

Arguments that Fail

Christians are required to make a defense for their hope (1 Peter 3:15). A successful defense will not use arguments that fail. Let's consider some of these.

Failing arguments: Arguments that neglect Scripture

If we omit the word of God simply because our opponents do not believe in it, then we fail. We believe 2 Timothy 3:16-17, which say that...

¹⁶All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; ¹⁷so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

How then can we teach, reprove, correct, or train others without using the word of God?

Moreover, the word of God is the "sword of the Spirit" (Eph. 6:17). Why would we enter a spiritual battle without our spiritual sword?

While it is not necessary to cite book, chapter, and verse to others who don't believe, it is important that the content of God's word be in every argument we make. We cannot convince our opponents of the truth of God's word without using God's word.

Failing arguments: Arguments that make the wrong use of Scripture

Citing Scripture settles an argument when the Scripture is used correctly. However, if the Scripture is interpreted wrongly, then its use can actually be detrimental.

Christians must be careful and honest students of God's word to avoid making bad interpretations. This mandate is given in 2 Timothy 2:15:

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

If we are not careful students, then we may be among the untaught and unstable who distort the Scriptures (2 Peter 3:16). If we are dishonest with the Scriptures, then we will be in league with Satan, who misused Scripture in his temptation of Jesus (Matthew 4:5-6).

Failing arguments: Arguments that defy Scripture

The Bible is the word of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17), and as such it is the irrefutable truth (John 17:17). If we ever find ourselves trying to justify a belief that is contrary to the truth of God's word, then we are doomed to failure.

It is possible to persuade others through personal stories, hypothetical situations, personal attacks, or emotional appeals. However, if these arguments are contrary to Scripture, then they fail. This principle from Romans 3:4 always governs:

Let God be found true, though every man be found a liar.

God will never be wrong, and man will never be right when he is in defiance of God.