).

($\sim$): A common mathematical symbol showing negation.

(e): A common symbol for evidence.

About:

Benjamin Fischer is a fourth generation preacher and minister of the Gospel.

Ben grew up in the home of a Lutheran pastor and possessed a great love for God and a sincere devotion to Jesus as a small child. But at age 17, Ben backslid and fell away from the Lord and spent the next several years in a lifestyle of drugs and alcohol. Nevertheless, through the prayers of his parents, Ben reclaimed the faith of his youth before his early twenties.

On October 22nd, 1997, Ben had a powerful encounter with the person of the Holy Spirit. Since that time, Ben has served the Lord in full-time ministry.

In 2008 Ben completed both his Bachelors from Concordia College Bronxville NY and his Masters from The Master's Institute Seminary in White Bear, Minnesota. Today, Ben holds a BA in music and an MDiv which he completed in preparation for the pastoral ministry.

Ben has ministered significantly in churches throughout the upper midwest. He began his pastoral ministry by serving as an associate Pastor at North Heights Lutheran Church in Roseville, MN, between 2006-2011, before being moved on into the work of full-time domestic mission. He now labors as a missionary-evangelist and is involved in the work of preaching and teaching. He has also traveled and spoken at various churches on the subject of apologetics, ministering as he does on the beauty and reasonability of the Christian gospel.

Ben is perhaps best known for delivering God's Word with passion and clarity, and has a desire to see a generation raised up to minister Jesus to skeptics. His life's mission is to minister the gospel of Jesus Christ to skeptics and believers with Fire and Passion for his Return.

Ben believes strongly in the role that apologetics will play in the "new evangelization" of America, seeing it as a key solution to revitalizing a nation lost in disbelief. Today, Ben lectures as an adjunct faculty member at Teen Challenge Leadership Institute, which is a second-year ministry preparation track for graduates of the chemical dependency program.

Ben has been married to his best-friend, Sarah, whom he calls "princess," for 12 years. They met in 2007, married in 2008 and started their family in 2013.

Together, Ben and Sarah have two children: a son, named Aaron, (age 6), and a daughter named Adeline (age 4). Together, they live in the state of Minnesota and have a desire to see God's people walking in his kingdom purposes for family and for ministry. Click here to get signed up for Ben's course today.

Learn the secret to defeating religious unbelief.

Traditionally, there have been two major ways that Christians have sought to defend their faith: (1) Refuse to admit religious skepticism because doubt is biblically forbidden, or, (2) Defend an analysis of doubt which presupposes the Bible is true in order to make theology immune to skeptical attacks.

However, in this book, Benjamin J. Fischer introduces a third approach, and a better one, which is to attack skepticism on its own ground by granting as much as possible to the skeptic while at the same time showing why what can be granted does not lead to the skeptic's conclusion. Drawing from the work of modern philosopher Peter David Klein, Ben demonstrates convincingly that the argument of skepticism can be reasonably refuted. Here, at last, is a strong method for defeating the universal basis for all virtually all religious unbelief! The argument is sure to persuade, even the firmest atheist, that skepticism is now resolvable.