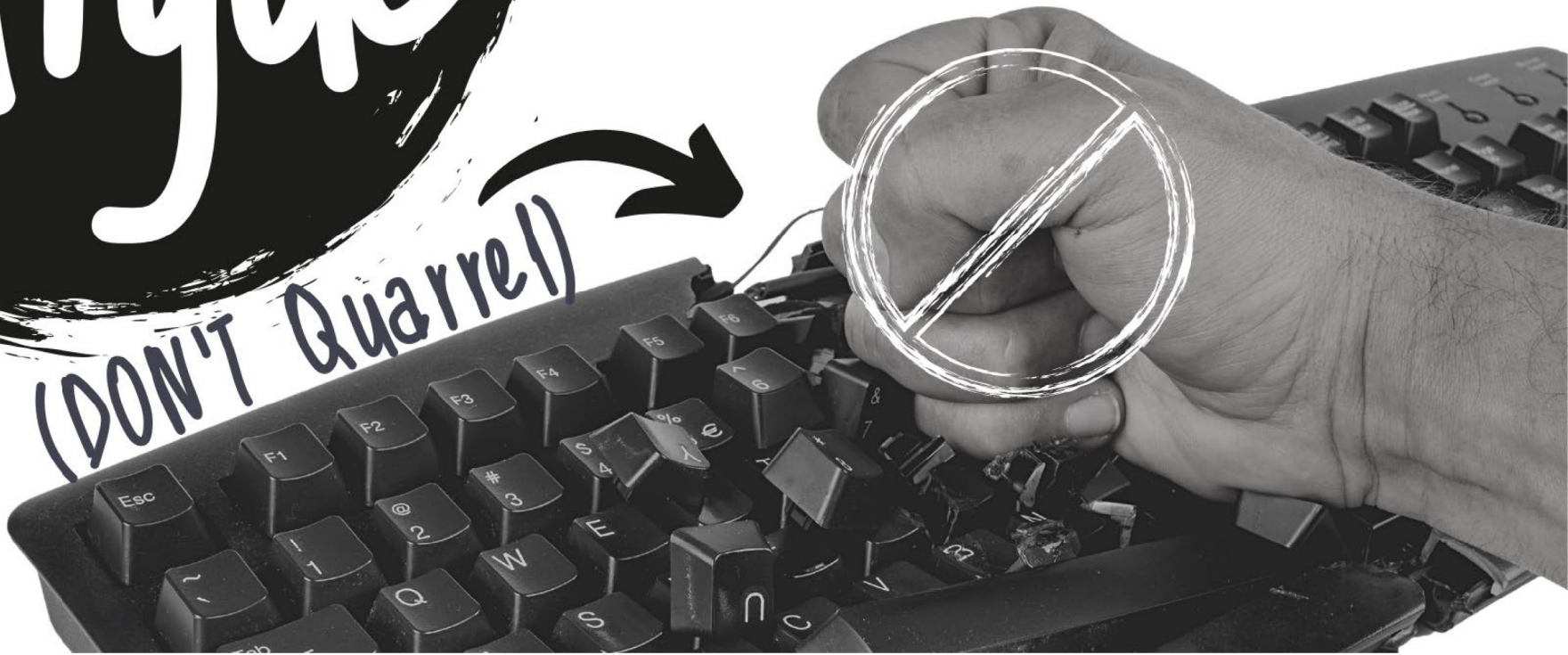


Argue

PRACTICAL
LESSONS
in logic and life

(DON'T Quarrel!)





CHESTERTON AND
CONVERSION

LEARNING TO THINK AGAIN

Connect the Dots

1) Argument is an essential part of our conversion...

2) Argument was an essential part of GKC's conversion...



CHESTERTON AND ARGUMENT



"All men do
naturally love...
loud and equal
argument."

Brotherly Love... of arguing

My brother, Cecil Edward Chesterton, was born when I was about five years old; and, after a brief pause, began to argue. He continued to argue to the end; for I am sure that he argued energetically with the soldiers among whom he died, in the last glory of the Great War. [...]

We argued throughout our boyhood and youth until we became the pest of our whole social circle.

G. K. Chesterton, *The Autobiography*.



Brotherly Love... of arguing

We shouted at each other across the table, on the subject of Parnell or Puritanism or Charles the First's head, until our nearest and dearest fled at our approach, and we had a desert around us. And though it is not a matter of undiluted pleasure to recall having been so horrible a nuisance, I am rather glad in other ways that we did so early thrash out our own thoughts on almost all the subjects in the world. I am glad to think that through all those years we never stopped arguing; and we never once quarreled.

G. K. Chesterton, *The Autobiography*.



Brotherly Love... of arguing

Perhaps the principal objection to a quarrel is that it interrupts an argument. Anyhow, our argument was never interrupted until it began to reach its conclusion in the proper form; which is conviction. I do not say that at any particular moment either of us would have admitted being in error; but as a matter of fact, it was through that incessant process of disagreement that we came at last to agree.

... to end eventually, but quite independently, in the same Church.

G. K. Chesterton, *The Autobiography*.





CHESTERTON AND
CONVERSION
AND ARGUMENT

“thrash out our own thoughts”

“through... disagreement... came to agree”



It's a black
and blue
dress!

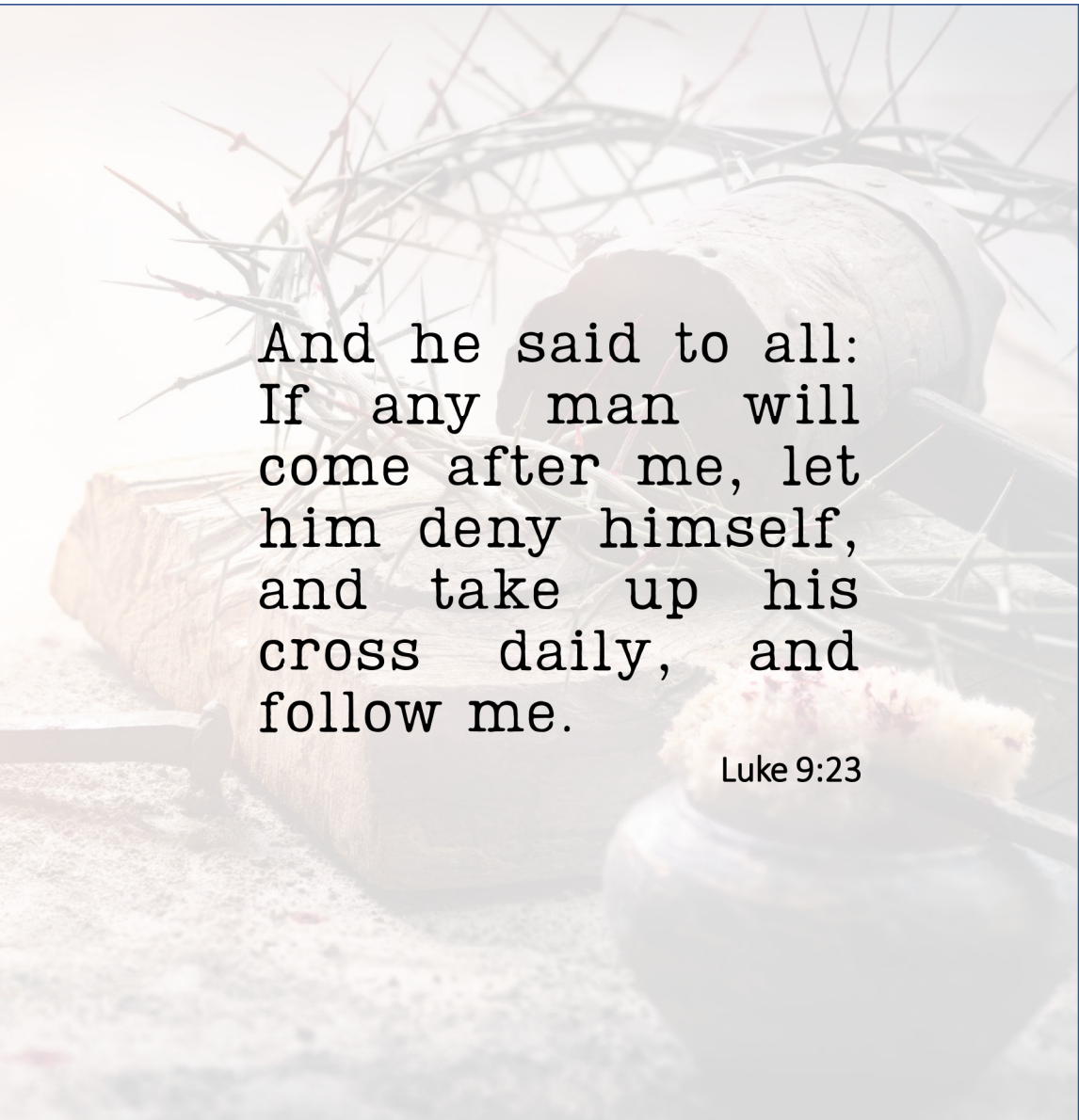


It's white
and gold!





THE CHRISTIAN SOUL ACCEPTS THE CROSS
OIL ON CANVAS; ANON. CA. 1630.
MUSEO DEL PRADO

A background image showing a crown of thorns and a jar of spices, likely representing the Passion of Christ and the offering of spices for his burial.

And he said to all:
If any man will
come after me, let
him deny himself,
and take up his
cross daily, and
follow me.

Luke 9:23



**Bill,
come to bed!**

**I can't!
Someone is
wrong on the
internet!**

Christian Duty to NOT Quarrel

Avoid disputing about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. Avoid such godless chatter, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, and their talk will eat its way like gangrene.

2 Timothy 2:14-17

Christian Duty to NOT Quarrel

Have nothing to do with stupid, senseless controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kindly to every one, an apt teacher, forbearing, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant that they will repent and come to know the truth, and they may escape from the snare of the devil....

2 Timothy 2:23-26

Christian Duty to NOT Quarrel

Avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels over the law, for they are unprofitable and futile. As for a man who is factious, after admonishing him once or twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is perverted and sinful; he is self-condemned.

Titus 3:9-10

“Stupid, senseless controversies”



“Stupid, senseless controversies”

Not changing the toilet
roll when empty.



“Stupid, senseless controversies”

Not putting the empty roll core in the bin, but on the floor, windowsill, back of toilet, etc.



“Stupid, senseless controversies”

Squeezing an item in on top of an already full trash bag rather than taking the trash out.



“Stupid, senseless controversies”

Leaving dirty dishes in
bedrooms.



“Stupid, senseless controversies”

“Who started the argument.”





Why We Quarrel

People generally quarrel because they cannot argue. And it is extraordinary to notice how few people in the modern world *can* argue. That is why there are so many quarrels, breaking out again and again, and never coming to any natural end. People do not seem to understand even the first principle of all argument: that people must agree in order to disagree. Still less do their imaginations stretch to anything so remote as the end or object of all argument: that they should disagree in order to agree.

“The New Generations and Morality.”
Illustrated London News—09 March 1929



Lesson One: A Can-Do? Attitude

“People generally quarrel because they cannot argue.”

Some things cannot be disputed in argument.



Lesson One: A Can-Do? Attitude

“People generally quarrel because they cannot argue.”

Some things cannot be disputed in argument.



I can't drive a car.

I can't drive *that* car.



Lesson One: A Can-Do? Attitude

“People generally quarrel because they cannot argue.”

Decide whether argument is the right approach.

Can we argue about this at all?

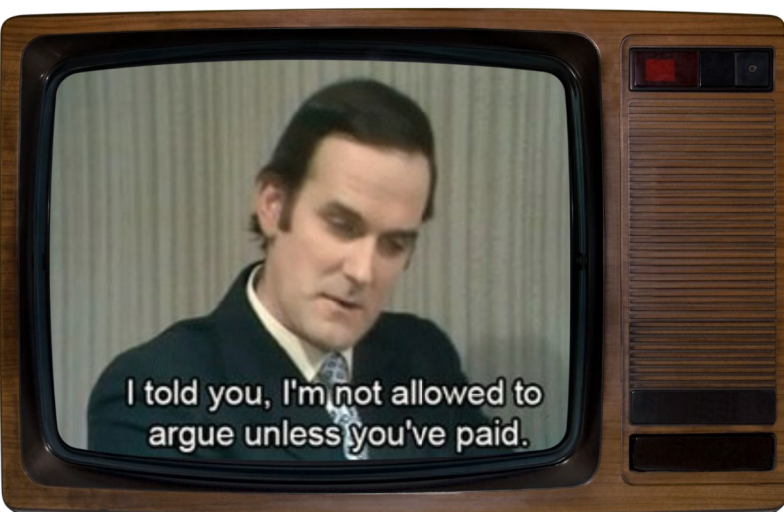


Lesson Two: It Takes Two, Baby

“People generally quarrel because they cannot argue.”

Not at all, ever (habitually).

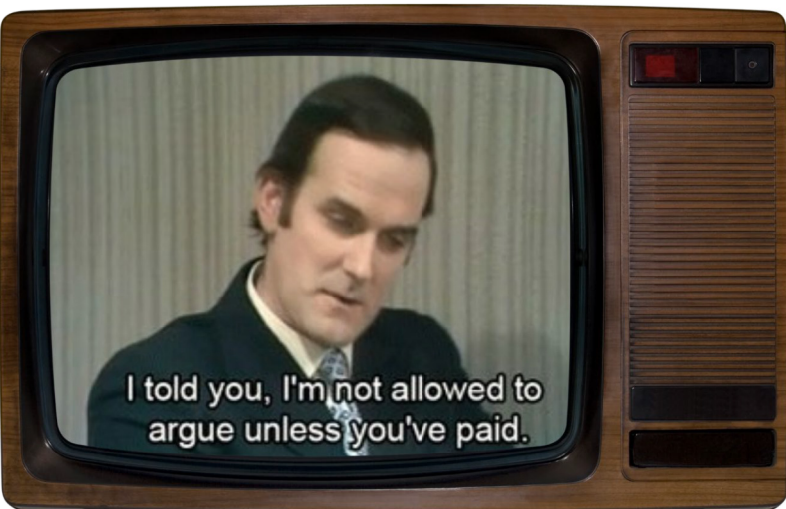
Not right now (conditionally).



Lesson Two: It Takes Two, Baby

“People generally quarrel because they cannot argue.”

WHY NOT?





Report
dead line
05.04

Pick up
kids
talk to teacher

business
meeting
4:30

SPA 9:10
Call
Mom

Spanish
courses

Shopping
milk
eggs
butter
oranges
bread
apples

fitness
training

9:10
Partners
letter

Cat
food



“Let’s talk about this some other time.”



Lesson Three: Agree to Disagree

This is a paradox.

This is the *beginning* — not the *end* — of all argument.



Lesson Three: Agree to Disagree

“People do not seem to understand even the first principle of all argument: that people must agree in order to disagree.”

Argument is agreeable disagreement.



Lesson Three: Agree to Disagree

“What are we even arguing about?”

We need to track our disagreement.



Lesson Three: Agree to Disagree

“Does a woman have a right to choose?”

... choose *what*?

What is the unborn child?

Is he or she a human being?

Is he or she a person?

“Grant for the sake of argument...”



Lesson Four: Telic Like It Is

Τέλος (telos): end or goal; final cause

“Still less do their imaginations stretch to anything so remote as the *end or object* of all argument: that they should disagree in order to agree.”

“[F]ew people in the modern world *can* argue. That is why there are so many quarrels, breaking out again and again, and *never coming to any natural end.*”



Lesson Four: Telic Like It Is

Think of argument like a game.

What's the object?

How do I win?

How do I lose?

How do you win?

"Sounds great! Let's play for money!"



Lesson Four: Telic Like It Is

*What quality or quantity of evidence
is necessary to convince ME?*

*What quality or quantity of evidence
is necessary to convince YOU?*



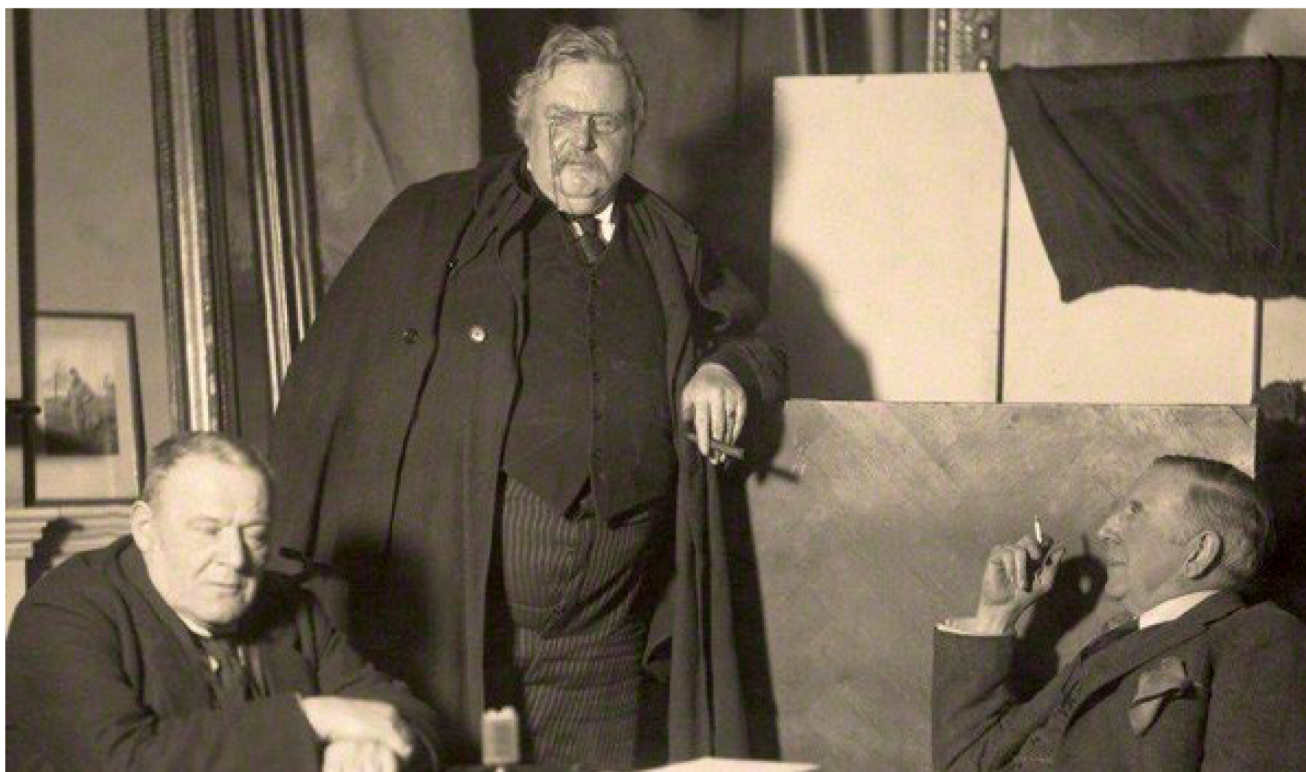
Lesson Five: Brotherly Love.

Practice in a “safe space.”



Lesson Five: Brotherly Love.

Practice in a “safe space.”



Lesson Five: Brotherly Love.

“I think it was a good thing that we had tested every link of logic by mutual hammering. I will even add something that sounds too like a boast; though it is meant to be a tribute. I will say that the man who had got used to arguing with Cecil Chesterton has never since had any reason to fear an argument with anybody.”

G. K. Chesterton, *The Autobiography*.



“Iron sharpens iron.”

No Excuses

The contemporary official paper, like the *Daily News* or the *Daily Chronicle*... simply cannot argue; and simply does not pretend to argue. [...] There is no more curious quality in its degradation than a sort of carelessness, at once of hurry and fatigue, with which it flings down its argument—or rather its refusal to argue. It does not even write sophistry: it writes anything. It does not so much poison the reader's mind as simply assume that the reader hasn't got one.

"Mental Breakdown in Fleet Street."
Utopia of Usurers and Other Essays, 1917



Be A Sign of Contradiction

I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus... preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own likings, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths. As for you, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil your ministry.

2 Timothy 4:1-5

GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON,
PRAY FOR US

