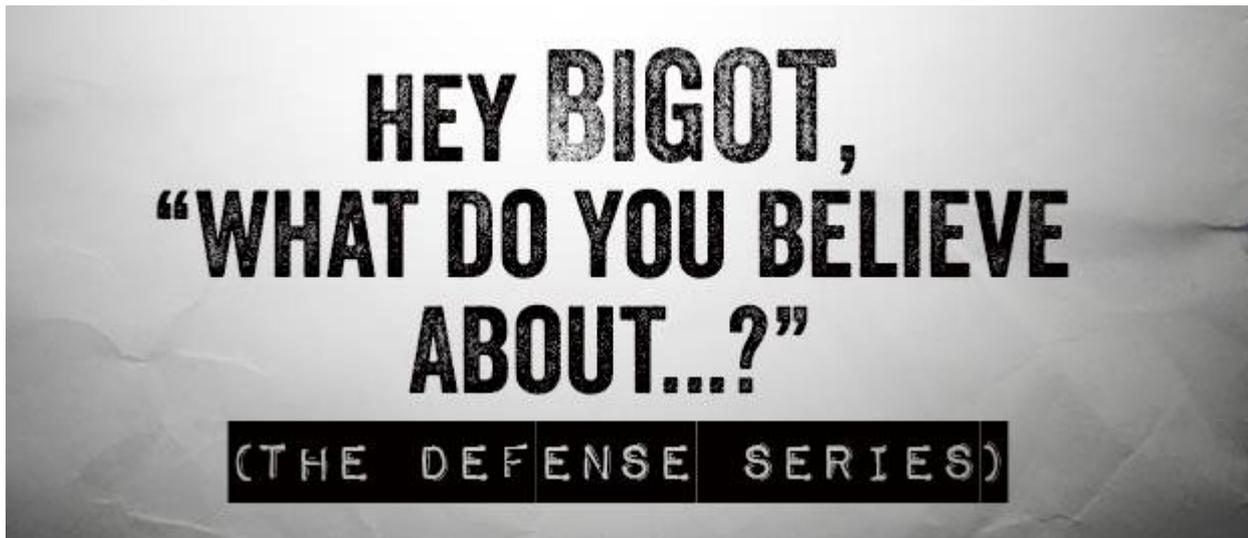
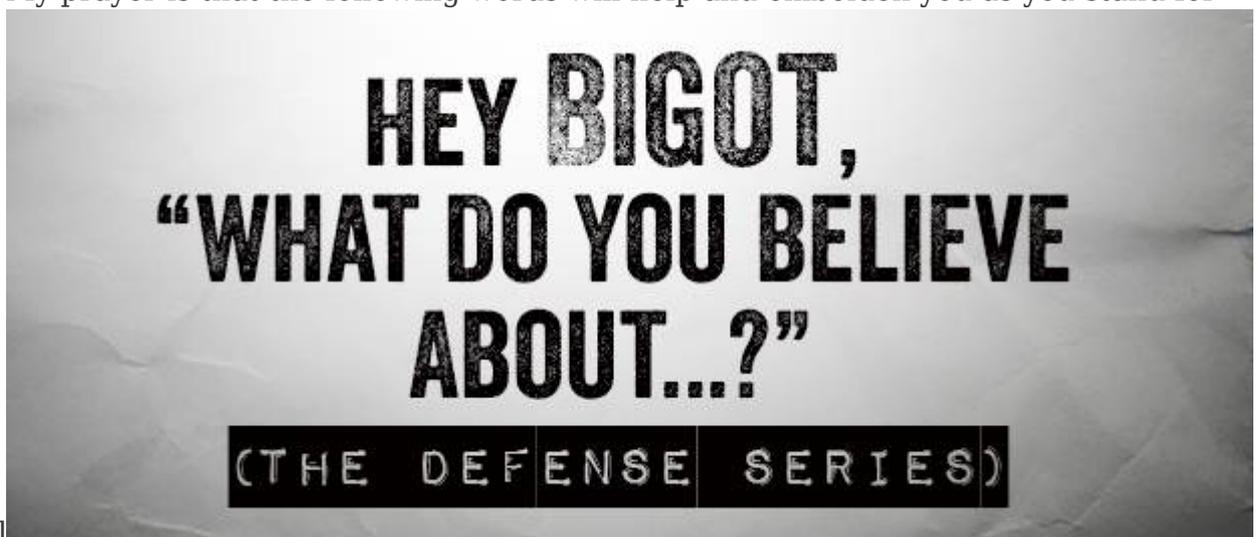


Hey Bigot, What Do You Believe About...? (The Defense Series)

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[Welcome to *The Defense Series*. The aim of this series is to help Christians more effectively “make a defense” ([1 Pet. 3:15](#)) to those who challenge the teachings and values of New Testament Christianity. Don’t be fooled by the title; this article is a *response* to the above quote. My prayer is that the following words will help and embolden you as you stand for



Truth.]

When someone begins their question with, “*What do you believe about...*,” I get excited.

Why? Because they have allowed me the opportunity to illuminate some aspect of *religion* or *morality* with God's Word. Perhaps I will be able to plant a seed that will eventually bring this soul to the Lord.

More and more often, however, this question is being asked with a double standard. Our postmodern culture is conditioning people - especially the Millennial generation - to doubt the reality of absolute truth. As a result, the valued virtue of "tolerance" has taken a new meaning. Today, many who consider themselves "tolerant" are decidedly *intolerant* to anyone who believes in moral or religious absolutes.

Commenting on the difference between the traditional view of "tolerance" and the new postmodern view of tolerance, D.A. Carson writes,

Neither the old tolerance nor the new is an intellectual position; rather, each is a social response. The old tolerance is the willingness to put up with, allow, or endure people and ideas with which we disagree; in its purest form, the *new* tolerance is the social commitment to treat all ideas and people as **equally right, save for those people who disagree with this view of tolerance.** (98; emp. mine)

This new understanding of "tolerance" complicates the seemingly innocent question that begins with, "*What do you believe about...?*" Many will quickly label you as being intolerant (*and will thus respond to you with intolerance*) if you somehow communicate any of the following principles:

- Jesus Christ is the only way to the Father (John 14:6).
- The practice of homosexuality is sinful (Rom. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).
- Jesus has very specific standards for what constitutes marriage (Matt. 19:4-6).
- Jesus is God (John 1:1; 14).
- There is such a thing as "sin" (1 John 3:4-10).
- Jesus only started one Church (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:4-6).
- Hell exists (25:41, 46), and God will send seemingly good, moral people there (Matt. 7:21-23).
- God's Word is the only standard in matters of faith and religion (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
- Etcetera, etcetera.

Christians, if you are being salt and light to the world (cf. Matt. 5:13-16), you will occasionally be asked, "*What do you believe about...?*" by people who hold to the *new* tolerance rather than the *old*. **And when you find yourself in this situation** - and you

suspect your convictions will label you as being arrogant, bigoted, narrow-minded, judgmental, or intolerant - **preface your answer by *asking for tolerance***.

For example, say, “Thanks for caring about what I think. My beliefs are actually very personal, and I am glad to share them with you. But before I do, tell me, do you consider yourself a tolerant or intolerant person? Is it safe for me to share my beliefs with you, or are you going to ridicule my convictions? Do you respect other points of view, or do you criticize views that differ from your own?”

Let them answer your question. If they claim to be tolerant (and who considers themselves intolerant?), then it will be very difficult for them to call you “intolerant” or “bigoted” when you share the truth of God’s Word with them.

This response demonstrates that the *new tolerance* is flawed; there is no such thing as being neutral. Too often, Christians are the only ones who get labeled as being ‘judgmental,’ though everyone else is judging, too. Nonetheless, those who seek to please God rather than men will be persecuted by those who subscribe to the *new tolerance*.

(Your comments are welcome and encouraged, even if they are in disagreement. However, please keep your comments relevant to the article. For my full comment policy, [click here](#).)

Sources

Carson, D.A. *The Intolerance Of Tolerance*. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, MI, 2013.