

Chase Barbe
702 – Working with People
LE6 – Interview an Irreligious Person

“If I were to speak to you or your family about God, how would you like me to represent Him?”

With regards to this question, I decided to interview my brother Beau for a few reasons. Firstly, he recently identifies as an agnostic (was a former atheist), so he fits the criteria for this assignment. Secondly, I know he will give much thought to this question because of his contemplative nature. Lastly, I love him dearly and desire for the two of us to have more constructive conversations about God moving forward, so that He would respond to the Father’s love in Christ Jesus.

After catching up on life over the phone, I asked him if he would like to participate in an interview for seminary, which would consist of one question. He obliged and off we went. After he received the question there was silence for about 20 seconds. I waited patiently knowing that he was carefully connecting his thoughts to answer a question he perhaps had never pondered before. His first words were for me to represent God in a non-biased way. Beau recognized that God could represent many different things, and he wanted me to share how I came to understand what God means to me with the language that was down to earth. Disregard all the spiritual and religious words like, “he is everything, truth, light, etc.” Drop the ‘Christanese’ and meet him with language that he could actually understand and relate to. The light bulb went off in my head because I remembered Dr. Martin emphasizing the importance of terminology in communicating the truths of Jesus.

It wasn’t until after the fact that I realized that Beau had completely strayed from the nature of the question. It was how to best represent God, not just have a conversation about God.

I am not sure how I didn't pick up on this during the interview, but it reveals some truth to how Beau puts so much value on knowledge instead of being. It could be possible that he has never quite allowed himself to experience the love of God by the representation of Christ ambassadors, like myself. Maybe this is showing how short we have fallen as a church to demonstrate God's love to our unbelieving family and friends. Either way I digress.

In this desired conversation, Beau would want context for how God relates to my life and why I would even choose to have a god. He was also interested in me bringing up the best argument against God, so to feel like I understood both sides of the table per se. His emphasis was having a rational/non-biased approach to the conversation. I responded by questioning how such a conversation with no bias could be possible, and in return he said to the best of my ability. He also wanted me to avoid any logical fallacies because he believes only in doing so can a good, rational conversation emerge.

Overall, the interview has revealed to me that it is my responsibility to pursue further conversations with him. He admitted to not having any friends in Europe where he could engage in these deep conversations, so it feels like the perfect opportunity to slowly evangelize. I've been praying for Christians to befriend him in Switzerland, but I now know, the prayer is for God to use me to ask questions and listen well in future conversations about God and soul issues.