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Dealing with a *Piman* Head

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In the Japanese language, a *piman* is a bell pepper. The expression "*piman no atama*" (bell pepper head) is sometimes used to refer to someone who is empty headed (since the inside of a bell pepper is empty).

On occasion, I come across people on social media who bash Christians and Christianity, but never support their own point of view. Essentially they are trolls, but some of them think they are making intelligent arguments. These people are truly clueless concerning what they don't know. Sadly, some of them are not even interested in getting it right. People like that can legitimately be labeled *piman no atama*.

I recently had a discussion on YouTube with just such a person. Alltime continuously attacked the Christian faith using totally empty arguments, yet never gave a reason why his beliefs should be considered true. He just asserted them without ever backing them up. Sometimes, the only way to deal with a person like that is to call them out for their shallowness.

The name of one particular video I published on YouTube is called *Bible Basher*. It can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wTw1iNr1efg&lc=UgyqZvsGdxy3nb2xVT94AaABAg.A36WV3vGIZfA4y9iMuy1xJ>

This video generated quite a bit of discussion with several Atheists, but mostly with Alltime. Since this was the main "Christian basher" in this conversation, I am limiting my discussion here to only my interaction with him.

In actuality, this ended up being a VERY long discussion. For that reason, I am going to deal with this a little differently than I normally do. In this article I am not going to post the discussion itself. (I have posted it at

<http://www.marketfaith.org/2024/07/dealing-with-a-piman-head-dialog/> for those who are interested in reading it.) Rather, I will identify the various attempts this person has made to put down the Christian faith, and explain how I dealt with them.

[Special Note:

If you would like to read the actual dialog, there are a couple of things I believe will help you digest this better:

1. It will be helpful if you view the video before reading the dialog. There are several places where Alltime inserted a time stamp to identify specifically what he was complaining about. Viewing it ahead of time will provide you more context.

2. You will also note that in the dialog there are four sections of discussion. It is very possible that there is a certain amount of overlap to the various ones, but that is simply the nature of the way YouTube has set up its comment system. When a person makes a comment, it is possible to either reply directly to a particular initial comment, or make a new independent one. Each section below begins with an initial comment, and all following comments in that section are replies under it. So, there are four initial comments with reply discussions.]

With that understanding, we will now look at the various ways this person tried to win his point.

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Alltime's Approach to Interaction

1. Insults and Words of Contempt

One of the approaches Alltime used was basically blunt force. Rather than engage in an actual discussion, he sometimes just directly insulted me personally, and heaped contempt on the Christian faith.

People who do that really can't be taken seriously. They generally operate out of ignorance and anger, and simply don't want to hear another point of view. They use the insults as a means of deflecting from their own lack of knowledge.

Rather than insulting back, it is generally more productive to call out their insult and point out that an insult is not an argument. In doing that, it becomes possible to challenge their belief with some actual legitimate expression of the truth of the Christian faith.

2. Making False or Incorrect Statements

Another of Alltime's techniques was basically just to lie. Actually, I'm not totally sure he knew he was lying when he made his false and incorrect statements. I really think he actually believed he was telling the truth. Still, he did it consistently and continually throughout our entire discussion.

The counter to this is simply to correct the record, and do it in a manner that is as matter of fact as possible. It is rather frustrating to have to do the same thing over and over again, but standing one's ground with the truth is an essential. You hope that at some point the person might get embarrassed at being called out so much and finally quit. But sometimes it just requires a lot of persistence.

3. Changing the Subject

It is very interesting to see that there were occasions when Alltime would not even respond to some comments. Instead, he would just ignore them and change the subject. There were basically two occasions when this tended to happen. One was when one of my responses backed him into a corner. Sometimes I would answer him with facts that he simply could not dispute, but was unwilling to concede. A second occasion was when he tended to change the subject when I challenged him on a personal spiritual level.

In dealing with this, there were times when the point he was ignoring was not that important and I just let it go. There were times, however, when the point was important and I brought it up again and pushed him to answer. Most of the time he still wouldn't respond, but I felt he needed to be pushed to think more deeply than was his tendency.

4. Making Incorrect Assumptions about Christian Doctrine and Beliefs

One of the things Alltime did over and over again was to misrepresent the Christian faith. He made numerous attacks on Christianity from several different angles. Since he did this repeatedly, I am convinced that he really believed he was representing the truth. However, it was obvious to me that he simply was not up to speed on the teachings of the Christian faith.

To deal with this, I took two different approaches. Sometimes I simply responded that he was wrong in his assertions and challenged him concerning where he got his information. Other times I took the opportunity to share with him what the Christian faith really believes. These exchanges provided an opportunity to share a witness for Christ.

5. Unwillingness to Back up His Assertions about Christianity

While sometimes Alltime simply ignored my requests for him to back up

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his false assertions about the Christian faith, there were other times when he acknowledged that he was deliberately ignoring my requests. This is rather rude at a surface level, but rather than take offense I just persisted. Generally he just stated up front that he felt no need to back up his assertions, as Christianity was simply false on its face. Rather than let that pass, I continually insisted that he did need to back up his taunts, and that not doing so invalidated his complaint.

6. Assuming a Naturalistic Worldview Is True and Dismissing Christianity

There were numerous times when Alltime attacked me and the Christian faith, and it was evident that his starting assumptions were based on naturalistic worldview beliefs. One of the responses I made quite frequently was to challenge him to justify his own beliefs. I would ask him how he knew his beliefs were true and mine false. He was very resistant to engaging my responses, and I am convinced that he had no idea how to justify his own beliefs. I believe his resistance to responding was a means of self-defense. I was not going to let him slide by on that, though, so I kept pressing. Everyone who attacks the Christian faith begins their attack based on some set of beliefs. Until that can be brought out into the open, there is no possibility of a back and forth discussion.

7. Misunderstanding of the Nature of His Own Beliefs

In addition to merely assuming his naturalistic beliefs were true, Alltime also revealed in his comments that he actually did not understand the implications of his own beliefs. Many, if not most, people who believe in naturalistic philosophy truly think that they are not religious. That is not true, however, as there is no such thing as a belief system that is not

based on faith – including Atheism (or so called Secularism).

Dealing with this objection requires pointing out how they are religious. I did this with Alltime by asking him to prove to me, using empirical science (his own standard), how the natural universe, operating by natural laws, is all that exists. He refused to take that on every time, so I kept on pressing. There is no way to have an intelligent discussion if one person refuses to interact.

8. Making Incorrect Statements about Christian History

Alltime, over and over again, asserted things about Christian history that simply are not true. His purpose in doing this was to try to present Christianity as either evil or untrue.

The counter to this kind of attack is always the truth. Of course, in order to counter it, it is necessary to know the facts. If known, however, the truth will ultimately always destroy a lie. That said, it may be necessary to be persistent in advocating the truth. In the case of Alltime, even when I challenged him, he continued to say the same thing. I was not willing to let that stand and was persistent.

9. Making Incorrect Statements about History in General

In addition to making false statements about Christian history, Alltime even mischaracterized secular history – again, for the purpose of putting down Christianity. The counter for this is exactly the same as before. The truth is the best counter for a lie.

10. Total Lack of Understanding of Christian Theology

One of the more frequent things Alltime did, as he tried to diss Christianity, was to mischaracterize the nature of the Christian faith itself. Somewhere, he had developed in his mind a version of Christian theology that is simply not true. He particularly as-

serted that the core message of Christianity was that God was just waiting to burn billions of people in Hell, and that Christians were diligently working to instigate things to bring that on more quickly. (He made a few other false theological assertions, as well, but his most common one was about how evil God and Christians are.)

Once again, the counter to false assertions is the truth. As he constantly asserted his false understanding, I continually disputed his interpretation. Additionally, I pressed him on where he got his understanding of Christian theology. He steadfastly refused to say, but I never let him get away with his falsehood.

11. Ignoring My Calls for Accountability

Normally, when a person is asked a direct question, the natural response is to answer it – even if the answer is a dodge. Alltime had a different strategy. His approach was to ignore anything that did not correspond to his own personal narrative. It was easy to see, as the conversation progressed, what he was doing, but attempting to deduce that conclusion was not necessary in his case. He came right out and basically said, "Attacking your point of view is my purpose, and I am deliberately not going to talk about my personal beliefs."

Of course, I did not allow that kind of attack to stand without challenging it, but he maintained that approach all the way to the end. Occasionally I was able to get a small tidbit out of him about his views, but very little. Still, I did not accept his attacks and continually challenged the validity of his worldview beliefs.

12. Unwillingness to Engage Intellectually

Perhaps the overarching characteristic of Alltime's attacks was that he never engaged at an intellectual level. Every attack he made was prescriptive – an attempt to impose and enforce his point of view. Basically, he was using bullying tactics.

I am convinced that he used that approach because he did not have the knowledge and understanding to actually discuss the merits of either his or my beliefs. Since I continually not only challenged his point of view, but also gave reasons for my beliefs, the longer the conversation went on, the less credible he came across.

What Happened in the End?

This conversation ended much the way most of my social media dialogs end up. Alltime finally just quit. The thing that was unusual about this interaction was that it went on for so long.

I did not post this video on YouTube for the purpose of engaging a dialog with an Atheist, though it is not unusual for that to happen. My purpose was simply to have a place to house the video so I could link to it on the MarketFaith Ministries website. But when people do engage, I am more than willing to discuss. In those cases, my ultimate purpose is to share a witness for Christ with the person, also always remembering that there are generally many who do not join in but are following the conversation.

Because of the worldview predisposition of most of the Atheists I engage, it usually takes a little time to get an opening where I can actually share Christ in a

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way that they can understand. Because of Alltime's dogged unwillingness to actually have a conversation, that just took a long time in his case.

Finally, though, I was able to ask him if he would like to explore the possibility that Jesus Christ might actually be real, and he immediately quit the conversation.

I must say, Alltime is probably the most obstinate Atheist I have ever engaged. But I try to never let that be a deterrent to me. I always attempt to be respectful (even if it sometimes requires being direct) and remember that this is a person who needs Christ. I may not be the one who is ultimately able to lead him to the Lord, but I can be a seed-planter in his life. Ultimately, God is the one who must change his life, and I pray that this conversation at least pointed him in the right direction.

If you have not yet looked at the actual conversation and wish to, it is posted at <http://www.marketfaith.org/2024/07/dealing-with-a-piman-head-dialog/>.