

**Answers  
to**

**Tough  
Questions**



EVANGELISM EXPLOSION  
INTERNATIONAL



## GENERAL GUIDELINES

2 Timothy 2 lists several qualities that make an effective witness:

1. **STRENGTH:**  
Don't rely on your own wisdom and strength but remember, as Paul reminds Timothy that your strength lies in Christ, v. 1-2.
2. **SACRIFICE:**  
Be willing to make the sacrifice and to suffer what is necessary, v. 3.
3. **SECURITY:**  
Be secure in your salvation, v. 11-13.
4. **STABILITY:**  
Be grounded in the Faith v. 14-19.
5. **SANCTIFICATION:**  
Don't live a compromised lifestyle, be sanctified, v. 20-23.
6. **SERVANTHOOD:**  
Adopt the Servant Attitude necessary, v. 24-26.

Who are we serving? Who are we concerned about? If we're serving ourselves, our own interests, we are going to want to defend ourselves. We'll be more concerned about making ourselves look good than we are about communicating the goodness of God.

This is why Paul reminds Timothy that he is a bondservant of the Lord. We need to be equipped with reasonable answers so that we're ready. And if we see ourselves as His bondservant, then everything we do and experience takes on a new perspective. We won't be quarrelsome, we'll be kind to everyone who questions us, we'll remain in a place emotionally where we are able to teach – rationally and reasonably. We won't become impatient even when we're put down and we will remain calm and kind in all of our responses. Look at what is at stake here, verse 25. . .

*“Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth”*

# 1

## WHAT IS TRUTH?

We are living in what is being called the Postmodern era where everything is supposedly relative, where “tolerance” is the new excuse for rejecting right and wrong, where moral absolutes that have guided societies for the past 5,000 years are now all suspect. People will say, “Well, if it’s true for me, then it’s true. If it’s right for me, who are you to question it—you’re just being intolerant of others. If it doesn’t hurt anyone, what’s wrong with it? Etc.” The argument is that there are no absolutes, there is no such thing as absolute truth and there certainly is no such thing as absolute morality.

Let’s take Truth: First, the statement “There is no such thing as absolute truth” is an absolute statement and is therefore a self-defeating statement. Second, people accuse us of being narrow when we assert absolute truth, but that is the nature of truth—it is by definition very narrow. Truth may have only one right answer and many wrong answers.  $2+2=4$  and never 5, 9, 36 or any other of an infinite number of possible answers. There is only one person who is president of the United States at this moment in history (one right answer and billions of wrong answers). Isn’t it then reasonable to expect when it comes to eternity that there would be one right answer?

Jesus prayed to the Father and said, “Thy Word is truth.” God claims the Bible to be true.

What we need to do in these situations is remind people that it doesn’t matter what they believe, what really matters is what is true. We need to get people to think about truth rather than just belief. I might believe that there are little green men on Mars and you believe there are big purple women, but it doesn’t matter what you or I believe. What matters is what is true.

Two simple, but effective answers for those who are skeptical in regard to absolute truth and morality:

Adolph Hitler killed six million of God’s chosen people. As long as he believed in his heart that it was the right thing to do, then it was perfectly right. We need to be tolerant of other people’s views because if it is right for them, then it is right. If it is true for them, then it is true.

There is such a thing as absolute truth and you can find it in the Bible.

Here’s another one. Evidently a conservative woman appeared on the TV program, “Politically Incorrect.” This woman stumped the others who were defending relative truth and relative morality when she asked, “In what situation is rape okay?” The other guests on the show just sat there in silence.

Think about it—there are no situations in which rape is right. Therefore, it must be wrong for all people, in all places, at all times, and in every situation. The statement, “Rape is wrong,” is an absolute truth. If there is one absolute truth, there can be two, three, or more. We need to help some people shake this politically correct thinking and admit that there are absolutes in our world. Then we have a platform to present the truth of the Bible in regard to our spiritual lives.





## HOW DO YOU KNOW GOD EXISTS?

**“If** you can’t see God, how can you believe in Him?” There are a lot of things we believe in that we cannot see. I believe in gravity. You can say you do not, but if you jump off the top of El Capitan in Yosemite, you’ll experience something you cannot see and you just may change your mind in regard to its existence.

Some people assume that in order to believe in God we have to shelve our brains and take a blind leap of faith. God has never asked us to have a blind faith. He invites us to come and consider Him and His truth, “Come let us reason together,” He says. We can offer good calculated reasonable answers for our faith in God and His word. By contrast, it is the unbeliever who has taken the blind leap of faith when they have rejected the existence of Heaven and Hell and of God Himself without ever investigating the evidence around them.

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse” (Romans 1:18-20).

By the way, there is no evidence to prove that there is no God—it is an argument from silence. If challenged, an honest skeptic will have to admit he has no proof that God does not exist.

We can prove that He does.

We can’t exactly draw a picture of God for the skeptic, but we can give them some logical proof of His existence. One of the proofs we can use for God has four points—remember CADO and you will always have an answer for the hope that is in you. Or CODA, easier to remember.

**Creation**—every time you see a piece of machinery, you see an engine, a motorcycle, a car, even a bicycle, you know it has a creator.

**Art**— every time you see a piece of art, you know it has an artist.

**Design**— every time you see a wrist watch, you know it has a designer.

**Order**—every time you see order, like ten coke cans lined up on a counter, you know it has an “order-er.”

When we look around at the universe, what do we see? We see creation, art, design, and order. If everything else has a creator, artist, designer, and order-er behind it, isn’t it reasonable to expect that behind this incredibly intricate, complicated, and marvelous universe there is also a Creator, Artist, Designer, and Order-er behind it?

The anthropologist finds a rock with evidence that it had at one time, long ago, been shaped into a tool and he uses it as proof of human civilization existing in ancient history. It has a few scratches on it, which indicates that it was intentionally shaped for a purpose. Then he looks at the infinitely more complex design of man and does he remain consistent with his investigative protocol and conclude there must have been some intelligent designer behind the human being? No. Since he's already decided that God does not exist, he concludes that man must have somehow come into existence apart from any outside intervention, he must have just crawled out from under a rock—maybe the same rock he then learned to make into this tool! "See," he says, "these things don't just happen on their own. The scratches on this rock prove there was an intelligence and designer behind it."

All we're asking for is reason and consistency. Creation/Creator, art/Artist, design/Designer, order/Orderer: logical, reasonable proof that there is a God behind this universe.



## HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT THE BIBLE IS TRUE?

Since all the information we have about God and eternity comes to us from the Bible, it is a legitimate and reasonable question to ask and we ought to expect to hear it. What answer will we give?

\*We could talk about the popularity of the Bible . . . sales at 150 million every year. Four billion in total sales. No other book in human history comes even close!

\*We could mention the power of the Word to change lives . . . many of those who have set out to disprove its accuracy have become ardent adherents. And we have witnessed hardened criminals changed before our eyes because of its power.

\*We could share the claims the Bible makes for itself: "All Scripture is inspired by God . . ." (2 Tim. 3:16).

"Prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit . . ." (2 Pet 1:21).

The phrase "thus says the Lord" occurs over 3,600 times in the Bible. The Bible claims not human, but divine authorship.

We could say these things and support them, but the real proof of the authenticity of the Bible comes from three other points. Three proofs which are hard for anyone to deny or to dismiss: **HAP:**

**History** — in all the years of criticism by the skeptics and enemies of the

church, no one has ever been able to identify even one historical mistake anywhere in the Bible. That's truly amazing, because if man wrote it, we would surely find historical errors after all these years, but there are none. How do you explain this? This book did not come to us simply from the hand of man, but from the hand of God.

**Archaeology** — out of all the 25,000 archaeological finds relating to the people, places, and events in the Bible, how many do you suppose have been found that disprove a detail of the biblical record? You'd expect that some would disprove something, right? How many have? None! In fact every discovery just continues to prove the Bible is true—great proof for the accuracy and trustworthiness of the Bible. If we can believe the historical and archaeological evidence for the Bible, we have great support to believe the spiritual accuracy of the book!

**Prophecy** — fulfilled prophecy is unique to the Bible alone. Out of all the religious and spiritual guidebooks of history, the Bible stands out all by itself in this area. There is no other book like it in the history of mankind!

Here's a good question to ask the skeptic: "What is the only book in the world that contains hundreds of very detailed prophecies?" The correct answer of course is the Bible. The Koran for Muslims doesn't, and the Gita for Hindus doesn't.

If there were a book that contained prophecies that did not come true, what would you say about the book and its author? They would be false, right? And what would be the value of such a book? Worthless—throw it in the trash.

From the Old Testament alone some 2,000 specific prophecies have been fulfilled already. And of the 333 prophecies specifically predicting the Messiah, all of those concerning his first coming have been fulfilled, and those remaining have to do with His second coming.

As the Bible was written, 25 percent of it was predicting future events. Every single prophecy has been fulfilled except for the few remaining ones that deal with the future return of Jesus Christ. There is no way anyone can predict the future with 100 percent accuracy. Who is the only one who can do this? The answer is God. Fulfilled prophecy is not only proof for the veracity of the Bible, it is also proof for the existence of God.

The only reasonable explanation is that the Bible is a supernatural book written under the supernatural direction of God Himself.

# 4

## HOW CAN JESUS BE THE ONLY WAY TO HEAVEN?

**Sin**—Jesus is the only one who can forgive sins. Not Mohammad, Buddha, Krishna, etc. No one can pay for their own sins. There are those who deny they are sinners. But I find that all come to recognize their sinful state when presented with the ten commandments.

Jesus is the only way to salvation because He is the only one who can forgive sin.

**Cross**—if there is another way, the crucifixion was unnecessary and meaningless. Yesterday I heard of a priest who was giving what appeared to be a good biblical message at a recent funeral. But as he concluded the service he said that he knew the deceased was in Heaven because she had been a good person. If we could get to Heaven by simply being good, then why on earth did Jesus Christ have to die upon the cross?

He is the only one who died on a cross for you and me. None of the other major religions of the world contend that their founder or leader atoned for or paid the penalty for our sins. The cross of Christ is the only place mankind can find forgiveness of sin and eternal salvation.

**Claims**—Jesus claimed to be God— no other credible religious leader has ever done so. We are back to the issue of absolute truth. His claims are either false or else they are true. He claimed that He and the Father were one in essence. That if one had seen Him, they had seen the Father. He claimed that He has existed since before Moses was born, that He is eternal and that He has the power to forgive sins.

How do we know these claims are true? Because He also predicted His own death and that He would rise from the dead the third day. The resurrection is one of the best attested facts of ancient history. Any reasonable and honest person who cares to investigate it will come to the same conclusion, that Jesus Christ did indeed rise from the grave. This is proof of His claims for divinity.

He also made this claim, “I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father but by Me” (John 14:6). It too must be either true or false. Every person must decide this one on their own. It is more than an intellectual decision. It is a decision that involves the will.

# 5

## HOW CAN THERE BE A GOD WITH SO MUCH EVIL OUT THERE?

**T**heir thinking is that either God is not powerful enough to prevent evil or else God is not good. He is often blamed for tragedy. “Where was God when I went through this, or when that happened?.” God is blamed for natural disasters, Even my insurance company describes them as “acts of God.”

### How to handle this one— (O.N.E.)

- a. **Origin of evil**—man’s choice—God created a perfect world . . .
- b. **Nature of God**—He forgives, I John 1:9—He uses tragedy to bring us to Himself, C.S. Lewis, “God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is His megaphone to arouse a deaf world.”
- c. **End of it all**—Bible teaches that God will one day put an end to all evil, and pain and death. “God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away” (Rev. 21:4).

As Christians we have this hope of Heaven and eternity. Share how it has made a tremendous difference in your life and that you know for sure that when you die you are going to spend eternity in Heaven. Ask the person, “May I ask you a question? Do you have this hope? Do you know for certain that when you die you are going to Heaven, or is that something you would say you’re still working on?”

How could a loving God send people to Hell?

### (O.N.E.)

- a. **Origin of hell**—never intended for people. Created for Satan and his demons. Jesus said, “Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matt 25:41). Man chooses to sin and ignore God. The penalty is death (eternal separation from God) and, yes, Hell. But God doesn’t send anyone to Hell, we choose it by refusing or ignoring God in attitude and action.
- b. **Nature of God**—“ God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9). He is so loving that He sent His own Son to die and pay the penalty for our sin so that we could avoid Hell and have the assurance of Heaven. No one in Hell will be able to blame God. He doesn’t send people there, it’s our own choice. We must choose to repent, to stop ignoring God in attitude and action, accepting His salvation and yielding to His leadership.
- c. **End of it all**—Bible teaches that God will one day put an end to all evil, pain, death, and penalty of Hell. “God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away” (Rev. 21:4).



As Christians , we need not worry about Hell. The Bible says, “these things have been written . . . so that you may know you have eternal life” (1 John 5:13). I have complete confidence that when I die, I’m going to Heaven. May I ask you a question?



## WHAT ABOUT THOSE WHO HAVE NEVER HEARD OF JESUS?

**T**he rest of the question, usually in the mind of the person asking it, is, “You mean God is going to send people to Hell just because they haven’t believed in a Christ they never heard of?”

The short answer is, “No, God will not send anyone to Hell because they have never heard of Jesus.” Notice I did not say, “People will not go to Hell.” But the truth is that no one will go to Hell because they have not heard of Jesus. Hell is not the penalty for ignorance, it is the penalty for sin. God will not send anyone to Hell for their ignorance. It is sin that by its very nature condemns us and sentences to an eternal separation from God in Hell. But that need not be the end.

The Bible says that no one is ignorant when it comes to God. (Romans 1:19-21)

There are several ways God reveals Himself in this world.

### **a. The light of Creation**

(Rom 1:20 & Ps 19:1-3)

Every person of every language and dialect has “heard” the voice of God through what He has made. It is the light of creation that shines on every heart and opens every mind that does not shut Him out.

### **b. The light of Conscience**

In Romans 2, God’s Word says that every person’s conscience will either accuse or excuse him on the day when God will judge the secrets of their hearts. God has placed in everyone the knowledge of right and wrong, He has given us a moral compass. We can choose to sear the conscience through immoral and ungodly behavior, but we’re still responsible. No one is able to completely turn off his or her moral conscience. There is always something there that tells us what is right and what is wrong, even if we try to convince ourselves that the thing we are doing is OK.

No one can hide behind the claim of ignorance. No one can say because they have never been given the Ten Commandments they aren’t guilty. The law is written on every heart. (Rom 2:1,3)

God uses the light of Creation and light of Conscience to get the attention of every person on the face of the earth. We are judged according to the way we respond to the light we have been given, not on the basis of something we have never heard. People are not condemned for what they don't know or haven't done, but for what they DO know and for what they HAVE done. And God is perfectly just and therefore, will judge each one perfectly.

### **c. The light of Christ**

Not everyone in the world has this light. The only way to receive grace and mercy instead of simply justice is to receive the light of Christ. This is where we as Christians come in. It's our responsibility to share the light of Christ with others. We need to share the Gospel with those who have never heard or who have never really listened.

Romans 1- All have seen the light of Creation and are without excuse.

Romans 2- All have heard the light of Conscience and are without excuse.

Romans 3- It's our responsibility to take the light of Christ to those who have no excuse.

When you feel a person is bringing up the "heathen in Africa" argument simply as a smoke-screen and diversion, you might respond something like this: "If you're truly concerned about the person in Africa who hasn't heard, why don't you just come to Christ and then go tell them about Him yourself?" That should be enough to clear the smoke away.

NO one will ever be condemned for not believing in a Christ he never knew. He will be condemned for rejecting the God he did know and for worshipping the idols he set up in God's place; And he will be condemned for what he has done when his conscience told him not to do it. People will be condemned for their ingratitude for the light and for the gifts God has given to them and for the sins they have committed when they knew they were wrong. It is "sin" that condemns . . . that is why we need a Savior.

Ask anyone, anywhere in the world if they have ever done something they believed to be wrong. Know what they will say? "Ha, ha, ha, of course, everybody has." We all know we have done things wrong. If all men condemn themselves, why should they be surprised if God also condemns them?

## 7 WHAT ABOUT THE HYPOCRITES IN THE CHURCH?

**M**ore importantly, what about the hypocrite in the living room? We're all hypocritical at some time and point in our lives. A hypocrite is a pretender, and people are right, there are pretenders in the church. But there are pretenders everywhere in life and that does not stop us from participating.

Admit there are hypocrites in the church. Point out that some are Christians who are not living the way they should. But there are also hypocrites at the mall and it doesn't keep us from shopping there. There are hypocrites at the ball game and yet we still watch the game.

"We can't let hypocrites stop us from finding out about the one true God who loves unconditionally and wants to forgive each one of us of our sins?"

Jesus didn't say, "Follow my people," He said, "Follow Me."

God calls us personally and individually. He holds us personally responsible. Ultimately the responsibility is an individual one. We all must take responsibility for our own decisions. We all must personally stand before God . . . we are all accountable for our own choices and actions.

How many of you know that THE ULTIMATE ISSUE is not the hypocrites in the church? It's not the heathen in Africa, or the problem of evil or of Hell. It's not the reliability of the Bible. These are intellectual hang-ups that many people seem to have. We can help them with those things. But ultimately the issue is not merely intellectual. It doesn't have to do with the head only. It has to do with the heart. That is where the Holy Spirit works to bring a person to repentance. The ultimate issue for every man and woman is a spiritual one, because what is demanded of us is a decision of the will, of the heart. We need to do what the Lord would have us do . . . then leave the results to Him.