

**Studying With People Who Do
Not Believe in God**

 **one more
for Jesus**

A decorative grid of plus signs (+) in the top-left corner, arranged in three columns and ten rows.

Why do people believe what they believe?

- **Sociological reasons** – parents, friends, society, culture
- **Psychological reasons** – comfort, peace of mind, hope, identity
- **Religious reasons** – scripture, religious leaders
- **Philosophical reasons** – consistency, coherence, completeness

It is important to understand people and to use a flexible approach that will benefit the hearer!





Belief Bias Reminder

- We have a natural tendency to judge invalid arguments to be valid if the conclusion is something that we already believe to be true.
- We naturally look to find flaws in the arguments of those who disagree with us, but overlook flaws in the arguments of those we agree with.



Motivated Reasoning

- Bias can affect the selection, weighing, and evaluation of evidence
 - We might want it to be true because *life would be “easier.”*
 - We might want it to be true because *we have claimed it and are stubborn*
 - We might want it *for the sake of our identity or in-group belonging*

A decorative grid of plus signs (+) in the top-left corner, arranged in four columns and ten rows.

Principle of Charity

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- Interpret the argument in the most charitable way that is reasonably possible
- Plausible premises

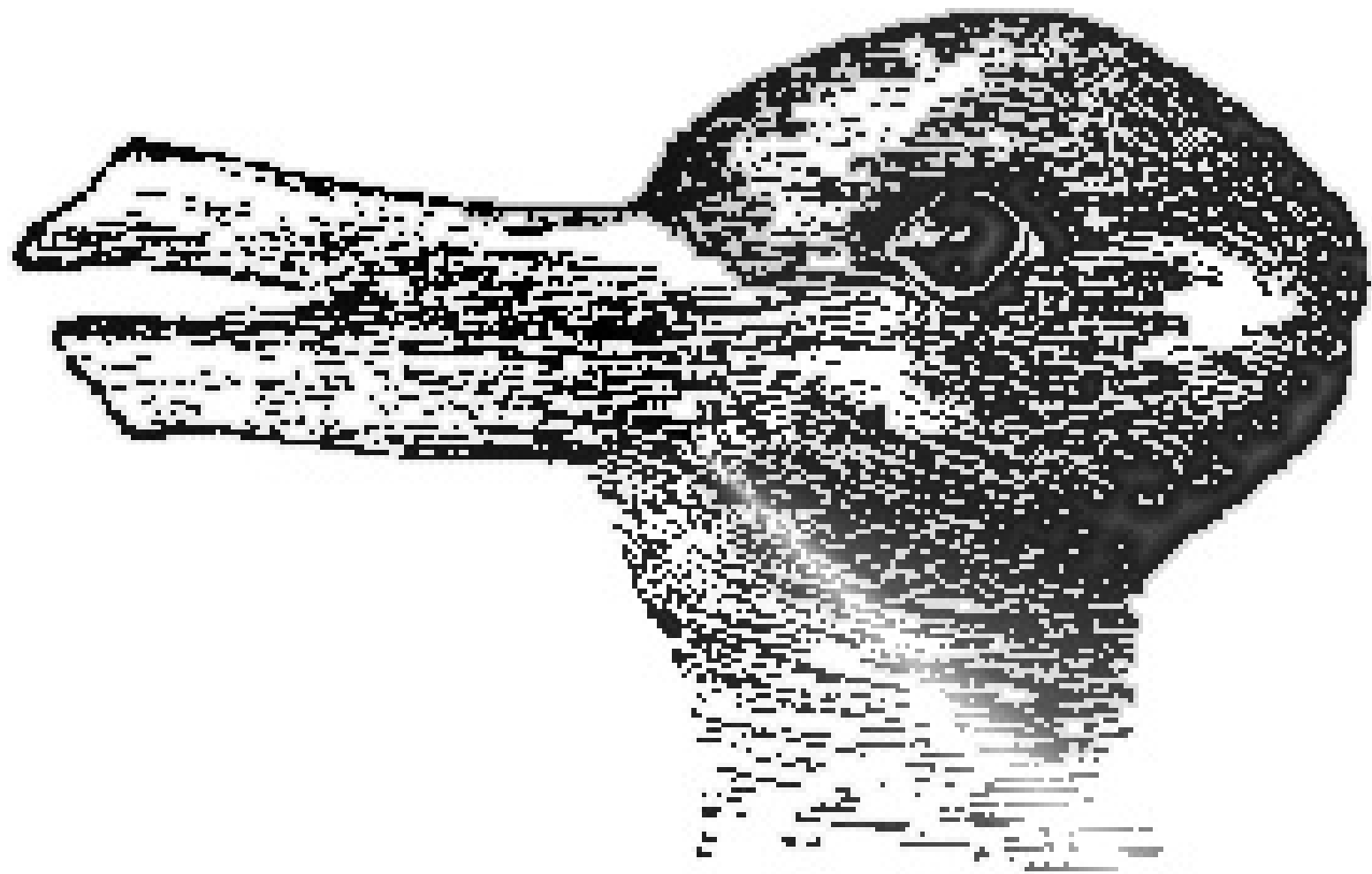
Straw-man fallacy

- Offering a weak reconstruction of your opponent's argument before attacking it
- Setting up a “straw man” and then knocking it down





Worldview



Fundamental Questions

- Where did we come from? (*origins*)
- Who are we? (*identity*)
- Why are we here? (*meaning*)
- How should we live? (*morality*)
- Where are we going? (*the future*)

Example: Comparison of Worldviews

Naturalism

Core Belief: Science leads us to knowledge because the only thing that exists is physical matter.

Christian Theism

Core Belief: Not only a physical world but a spiritual reality with God as the sovereign Creator.



Where did we come from?

Naturalism

A purely physical event occurred by chance and I am the result of a blind evolutionary process.

Christian Theism

God created everything including mankind.



Who are we?

Naturalism

I am a purely physical being that is a result of evolution.

Christian Theism

I am both body and soul, made in God's image.



Why are we here?

Naturalism

No ultimate answer can be given since we are here as a result of chance, therefore I must create my own meaning.

Christian Theism

To honor and glorify God.



How should we live?

Naturalism

There is no ultimate or authoritative answer so we can live however we decide.

Christian Theism

We are to follow the commands of God and the example of Jesus Christ as given to us in Scripture.



Where are we going?

Naturalism

Once my body ceases to function I no longer exist.

Christian Theism

I am meant to experience fellowship with God through eternal life.



Having Difficult Conversations...

Conversations happening at three levels...

1. The topic at hand
 - “Just the facts”
2. The combination of emotions, perceptions, and judgments
 - The perspective we bring to it
3. How our identity and self-understanding are affected
 - The existential implications



**Darrell L. Bock*

10TH
ANNIVERSARY
EDITION

A GAME PLAN
FOR DISCUSSING YOUR
CHRISTIAN
CONVICTIONS

TACTICS

UPDATED AND EXPANDED

GREGORY KOUKL

FOREWORD BY LEE STROBEL

GREGORY KOUKL

Author of *Tactics*

STREET

SMARTS

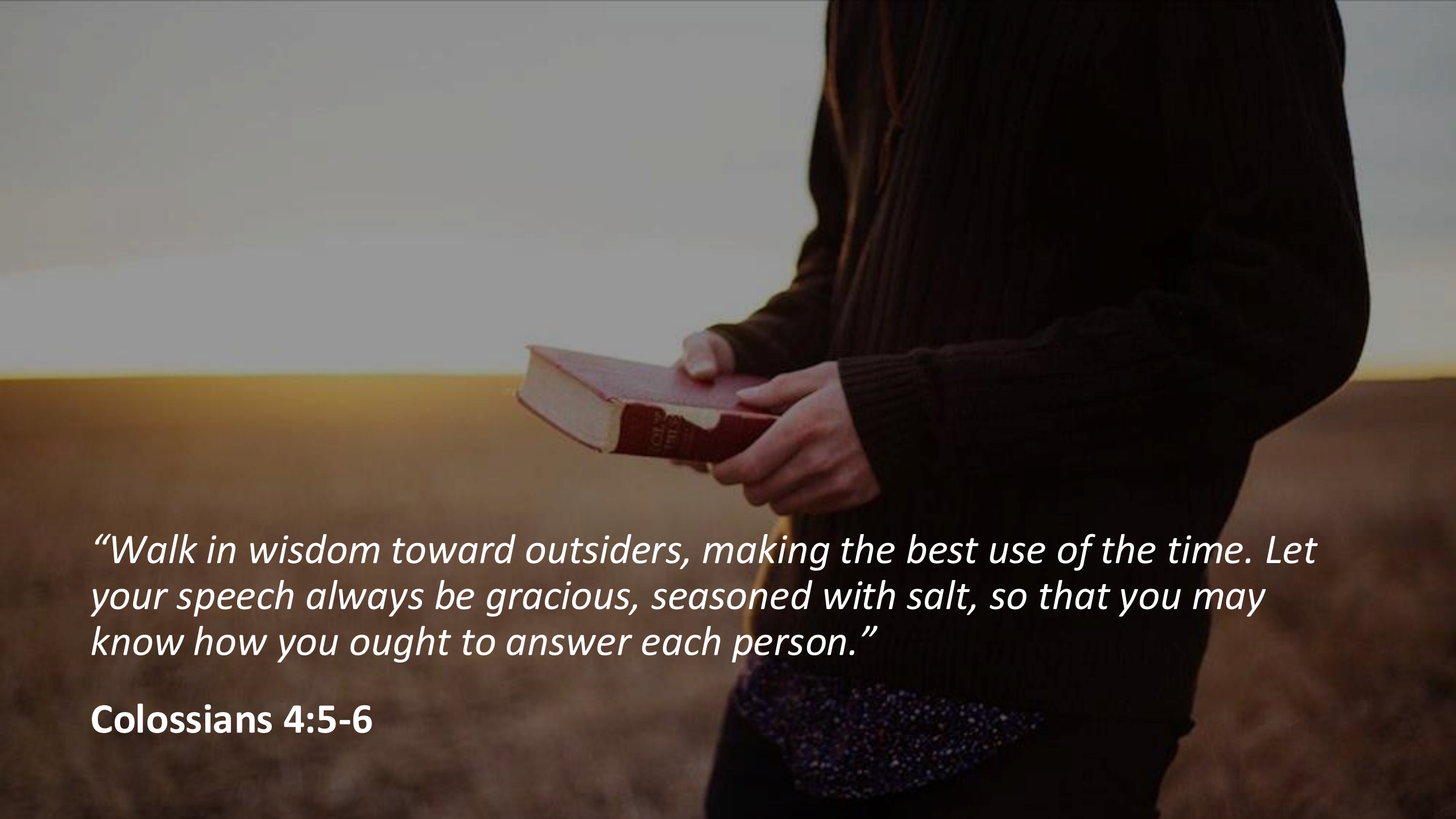
USING **QUESTIONS** TO
ANSWER CHRISTIANITY'S
TOUGHEST CHALLENGES

FOREWORD BY J. WARNER WALLACE

Gardners and Harvesters

“Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”

John 4:35-38

A person wearing a dark, ribbed sweater is shown from the chest down, holding a red book with both hands. The background is a soft, warm sunset or sunrise over a flat, open landscape. The lighting is dim, with the person's sweater appearing dark against the lighter sky.

“Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.”

Colossians 4:5-6

A person is sitting on a large, light-colored rock. They are wearing dark blue jeans and a dark blue t-shirt. They are holding a dark green canvas shoe with a light-colored sole. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with more rocks and some greenery. The text "A pebble in the shoe..." is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font. There are decorative white dashed lines and a solid green line in the bottom right corner of the image.

A pebble in the shoe...

What do you mean by that?

Gathering information

You don't want to misunderstand

You don't want to misrepresent

It causes the person to reflect on their own statements

What makes you think that?

Burden of Proof

Asking for reasons

Is it: Possible? Plausible? Probable?

*The first question helps you know **what** a person thinks; the second question helps you know **why** he thinks that way.*

A silhouette of an archer in the foreground, aiming a bow. The background is a sunset sky with a bright sun low on the horizon, creating a lens flare. The sky is a mix of blue and orange. There are decorative wavy lines in the corners: white dashed lines in the top-left and bottom-right, and a solid green line in the bottom-right. The text "Use Questions to Make A Point" is centered in white, bold, sans-serif font.

Use Questions to Make A Point

Practice Makes Perfect *(or at least better)*

Did I have the knowledge I needed?

Did I display wisdom in my method?

Did I display character?

Anticipate, reflect, and practice!

Inside Out Approach

- What can we **affirm**?
- What do we need to **challenge**?
- Where does it **lead**?

Telling a Better Story

How to Talk About God in a Skeptical Age



Joshua D. Chatraw

Inside Out Approach

Goal: create space so they can consider some of the problems with their own outlook and be willing to consider the plausibility of Christianity

Not a rigid system, but mental scaffolding to keep in mind as you engage others

Both gospel-centered and others-centered



2 Cor. 5:20

²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us.

We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

Three interlocking gears of varying sizes, rendered in a dark grey color with a slight gradient. They are arranged in a horizontal line, with the largest gear on the left, a medium-sized gear in the middle, and the smallest gear on the right. The gears are set against a light grey background with a subtle gradient.

Embodied Anchored Narrative

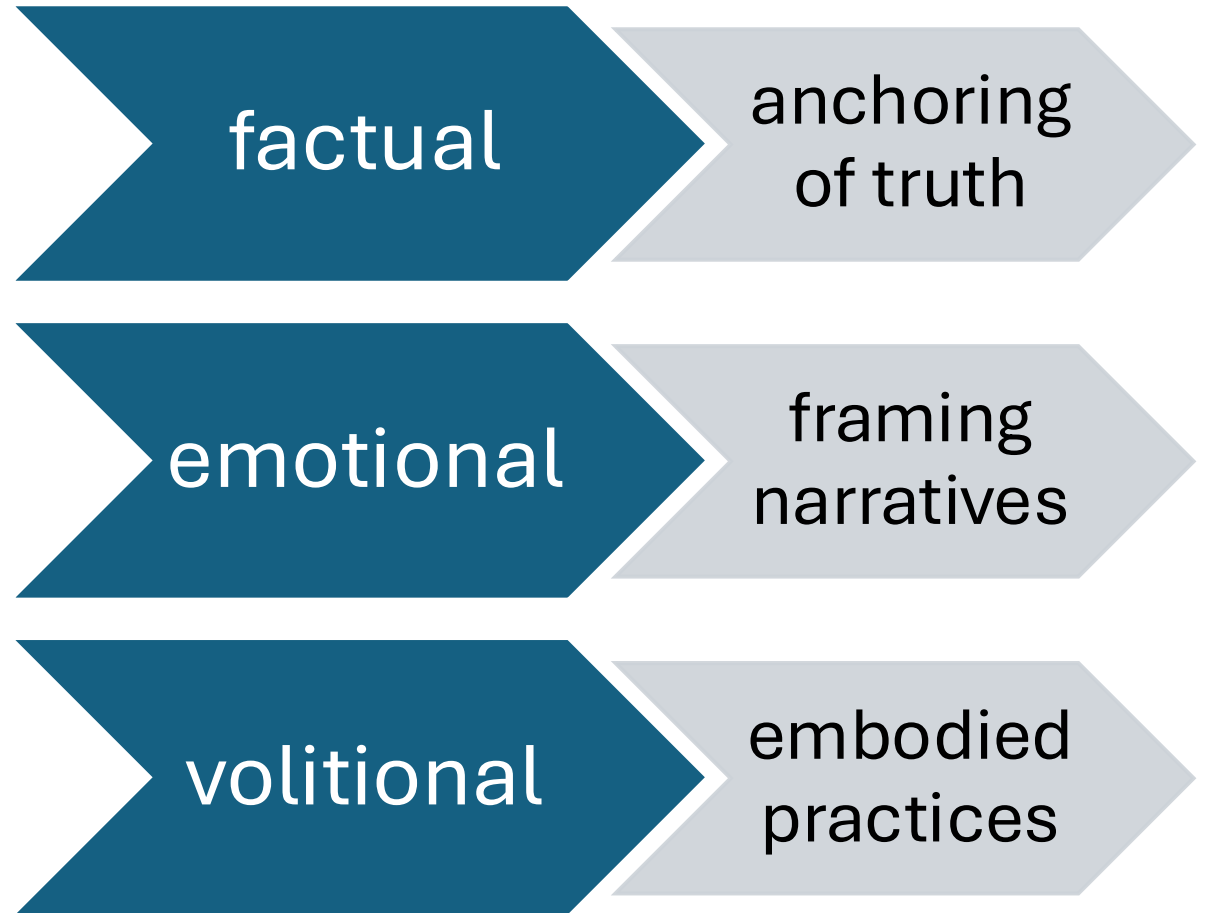
Embodied Anchored Narrative as Invitation

By embodied practices,
compelling narratives, and clear
truth claims, the skeptic is invited
to consider the larger picture of
the worldview



Embodied Anchored Narrative as Challenge

Engagement that identifies
common ground and/or
places of tension with
counternarratives



A white wooden signpost stands in a green lawn. The sign is red with a white border and contains the text 'FOR SALE' in large, bold, white capital letters. Below the text is a white rectangular box. In the background, a two-story house with white siding, black shutters, and a grey roof with dormer windows is visible under a blue sky with light clouds.

**FOR
SALE**



- Listen more than you talk.
- Demonstrate love.
- Speak the truth in love.

“By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

John 13:35



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