



# IMMANUEL CHURCH

**Conversation Starter: Atheism 2.0**  
**September 10, 2017**

## **Opening Questions:**

- Have you read books like *The God Delusion*, *God Is Not Great*, and *The End of Faith*? Why or why not? If you have, what did you learn?
- Do you agree that religion creates conflict and violence in the world? Explain.

## **Looking at Scripture:**

- Read **1 Peter 3:15-16**... Which part of this mandate do you struggle with most? Do you have people asking you about the hope you have? When they do, are you usually gentle and respectful when you explain it? Why might that be difficult for us to do sometimes?
- During the message, Josh said *people who were nothing like Jesus, liked Jesus* and that means there should be something compelling about our own faith that draws others in. How do you think Jesus might treat atheists different from how many American Christians do their atheist friends and family?
- Which of the six ramifications of God not existing unsettles you most? Why? 1) The illusion of the mind 2) The illusion of free will 3) The illusion of value/justice 4) Something from nothing 5) Life from no life 6) Natural selection being responsible for all life after first life. Which one do you come in contact with most often?
- Of the people you know that don't believe in God or have a spiritual life, what percentage of them would you say have a bigger issue with religion? Why do you think that is? What might the church have to do a better job of in order to turn the tide in that area?

## **Application Questions:**

- This week's bottom line was **YOU CAN'T MOVE AWAY FROM SOMETHING WITHOUT MOVING TOWARD SOMETHING ELSE**. Did it surprise you to hear that the number of professing atheists in the world is still relatively small? Why or why not? And what is your understanding of "The Nones?" Were you surprised to hear that most of them come from a Christian background? What does that say to you about church and organized religion? What role should it have (if any) in our society today?
- Read **Acts 17:27-29**... Why do so many people hope they're wrong about atheism but still don't lean into the truth of this passage of Scripture? Assuming you hope Paul's words in Athens are true, what does it look like, practically, to live this way so that others might actually ask us to explain the hope we have? How might we do that when we're in a relationship with someone who fundamentally disagrees with this passage?

*End your time together asking God to give assurance and peace about his presence in our world and in our lives. Thank him for being a personal, knowable God that reveals himself to us through Jesus, the Scriptures, and creation.*