

these things to be true. We have credible evidence to substantiate our beliefs, enough so that the burden of proof goes to you to investigate and disprove the evidence I am prepared to offer you to review (cite bibliography)].

- It is NOT circular, 1) if it is true in fact, 2) if they believe it based on other confirming evidence, and 3) if the Bible itself reveals evidence that it is not biasedly presenting its contents in the light most favorable to its inspired human authors and characters.
- Have you ever read the Bible? Did it strike you as just another book, with no mystery or magnificence setting it qualitatively apart? Perhaps you could use another, updated reading.
- Christians' opinions on the Bible do not change the fact of what the Bible is in fact and reality. However, a sincere Christian's opinion will be submitted to God's view of His book, so, as you would expect, their opinion will see His book as inerrant. Therefore, if their reasoning seems circular, first, they did not start with a bias that it was inerrant, but that it was what it was. Secondly, if one is open-minded to information, and can justify their viewpoint with outside evidence, their reasoning is not circular. Something is only circular if you use a claim to prove the claim, and nothing else (and even God's claim within His word is true, if no other evidence is mustered, though that may cause you to stumble, needing outside evidence).

**For Further Study:**

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 147-148, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980  
A Ready Defense, pp. 174-178, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993

**90. The Bible was written to make Christ look like He fulfilled prophecy. Does fulfilled prophecy verify the authenticity of the Bible? Didn't Jesus just try to fulfill prophecies?**

**Response(s):**

- Who told you that? Where did you get that notion? It would be humanly impossible for prophecies codified and written down thousands of years before their fulfillment to be orchestrated in retrospect as applying to events in the life of Christ, which occurred in history, time and space, those thousands of years forward. That would be an astounding thing for someone to believe, and takes more faith (and less reasoning power) than to observe how Christ fully fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies about His future life on earth as the Jews' Messiah. Please protect your dignity, and don't repeat that slogan again, as I want people to treat you as the intelligent person I believe you to truly be.
- Do you truly believe Christ only "looks like" He fulfilled Old Testament prophecies, or that the human authors of Scripture manipulated the words and facts to make Christ only appear to fulfill them? Have you read either the accounts of His life, or the prophecies of His Messiahship? If not, I would suggest first-hand knowledge of facts asserted in your allegation, before you come to confident (and errant) conclusions.
- That would be amazing, because the historical events of mankind would have to have been manipulated for Christ to have fulfilled the O.T. prophecies that He did.

**For Further Study:**

Defending Your Faith, pp. 37, 46-47, by Dan Story (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, MI), 1997  
Evidence That Demands a Verdict, pp. 267-323, by Josh McDowell (Here's Life Publishers, Inc.: San Bernadeno, CA), 1979  
Ready With an Answer, pp. 211-257, by John Ankerberg (Harvest House: Eugene, OR), 1997  
A Ready Defense, pp. 56-73, 213-214, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993  
The Complete Book of Bible Answers, pp. 253-300, by Ron Rhodes (Harvest House: Eugene, OR), 1997  
Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 609-617, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

**91. Men decided the contents of the biblical canon. Why do we have no original manuscript autographs?**

**Response(s):**

- Yes, and they had standards. These decisions were no mystical or mere subjective choosing according to what men wanted or liked. Study the thought patterns and analytical criterion and critiques offered for and against those books which made the canon, and you will soon discover that your implication that almost anything could have been let in—because imperfect men were a part of the process—is in error.
- Men did—Spirit-led men. Do you demand that God throw His Word down in a book lowered from heaven, in order to accept his message as truly being His?
- [Have you fully read the resulting contents of that group decision, to see how the text itself testifies

(and God's Spirit can witness the fact, as well), that they made the right decisions, as led by that same Spirit?]

---Were you expecting angels or aliens to do the job? Certainly humans were the instruments of that decision. But does that mean that ever human in every circumstance always makes mistakes or sins in his choices. Could God-filled and led men have actually made a prayerful decision, based on valid criterion, and NOT done so with political, selfish or evil intent, motives or results? I am certain that, by God's grace, that's exactly what happened.

**For Further Study:**

I'm Glad You Asked, pp. 114-115, by Kenneth Boa and Larry Moyer (Chariot/Victor Publishing: Colorado Springs, CO), 1982

Evidence That Demands a Verdict, pp. 29-38, by Josh McDowell (Here's Life Publishers, Inc.: San Bernadeno, CA), 1979

A Ready Defense, pp. 34-41, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993

Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 80-86, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

**92. Hasn't the New Testament been changed since it has been copied and recopied throughout history? [a question likely to be raised by Muslims]**

**Response(s):**

---There are several translations, which are simply different ways of saying the same thing and in interpreting the same original sources, following common rules of grammar and interpretive principles. There are also, variants in the historical record, in non-substantial matters, such as scribal errors, etc., which can be overcome by examining the cumulative evidence...

---It is virtually in tact, the same as the original manuscripts, and to the extent that less than one percent is at variance, that smidgen is not on any subject of substance, and is usually attributable to obvious scribal error, or other minor infractions which other manuscripts can quickly clear up and expose as variants.

**For Further Study:**

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 4-6, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

Answering the Tough Ones, pp. 43-45, by David A. Dewitt (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

A Ready Defense, pp. 137-161, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993

The Case for Faith, p. 264, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000

**93. Is the best way to interpret the Bible to interpret it literally? (ex.: cut hands and feet off).**

**Response(s):**

---Yes, if you understand what we mean by the literal, historical-grammatical principle, and do not misconstrue what we mean with such stereotypes as wooden literalism, etc.

---Yes, and might I first define the terms and meanings I am attaching. According to Dr. Bernard Ramm, this is neither a "wooden literalism" nor a figurative/spiritualizing definition

What I mean by "literal," is, according to a definition by Dr. Charles Ryrie, grammatical, literal, normal, common meaning of the words plain, normal, usage, accounting for clear figures of speech.

---When I say I believe in a literal interpretation, I mean that one takes the Bible literally, giving consideration to the various literary genre used within it's covers. For instance, when Jesus said that He was the door, I certainly understand that to mean what He literally meant it to mean—not that He has a doorknob near His appendix, but that He is the way/opening, opportunity for access to God and entry into God's presence. The context (defined as the surrounding topical circumstances) will usually let you know when a given literary device is being used.

**Answer(s):** See: Council of Biblical Inerrancy Position on what literal means and does not mean (i.e., abuses).

**For Further Study:**

I'm Glad You Asked, pp. 107-109, by Kenneth Boa and Larry Moyer (Chariot/Victor Publishing: Colorado Springs, CO), 1982

Defending Your Faith, pp. 49-61, by Dan Story (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, MI), 1997

A Ready Defense, pp. 179-184, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993

**94. There are so many different interpretations of the Bible, why should I believe yours?**

**Response(s):** See also: Answer to Question #78, above.

---There may not be as many as you are thinking—can you give me some specific examples?

- Some people who interpret the Bible are not saved, so they are all but bound to go astray.
- Some people don't want to rightly know what God has said, disagree with it, and consciously want to misconstrue His message, or go to Scripture to prove their presuppositions, rather than submitting to what it reveals, and making up their beliefs accordingly.
- THE (one) interpretation would be consistent, true, and make sense, given both God's revealed character, truth and in light of context and all biblical information given on the subject.
- Do you believe that all the many interpretations floating around there are all right/correct, or could be? Have you ever asked yourself of the degree of study, analysis, logic, care, training and thorough explanation the various proponents espouse in support of their opinions, or is any opinion given the same weight, under your assessment standard. Maybe everyone has an opinion—but they are NOT all of the same weight. Consider the source, check the credentials, and study for yourself to verify the true from the massive number of false interpretations (and seek God's guidance, using standard hermeneutical principles of interpretation).
- We all bring our personality, I.Q., and biases/past experiences to our encounter with the Bible, and though these factors NEED NOT influence the interpretation process, sometimes some people let them do so.
- Some "interpreters," though saved, and relying on God's Spirit, need some objective, formal training, and would benefit from learning a little bit from other people more knowledgeable than they
- Some people who interpret the Bible are saved, but do not rely on the illumination of His Spirit.
- Some Christians rely so heavily on the Spirit, their thinking becomes subjective (what they think it means), and they poo poo formal Bible training, teaching or principles of hermeneutics.
- Some (relatively few) verses are harder to understand than others, and scholars have provided us several credible interpretive options, which we must prayerfully accept as our own conviction of truth, knowing we may have chosen a less than perfect, valid interpretive option.
- Some things we do not agree on will be resolved with more work and research, or only in heaven.
- Many (quantity vs. percentage) people who interpret the Bible are simply in error, as we all can, from time to time, be guilty of—we must admit our failings, and not let pride preclude us from being freed by the knowledge of the truth (as there is only one interpretation, at least by God's perspective).
- Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines "interpret" as "to explain or tell the meaning of: present in understandable terms." Note that the meaning is within the text, not brought to the text by the interpreter, and that his explanation requires understandability, for which there are principles we can discern, to separate that from illogical or absurd viewpoints.
- There is only one true interpretation (II Pet. 1:20-21). The reason men have so many (not really a whole lot) different interpretations can stem from several reasons:
  - a) Men are imperfect, and the devil wants confusion, so men will not know the truth and be freed.
  - b) Some people do not honestly approach the Scripture with an open and honest mind-set, devoid of presuppositions. Some people want to justify their own beliefs, and go to Scripture to buttress their own ideas.
  - c) Some people, in relying on the Holy Spirit as teacher (a biblical thing to do), either have never learned or fail to apply commonly-accepted rules of literature and biblical interpretation (context, define terms, major on the majors, obscure verses interpreted by the clearer; New Testament perspective on Old Testament?, etc.).
  - d) There may be other reasons not solicited here.
- You may want the Bible to be subject to everyone's own interpretation, but then it would mean nothing at all, and the Bible itself says that it is NOT a matter of individualistic interpretation. (I Pet. 1:21?).

**For Further Study:**

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 13-14, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980  
True for You, but Not for Me, pp. 26-28, by Paul Copan (Bethany House: Minneapolis, MN), 1998

**95. Don't the two Creation accounts' orders contradict both themselves and what we know from modern science (Gen. 1-2)? Were the days in Genesis one twenty-four hours or a long period of time?**

**Response(s):**

- No. One version is descriptive, of concepts—pictorial, while the other is intentionally chronological, to show when these events occurred.
- Have you read the two accounts recently? What specific features of what you have read lead you to see a distinction, or seeming contradiction in the two accounts? (Better to address the specifics, knowing

the answer, than to assume they have not read it or do not know the distinctions, as you may get caught without knowledge).

--Have you taken the time to study scientists evidence CONFIRMING the Genesis accounts? May I suggest a few books for you to read? Creation Science (Morris, Creation Institute, etc.)

**For Further Study:**

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 102-103, 170-196, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

**96. Where did Cain get his wife, and how were they able to populate an entire city?**

**Response(s):**

--He must have married his sister, at a time when that act would have been O.K., because the genetic problems would not have yet been detrimental, in part, because there were no other people with which to marry, as the commandment to “be fruitful and multiply” has just begun to be implemented.

--May I first assure you that Christians have already addressed this issue, and that the answers exist. I would be happy to try to get you in touch with those resources, but before we do, let me also tell you that the answers to that question have no real impact on the fact that you are a sinner, who is in need of a Savior, because, as things stand, you will face God in judgment as one deserving of hell, as will all men who have never personally received Jesus Christ for eternal salvation. Let’s deal with first things first, then we can have the luxury of examining matters which do not affect whether we go to heaven or hell—the most important question you need to answer.

**For Further Study:**

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 98-99, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

**97. Why doesn’t the Bible record the existence of prehistoric man or dinosaurs?**

**Response(s):**

--Have you not read the verses certain theologians espouse as saying that the Bible DOES refer to such creatures? (Better to address the specifics, knowing the answer, than to assume they have not read it or do not know the distinctions, as you may get caught without knowledge).

--Regarding dinosaurs, there very well could be such biblical evidence, simply not using the terminology we are used to (e.g., “dinosaur”), but regarding so-called “prehistoric man,” the Bible does not reference him because he never existed in reality—only Adam, Eve and their progeny. [**What of prehistoric man’s bones?**].

**For Further Study:**

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 94-95, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

**98. What is the probability that Noah’s Flood actually occurred, given what we know from modern science and archaeology?**

**Response(s):**

--A very high probability—higher than that it did not...Have you personally reviewed the evidence, or at least investigated the conclusions and summaries of those who have?

--The exact probability that the Bible is inerrantly God’s Word.

--I’m no statistician, and I assume you are not, but what I can tell you, on the authority of God’s Word, that it happened, and I can point you to data, research and evidence to corroborate that claim. [**they provide evidence to the contrary?**]

--The rainbow is one of several evidences.

--I am no statistician, as I assume you are not, but, no matter the mathematical answer one could muster to your question (and I can forward you to that data), it will not be relevant or matter, because since the event did happen, the reality is 100%.

**For Further Study:**

Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 258-259, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

**99. Is the existence of the Jewish nation proof of the Bible’s inspiration as a fulfillment of prophecy?**

**Response(s):**

--It very likely could be, or is. That is, we do not know for certain that the Jewish nation cannot disband, before the Tribulation begins, then it may be just a precursor for Israel’s final gathering in the land. It does seem likely that the Jewish state will stay in tact, indefinitely, and it is very likely, as you review

the signs of the times, that Christ's "secret" return to the earth (that is, the Rapture) will occur before there could be a dismantling of the nation of God's chosen people.

- Many scholars believe that it is. They base it on Ezek. 38-39, and other verses. Certainly, end-time prophecy does and will center around activities taking place in that region of the world, and no one can deny the amazingly quick and profound return of Israel to her promised land (some would call it miraculous).
- I believe that it is, and if it is, what might that tell you regarding both the accuracy of the Word of God and your need to do what it tells you to do—and soon—regarding your own eternal destiny?

**For Further Study:**

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 31-33, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

**100. The Gospel is irrelevant (i.e., for social issues/too heavenly minded/suicidal argument).**

**Response(s):**

- Please and seriously tell me how an educated person like yourself can assert that what happens when we die—especially if heaven and hell are real—has no bearing to how you live your life down here? If your daily choices are sinful, and sin gets punished, or your deeds are righteous, and God rewards goodness (though not with heaven) where is the irrelevance? It appears to me to be much more true that there is a direct relevance, and to live as if your relating to God is unimportant, not valuable and "irrelevant" only shows me that you are not yet worried about a hellish future which COULD start at any time. THAT'S a foolish decision/lifestyle—NOT the one that builds the life here and now based on a certainty of their ultimate destination. It is the epitome of short-sightedness (and even the stock market and planners tell you that's a bad thing) to ignore the finish line, and only concentrate on your next few steps, especially if you are not even looking to the right end marker, and thereby are off course, or even running the exact opposite direction. The Gospel is only irrelevant to people who life-long consider it so and who God will consider irrelevant in His decision as to where they spend eternity.
- Would you dare tell that to God on the day of your eternal judgment? Can you with clear conscience tell Jesus that His suffering death on the cross for your sins was not important? I advise you firmly to rethink your assertion, as it is a severe insult to a loving and powerful God, who is your Judge.
- Have you read the whole of the Bible, or New Testament? That would be a great starting point for one to have an informed opinion, stated as seemingly authoritatively as you have done, because as soon as you read, especially the New Testament, you will see that the devil has duped you into believing exactly the opposite of what is true.
- Society not suffering from sin, your life has eternal purpose, you're right with God or not to die?
- If you are alive, and your body will one day die (after which you will face an eternal judgment), the farthest claim from the truth would be to say it is irrelevant.
- How is your eternal future irrelevant to how you live today? You budget and plan for retirement, which you are less sure will happen than the fact that you WILL die, and I'd recommend that unless and until a man knows where he is going, he is just wandering around without aim or purpose.

**101. The Gospel message has been disproved.**

**Response(s):**

- Really? Where did they find Christ's bones? How did they prove they were His?
- Can you cite for me one scholarly and commonly accepted work, book or other documentation in which that conclusion has been proved? Where did you hear that claim, and what moral/integretous credibility does that source carry?
- Easier said than proven. Authoritative confidence does not make a statement true. Can you substantiate your claim?
- [How would someone be able to prove that God either existed or did not exist?]
- Where, when and by whom? Please prove your claim and provide me with documentary evidence.

**102. Luke-Acts was written before the Gnostics allowed the Book of John to enter the canon. The message of the Synoptics differs from John's Gospel, and the Synoptics are the true Gospel.**

**Response(s):**

- There are different emphases, but they are in harmony, and do not conflict one another.
- That is a myth and allegation/accusation made by opponents seeking to discredit the Word of God. Can you identify for me the subjects and places where this supposed rift in agreement exists? The all teach the same thing, as God's Word is consistent, and the most important matter that all the Gospels agree on is that you, along with every other person, are a sinner, in need of God's forgiveness in Jesus Christ if you are to have any hope for the certain to occur afterlife.

---What evidence can and do you cite as documentation of your contention that any Gnostics had anything to do with the process of Scripture canonization? Which members of the Council do you assert were Gnostics?

**103. Jews wrote the New Testament (presumably meaning they were inaccurate or biased).**

**Response(s):** cite extra-biblical corroborating materials to the Gospels--McDowell

---Gentiles also wrote it (Luke).

---To the extent your statement is true, so what? Is their culture innately intellectually inaccurate or biased and deceptive?

---Why would a (good) Jew write materials which revised and claimed to fulfill the Old Testament—their Testament—knowing the penalties to adding to God’s word and believing the O.T. to be the final revelation, unless it were true? Why did they risk and suffer social, political and religious ostracization to begin a sister/related sect, if they were in error? And, there is no evidence that they were anti-Semitic, or turncoats to their heritage—in fact, they remained loyal to its true tenets, so they saw nothing in Christianity which required them to become un-Jewish—only more fully so, in Christ.

**104. The biblical writers were biased/partial.**

**Response(s):**

---**See Also:** Answer to Question # 88, above.

---They were in favor of Jesus, but unjustly biased people don’t usually state their own faults, or show negative events or statements (give examples).

---This question may differ from question 88 in that the claimer may not be attributing bias to many writers’ Jewish culture. However, the assumption of biased is, nevertheless, in error, whether blamed on the authors’ close ties to Jesus or their cultural background.

---Would a biased author show their friends and human (as opposed to divine) heroes’ frailties and failures? (ex.: Christ’s indignation, tears, Peter’s denials, Thomas’ doubts, the 12’s return to their own life after the cross, the sons of thunders’ ego, Peter’s cutting Malchus’ ear off, the 11’s doubts despite years of being told Jesus would suffer and die, Peter’s failure at the end of walking on water, etc.).

---Would a man give up his life as a martyr for something he knowingly believes is a biased and partial exaggeration?

---It was neither socially nor culturally beneficial to the authors to write and preach the things they did, regarding the Lord Jesus Christ, especially those who were completed Jews living among the Jews.

---ETC.

**105. The Gospel’s appeal is based on the ultimate fear tactic (hell) vs. the love of God.**

**Response(s):**

---It is no “tactic” for one to tell another the truth. A tactic is a manipulation of thoughts and emotions to bring about an intended result. If we had dreamed up or imagined/created the concept of hell, we would be rightfully guilty of using that doctrine to scare people to Christ. As it is, and as the facts have it, hell is your sure destiny, without Christ. As has been said, ‘it’s hell to live without Christ.’

---Ultimately it’s based on God’s love, though it is truly sobering to me at least to contemplate hell (actual place described as...)

---Some things in life are fearful—not just because you are emotionally impressed. For a human to not be fearful about a place where they will eternally be tormented with fire, with no relief forever, is to show signs of crazy-like tendencies—not that the Christian, warning of it’s severe and serious danger, is using oppressive “tactics” to try to persuade you. Someone near the Niagara Falls could yell at an unknowing swimmer: You’re going to die!, or be careful—there may be some danger ahead. Which is more appropriate to the circumstances, and would the first person rightfully be accused of using a “fear tactic?”

**106. Which Bible do you believe in? (ex.: Jews’ O.T., Catholics’ apocrypha, Christians’ O.T. and N.T., Muslim’s Koran; KJV-only believers, etc.).**

**Response(s):** See Geisler on why not other holy books

---Both the Old and New Testament, but it is not so much a matter of which holy book I believe in, but which one is true, why, and therefore which one you must rely on with your eternal destiny being at stake.

---[Christ claimed to be the truth, and spoke the truth (without lying), and only the Bible, especially the New Testament, record His life experiences accurately and authoritatively].

---Not the Koran, Book of Mormon, Pearl of Great Price, Book of Moroni, Koran, etc.  
---I say in all humility and trust in God, the only right one. The Catholic Bible, where it's core coincides with the New Testament, and the Muslims do not have a Bible (or library of books, as that word is defined).

[Note errors in apocrypha]

**For Further Study:**

Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 28-36, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

Defending Your Faith, pp. 63-74, by Dan Story (Kregel: Grand Rapids, MI), 1997

**107. Can the biographies (Gospels) of Jesus be trusted? Do they hold up under scrutiny? Were Jesus' biographies preserved for us? How can anyone believe the New Testament account of the life of Jesus, seeing that it was written long after His death?**

**Response(s):**

---First, before I answer your question, let me discover whether we are both speaking from first-hand knowledge. That is, have you ever read in their entirety both Matthew, Mark, Luke and John? I could (and will) answer your question, but unless you have read them the answer to your question will have little meaning for you.

---Yes, they can be trusted. Read them for yourself, and come back and tell me whether they appear trustworthy or reliable (or show me the places where they cause you to doubt, and we'll discuss your findings).

---Yes, and even the miracle of their preservation shows signs/evidence of God's protectorate of His divine book.

**Answer(s):** See Also: Answer to Question # 13, Above.

**For Further Study:**

A Ready Defense, pp. 74-91, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 7-8, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

The Case for Christ, pp. 19-72, 259-260, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1998

The Case for Faith, pp. 263-264, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000

True for You, but Not for Me, pp. 100-106, by Paul Copan (Bethany House: Minneapolis, MN), 1998

www.probe.org

**108. Is there credible evidence for Christ outside the biographies of Christ?**

**Response(s):** See Answer to Question # 6, Above.

---Wouldn't you expect such of a credible and historical event as influential and amazing as the miraculous life of the Lord? Your answer is yes...

---Yes. I have not yet studied them first-hand (in fact, the originals may be located in museums or libraries in other nations), but I can refer you to writings which are based on having studied them or which refer you to the sources themselves. The point is that those documents do exist (in various forms, as old as they now are).

---Yes there is, which is. There are objective, neutral and outside observers who wrote of Christ, which is all the more reason you need to pay attention to what the eyewitnesses to His life had to say about Him—especially as it relates to your own eternal salvation and His role in it.

---If there weren't, that would not necessarily show them to be false, but the good news is that there actually is such evidence(?).

**For Further Study:**

Defending Your Faith, pp. 45-47, by Dan Story (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, MI), 1997

The Case for Christ, pp. 73-91, 260, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1998

The Case for Faith, p. 264, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000

The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable, by F.F. Bruce (InterVarsity Press: Westmont, IL), 1943

The New Testament: Its Background, Growth and Content (James Clarke & Co.: Cambridge), 2003

**109. The Bible is not intellectual enough for me (i.e., its too simplistic).**

**Response(s):**

---I know people with 7 or more college degrees, and they have studied and written volumes of materials about the Bible, and related studies. It strikes me that you may take caution in reading what God has written concerning one seeking man's wisdom, and considering His message of salvation to be foolish, and to see that, in the end, it is God's opinion of you—not your opinion of Him or His word, that will

be the final determining factor as to your eternal fate. A man can have both all the material assets and all the knowledge of the world, and lose it all if they never trust Jesus Christ for their eternal salvation. It's not how intellectual or knowledgeable you are—in this case, it IS Who you know!

---Have you read the Bible?

---If so, have you ever studied the original languages, theological issues such as the relationship between divine sovereignty and the will of man, or the “problem passages?” Are you also aware of apologetic materials surrounding the Bible, historical and archaeological documents supporting the Bible, as well as the study of harmonizing teachings from different parts of the Bible? Don't make claims which are not based in fact, because God wants you to love Him with all your mind, and I can assure you that He can fully utilize your every mental capacity, even in evangelism, if you are one of His children.

---[Is it possible that perhaps you could have a problem with ego, or pride, in the mental capabilities GOD has given to you?].

#### **110. The Bible is a story book. That stuff is for children.**

##### **Response(s):**

---Descriptive differences between myths and history.

---Stories are truly in the Bible--true stories and historical life events. Indeed the truth of the Gospel is simple enough for a child to understand and believe; yet, contemporaneously, it's profundity is so deep as to confound the wise and knowing among this world's adults. It truly may sound simple, but the idea that man cannot work himself to heaven has seemingly escaped all other ways/traditions/religions in which men seek to get right with God, and to comprehend how one person's life sacrificed on behalf of another secures the benefit for the party sacrificed is a truth/concept not lacking in maturity of wonder. Your sin choices are sober mature evil; simple but profound

---This stuff is for child-like, humble, open-minded, sincere and trusting individuals. The features of children (innocence, wonder-lust to learn and explore) cannot be sluffed off as meaningless virtues which adults should avoid. In fact, we need to re-learn them, and the Bible honors those traits, and they are essential for understanding the profound yet often simply stated truths contained therein.

#### **111. The Bible has some weird beliefs and ethics (ex.: God is male).**

##### **Response(s):**

---Can you cite/list for me some examples you might have in mind?

---Death penalty for homosexuals, unique rituals and sever restrictions on Jews, harems/polygamy, animal sacrifices, God as Father v. Mother, virgin birth, eat Christ's flesh, etc.)

---Farm out particulars to the answers provided by Norman L. Geisler, etc.

---[Miracles are unique and abnormal to the laws of nature and physical/natural laws—but are not “weird”].

##### **For Further Study:**

I'm Glad You Asked, pp. 110-112, by Kenneth Boa and Larry Moyer (Chariot/Victor Publishing: Colorado Springs, CO), 1982

#### **112. You call yourself educated, yet still believe in a literal 6-day Creation story and a 6,000 year old earth? How can you believe the earth was created around 4004 B.C.?**

**Bible Reference(s):** I Cor. 8:1, II Pet. 3:1-7, etc.

##### **Response(s):**

---A hundred college degrees do not negate the truth of God's Word. In fact, one can get so much knowledge, or pridefully think he is so intelligent that he rejects the revealed Word of God. Faith in God's Word is not a matter of intelligence, or lack thereof, so much as an openness to the evidence proffered, and the result of God's revealing miracle.

---Your assumption/presupposition is that all educated people deny a six-day creation. THAT presumption is “uneducated,” as it is not true or consistent with reality... After all. Evolution is only a theory. Truly educated people avail themselves of all information and evidence that might shed light on their opinions and beliefs, and are not scared off or closed to subjects, just because their personal desires are not favorable to the particular discipline. (I Cor. foolishness made wise).

---You call yourself educated, and believe that all species and all the created order evolved from one huge and random explosion, even when there is no evidence of any micro-evolution (species change), etc.(?)

---I will grant you one concession in this matter—not even the most educated person in the world knows all disciplines or sciences, so even though you and I are both educated, I will not presume that you know a lot about, say, micro biology, just like I may know little about anatomy—I never studied it in

college. Therefore, let's begin by admitting that one's educatedness bears little resemblance to the areas in which one is educated, or lacking knowledge. In this case, I will assume that you have little knowledge about what the Bible teaches on the subject, and we both could learn more from experts on the evolution-creation debate, and if the answer to this issue keeps you from going to heaven, I would suggest that you endeavor to study and pursue some books I can send you to which can broaden your education, as letting that issue keep you from heaven is a huge problem for you. My knowing I will be going to heaven does not cause me near as much discomfort in trying to settle all aspects or fully investigate that debate as your condition should, as, if evolution is false, and God is real, you've got a real problem on your hands.

--First, if one "calls" themselves "educated," and they are indeed accredited as having a higher (or even extensive education), just because we may disagree on a particular matter does not negate one's educatedness. A faith based on evidence, over and as opposed to merely an opinion, possibly not researched and unsubstantiated with evidence, is always a better position to hold (don't you think)?

**For Further Study:**

Defending Your Faith, p. 143, by Dan Story (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, MI), 1997

**113. I'm going to live forever through electro chronics or time machines.**

**Response(s):**

--You have a confidence in science and technology which I cannot say that I can fully embrace.

However, even to the extent that scientists become able to extend or prolong lives, no one will ever be able to escape the inevitable and tragic end which awaits all men—death, followed either by eternity spent in heaven or hell, depending (humanly-speaking) on whether the person received Christ as his or her personal Savior.

--The Bible assures us that "it is appointed unto man once, and then comes the judgment." It also states that through the death of one man (i.e., Adam) death came to all men. You may learn how to prolong life a little—not in God's reckoning of your appointed date with death/the grim reaper, but in our own understanding of our earthly experience—but you will not escape the reality and fact of physical death (even as many Americans live as though it will never happen to them, and try to block that negative, unpleasant reality from their conscious thinking. Funerals and mortuary professionals should give you a sober taste of and encounter with reality).

**114. Do you believe in the Shroud of Turin? (i.e., that it's authentic/the real thing/Christ's burial cloth).**

**Response(s):**

--It is possible, but I have not studied the evidence enough to make my own conclusions. However, may I refer you to some writings of men who have done more extensive study, so that you may benefit from their research? Whichever way you conclude on this matter, what really matters is your position on the Man who may or may not have worn that face cloth—have you ever personally prayed to receive Jesus Christ into your life for the forgiveness of all your sins?

--The Bible says, whether corroborated by the Shroud of Turin or not, that Christ indeed did die, was buried, and rose again, and is alive now desiring to save your eternal soul. Have you ever asked Him to do so/let Him?

--It may very well be. Certainly, unless Christ's burial cloths were destroyed, or deteriorated/decayed/disintegrated, we should expect that they both existed and could still exist.

--I have not studied the evidence well enough to form a conclusion, but the subject I have studied concerns your eternal salvation...

**For Further Study:**

The Signature of God, by Grant Jeffries (Whitaker House Publishers: Benton, NY), 1997

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 155-169, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 705-706, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

## **SALVATION, FAITH AND ASSURANCE**

**115. Why did Christ have to die on a cross for me to go to heaven? How could someone else die in my place/stead?**

**Response(s):**

--Because God has always required a just payment for offences done against Him, though the

instrumentality of the shed blood of a sacrificial Lamb. Death is the cost for our sins, and though all men will physically die, because of Christ's death on the cross in our place and on our behalf, we need not suffer eternal and spiritual death in hell, because Christ has provided us the way of access to an otherwise offended and separated holy God and Creator, with whom we can now be intimately and lovingly related, by having received His free gift of salvation which no human works could ever have achieved of their own selves. That's why God chose to bridge the gap for us, and the love shown in that one, historical event is exactly why I would encourage you to make sure that you personally appropriate the gift Christ's death has provided for you, if you will believe.

- To understand the answer to your question would require you to know some information from the Old Testament concerning what God has revealed about His character, and His view on the need for sacrifices, as a way to atone or amend the rift caused by men's sins, and between man and his maker...
- In human criminal justice, another person cannot take the payment for your wrongdoing. When we move to the spiritual dimension, that's the only hope you have, because 1) God has provided it for you, and it is the only way to be reconciled with Him, and 2) because a human can never pay his own debt to God and escape hell, as hell IS punishment for our sins. The only hope we have IS that God would forgive our sins, and not account/reckon and enforce justice against us. We desperately need His mercy, or there is no hope.
- Are you familiar with the Old Testament concept of sacrifice, or what theologians call "atonement?" If not, I can sure see why that confuses you. let me give a brief sketch of the process/concept.

**116. Why did Christ have to shed blood? Why do I need the blood? What are the origins and reasons for a blood sacrifice?**

**Response(s):** See Answer to Question #115, above.

- The Bible says that "the life is in the blood." When blood is shed, that term represents the dying of a person, and God's anger at sin is only allayed by His punishment falling on something or Somebody, as God is just. Because He is also merciful, analogous to and as a full and final completion of the Old testament sacrifices, Jesus was that spotless, blemish-less lamb, sacrificed for YOUR sins, both so you would not have to pay your own debt, and also as a demonstration of His love for you, as the punishment you were and are guilty of has to fall on someone...God does not just ignore the problem.

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, pp. 1348-1349 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**117. How can the death of one man 2,000 years ago help me today?**

**Response(s):**

- Because that same sacrificial Lamb/Man is alive today, ready to give you the same life he gave people back then.
- Exactly because that same human being and Divine Person, Jesus Christ, is still alive, in heaven, today. Not only did His work on the cross for your benefit/on your behalf work to allow heaven to be yours as a free gift, He also is actively working to convince you to accept it for yourself, personally, to put His standing before God into your "spiritual bank account," as it were. If Christ had not resurrected from the dead; that is, if He were still dead, your question would be a valid objection to the message I am presenting to you. Also, God's view—not His accounting--of time differs from ours, in that 2,000 is just a drop in the bucket of time lapse for the One who eternally is.

**For Further Study:**

Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 62-63, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000

**118. What is salvation?**

**Response(s):**

- Salvation is an eternal "transaction" (better, event or experience) in which God does all the work of "saving", when man relies on Him so to do, to eternal change the person's status before a holy God, and the consequences and ramifications/implications of that sinful condition, by forgiving them all of the sins and offenses they have (and will) committed against Him, solely based on His merciful and gracious kindness in having sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to pay the penalty and price for those sins which men would otherwise have had to pay for themselves, ultimately in hell.
- Salvation is the experience you need, and every person needs, in which our sinful status before God is wiped clean by His forgiving us all of our sins based on the shed blood of Jesus Christ on the cross. When we ask Christ to forgive us and live within, God changes the account, puts His Spirit within us and makes us new persons on the inside. The Bible calls this being "born again." There is nothing

more important, and it changes one's eternal destiny forever. That is New Testament salvation in Jesus Christ!

---The miraculous establishment of an eternal, personal relationship with God, where He forgives all of man's sins, and indwells and empowers such changed believers with Himself.

### **119. Why would God give you the one reward which alone motivates men to live good?**

#### **Response(s):**

---For one, because God has the power, by saving you, of motivating from a different perspective—to please Him and because of what He did for you (thankfulness) rather than MAN'S thinking that fear of hell or hope of heaven motivates morality. Neither could be true, as the standard is perfection, so living sinfully would merit fear of the future, as would living holy, because no one can live perfectly holy from birth to death, so the end result is the same—legitimate, credible fear of the future.

---He had His reasons, but it is likely centered around the fact that he knows that even a motivated lost person will sin, and never be perfect, so it is not a matter of motivation, but instilling a new capacity, or nature, so that the Christian, by the power of the Holy Spirit, can more and more live the type of life God intended every man to live unto Him. Truly, you don't think that eternal rewards in heaven, and the satisfaction of actually bringing pleasure to and pleasing God are motivating—IF you have the capacity so to do? I certainly find it revving on a daily basis.

### **120. What must I do to be saved?**

#### **Response(s):**

---Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. (**Ac. 16:30-31**). That is and means, pray to ask God to forgive all your sins and to make you a new creature through Jesus Christ. Trust/lean/rely completely on God, based on the promises in His Word, to do what He says He will do, when He says.

---Not works. Not even Lordship commitment necessarily?

#### **For Further Study:**

Free and Clear, by Larry Moyer

Absolutely Free, by Zane Hodges

So Great Salvation, by Charles Ryrie

The Open Bible, p. 1349 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

### **121. Should Christians give away all their possessions?**

#### **Response(s):**

---God may have that in His plan for some people. However, more likely than not, most people must deal with how important possessions are to them, in their values, priorities and attitude—not innately in the assets themselves.

---There is a lot of wisdom in both being charitable and in wisely and adequately providing for one's own family. If money is an idol to a believer, God may have them break that habit, and on rare occasions this form of breaking might be the way he leads, but I would think that more often, it would be through adverse circumstances that teach them not to cling to the bank account. Also, even if you give away all your possessions, you will not solve all the world's problems, and you will then become a drain on society—which is not as good thing—unless God specifically tells you you must (sort of like the question should I go do evangelism in Afghanistan). Even the Scriptures state that you could give everything away, have no love, and gain nothing by so doing. As is often the case, it is the internal motivation and attitude more than the external act which matters to God.

---Not necessarily. It depends...

#### **For Further Study:**

Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 58-59, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000

### **122 . What makes Christian conversion valid? Can't it be explained psychologically?**

#### **Response(s):**

---First, because it is real, and God makes it a valid experience.

---Second, the enduring results make it different. Thirdly, a decision empowered by God's Spirit is innately different from a New year's resolution to become a better person. Fourth, judgment day will ultimately prove it out—but that's too late if you wait that late to find out.

---Paul and Peter's change as example (Peter's after the resurrection, from an abandoner to powerful preacher). Martyrs rarely take such drastic measures if they are not fully convinced they are dying for a

real vs. delusional cause (though Heaven's Gate is a testimony to suicidal delusion, Christian martyrs showed no signs of delusional insanity).

--Testimonies of "really bad" jailed prisoners? Don't knock it until you've tried it/walked in my moccasins argument? **[testimonies of self-improvement/New Years' resolution changes appear to counter some of the argument, though the breadth of change is significantly different—not merely one or two habits, but many—a lifestyle change over a lifetime). Ultimately, you cannot prove it, as it is a sovereignly revealed miracle from the heavenly Father.**

--Testimonies of our experience, even though the experience was real and is valid, is not the power which can change our hearers' lives—it is the Gospel which has such power, so get that message before them, as God's Word never returns to Him void. Though apologists have taught that "no one can argue with your 'testimony,' the objective is always superior to the subjective, though the subjective MUST have been experienced, if one is to preach the objective message (and not just to do so effectively—there is serious spiritual warfare danger potential for claiming to be "of God" and seeking to utilize His power, when you do not possess it inside; Ex.: Ac. 19:13-16). If God's Spirit is "working on" the person you are witnessing to, he will "know" (i.e., have the Spirit's borne witness) that what you speak is truth, even if he does not then and there receive/accept/respond to it.

**[Retort?: "Millions" (from varied walks of life?) have testified Buddah (i.e., their religion) has given them peace and a meaning in life; answers to prayer or comparing god's powers like Mount Carmel valid way to demonstrate god is greater, today? Also, back-sliders, carnals and fall always tend to diminish some credibility, as their behavior contradicts the reality within them if indeed it ever was]**

--The extreme certainty of salvation, not to the point of testing the Lord by running out in a freeway, but in confidently facing death, or opposing men (as in Acts) gives evidence supporting its reality. One could say that confidence could be misplaced, ignorance or self-deception, but Christians with such conviction can usually be tested with psychological examinations and show that they are sane, sober thinking individuals, who evidence no signs of delusional thinking, wild imaginations, hearing voices, etc. There is a qualitative difference between a decision to make changes in one's life for the better and toward more responsible living, and the lifestyle of a committed believer.

#### **Answer(s):**

"Many of you are saying, 'Christ changed your life, so what?' One thing that has confirmed to me the resurrection of Jesus Christ two thousand years ago is the transformation of the lives of millions of people when then became related by faith to the person of Jesus. Although they are from every walk of life and from all the nations of the world, they are changed in remarkably similar ways."

"Some say it is just wishful thinking, or they simply excuse it by saying it doesn't prove a thing. For a Christian, behind his subjective experience is an objective reality as its basis. This objective reality is the person of Jesus Christ and His resurrection."

**"There are two questions or tests I apply to a subjective experience.**

1. First, What is the objective reality for the subjective experience?
2. Second, How many other people have has the same subjective experience from being related to the objective reality?"

Example: A student claiming a stewed tomato in his shoe has changed his life, giving him peace and the ability to run the 100-yard dash in 10 seconds flat. Its hard to argue when one can back up his claim. "A personal testimony is often a subjective argument for the reality of something. Therefore, don't dismiss a subjective experience as being irrelevant.

Now, to apply these two tests to the Christian experience...

1. The objective reality or basis for my subjective experience of a changed life was the person of Jesus and His resurrection.
2. How many others have had this same subjective experience from being related to the object, Jesus Christ? "The evidence is overwhelming. Truly millions of people, from all backgrounds, nationalities and professions..." To those who say it is a delusion, then WOW! What a powerful delusion! "...From the first century A.D. down to the present, Jesus Christ has been radically changing the lives of individuals from all walks of life." (**See:** example testimonies in pp. 430-466).

**Source:** A Ready Defense, pp. 427-429, by Josh McDowell, (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993

#### **For Further Study:**

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 119-120, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

Evidence That Demands a Verdict, pp. 325-361, by Josh McDowell (Here's Life Publishers, Inc.: San Bernadino, CA), 1979

**123. Can Christianity be proved (i.e., scientifically)?**

**Response(s):**

---**See also:** Answer to Question #86, above.

---It can be proved about as soundly as it could be disproved(?). As in other such issues, one must assess and judge the weight of the evidence and make a reasoned decision, based thereupon. It is the foolish person and the unwise one who would shrug off Christianity without ever making a serious inquiry into both its claims and evidences.

---Just as with trying to disprove Christianity, the quality of evidence and nature of scientific “proof” differs from that achieved by repeated testing under the scientific method. God has so arranged things that He has rarely in history “personally shown up” in manifestations one could hardly doubt, yet, those few times when He has, namely in the Person of Jesus Christ, His miracles, the giving of the Law (etc.) bear substantive evidence attested to by eye witnesses for us to accept as reliable the writings he later inspired them to pen.

---God has mercy on some doubters, but it is more blessed to not see and yet believe, so may I recommend that you spend more time reading God’s Word—especially the Gospel of John—than in attempting to search down the many details associated with extra-biblical evidence which substantiates the message found therein.

---Christianity cannot be either disproved or “proved,” in the scientific definition of that term, yo888888

**For Further Study:**

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 145-146, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

A Ready Defense, pp. 421-423, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993

**124. That’s naive, easy believism that isn’t intellectually honest and clings mindlessly to the Bible, even when facts dispute and challenge the beliefs.**

**Response(s):**

---On the issue of Christianity being “mindless,” see the answer to question #33, above.

---As to the charge of “easy-believism,” (amazingly, often charged against Christ’s Church by those claiming to be members thereof) see the answers to questions #21, 102 , above.

---As to whether it is naïve to believe in Christ or intellectually dishonest so to do, it is in fact, quite the opposite that is true. A willful non-believer must intellectually disregard credible, solid and numerous evidence for salvation in Christ, in order to hold onto things he can only hope are true, as if they were to be true, he would be justified in remaining in his sinful lifestyle (possibly a deeper motive for his belief). Rather than stick one’s head in the sand, as the evidence points a direction the skeptic is not going or living, what is truly naïve is to be gullible enough to accept—without further investigation—the devil’s lie that Christianity is just a lie, myth or a hoped for reality (I Cor. 15:19). The intellectual dishonesty is committed by people unwilling to be open-minded enough to explore the evidence for Christ, who accept hook line and sinker the thought that they will be O.K. in the afterlife remaining as is—without Christ.

---We are not claiming that our case is such a lay-down, hands-down clear one that no one could possibly doubt it (like as unto the claim that human beings live on earth—a claim of whose quality would leave no room for faith), but we are suggesting that the weight of the evidence is in the favor of Christianity, and that it is often more a moral problem than an intellectual one, when one makes such accusations as is found in this question.

**125. There have to be strings attached to this “gift.”**

**Response(s):**

---You speak from the experience of only this life—not from having experienced God and His character in giving. Many times, in this world, strings are attached. Yet, God is not beholden to the way sinful man conducts their transactions, so to take that analogy of giving and apply it to God is totally inappropriate.

---If the offer/transaction which God initiated were a purely human and secular offer, as with all other offers which enter our lives as options, on a daily basis, your point would be well-taken, as fallen men seem to hardly ever be able to even come close to emulating the Father, in making a truly gracious offer which does not benefit the offeror financially. However, that “truth,” derived from dealings in this world, has no legitimate carryover to spiritual things, and we must not run the risk of insinuating that God has to behave as men do, as He is wholly other. The fact of the matter is, even if contrary to our

ordinary experience, that the Bible does teach God's unconditional love, and His totally free offer of eternal life, apart from any works of man at all. 'Believe it or not,' you must 'believe it or' your will 'not' receive its benefits.

---If your contention does not square with the revelation of Scripture, you must abandon preconceived ideas of what is true in regard to God.

---[Strings were the cords with which Christ was beaten?]

#### **126. Is baptism necessary for salvation?**

**Bible Reference(s):** I Pet. 3:21, I Cor. 1:17.

#### **Response(s):**

---Although you may meet claiming Christians who would answer this question affirmatively (namely, Church of Christ), and though one could find a handful of verses which might lead one to tend to think that could be the case, the vast majority of verses teach and the truth of the matter is that water baptism is NOT required for salvation. It is a necessary first step of obedience for believers, but would constitute a work of man in addition to the non-work of faith/trusting Christ, which alone secures salvation, and salvation, is clearly, not of any works of man. **(Eph. 2:8-9).**

---It is not necessary for salvation, but it is an essential first step toward sanctification. It is the outward manifestation of the inward change of heart brought about by the residing Spirit's presence and baptism, and is God's expected first act of obedience of all true believers.

---You can say that it is not required for salvation, but if one is seeking to avoid being water baptized. It might cause others to wonder why a child of God would want to avoid pleasing their heavenly Father immediately upon His gracious saving of their soul.

#### **For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1346 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

#### **127. There are things I must do before I become a Christian.**

#### **Response(s):**

---You may have a misunderstanding of salvation. God will get your moral "issues" resolved, once He is in your life. Your (greatest) need is Christ—not trying to clean up your act and make yourself presentable to Him. You can never be morally acceptable, no matter how hard you try. That's why you need Him. Plus, a decision to wait, even if for moral-sounding reasons, is a slap in the face of God and a willful rejection of His offer. How could such a decision truly be a moral one, though it can sound so by appearing to say you will tidy up first. Technically, even that is sin, as you are spurning God and independently trying to do things your own way. Besides, who knows for sure that there will be a tomorrow, or that God will give you a second or third chance? Behold, today is the day of salvation.

---You may feel the need to get things right with people, or earn a certain amount of money before, or a number of other things—even good things—which will produce a procrastination of the decision, even if your motives are for moral reasons, but on the authority of the Word of God I can assure you that there is nothing at all needed or preventing you—today—from trusting Jesus Christ for your personal salvation. It is also equally true, that, spiritually speaking, the sort of thoughts which cause a man to delay this most crucial of life decisions, ultimately may be traced back directly to the devil, as he would just love you never to make the decision, to see you die before you made up your mind, as he wants to steal, kill and destroy as many human beings as he can possibly deceive.

#### **128. God can save people without human intervention in the process (cf.: lifestyle evangelism and Rom. 1).**

#### **Response(s):**

---**See also:** Answer to question #51, above.

---God's ability can be quite different from what He chooses to do. We must operate off of what He has revealed to us, and that is that it is the Church's job to tell the world about Jesus and the lost man's responsibility to respond to God with faith in Jesus Christ. Relying on God to act in a fashion He does not apparently often do, is a sin for the Christian and a sinful delaying tactic, which could have eternal consequences, for the lost person.

---God could send all people to hell or heaven. So what? What matters is what will He do and what does He do, based on what His word says.

---God is *able* to do many things He apparently does rarely to never. One thing we can be perfectly clear about, from our reading of Scripture, is that God has chosen to use men to evangelize the world, and that the multitudes of lost in the world need the message we have no excuse but to bring to them!

History and Scripture reveals that it is the exception rather than the rule that God uses methods other than human intervention through evangelism, and it would be a mistake of gargantuan proportions for any true believer to feel much sense of peace and al-rightness, in thinking about an ability God possesses, that He apparently rarely uses, to in any way make us feel anything but miserable about the pitiful track record most have in God's Church in the most important venture of all (as far as lost men are concerned)—evangelism. Quit even holding the thoughts of God sending angels or other means, until the rapture, and let your mind be set on an attitude of commitment to avidly be about the task. This same spirit of Calvinism is the same spirit very well known for minimizing calls for lost people to pray to receive Jesus, just as that same spirit so often engenders apathy, indifference or lack of concerned motivation for Christians to be radically committed to evangelism—the fruits and description of which should show any regular Bible reader the source from whence it comes, given God's repeated and cumulative emphasis on lost men's putting faith in Christ, and saved men's need to be about the work of evangelism (and in a big way).

--[Ability yes; choice, rarely Tell me the Gospel you know from looking at creation (I'm here to speak it to you; i.e., don't test the Lord?)]

### **129. Isn't God going to save everybody in the final analysis, anyway? (i.e., Universalism).**

#### **Response(s):**

--Whatever gave you that impression? Where did you pick up such an idea? Have you ever seen any emphases in Scripture which would lead you to that belief, or have you not been reading a lot lately? Nowhere in Scripture is Universalism taught, and if it were true, God could have secured it without the death of his Son (i.e., by universal fiat), or our involvement in evangelism, and there would be no need for a literal hell—but that is not the case at all. No indeed! Men are most definitely going to be in hell, and, sadly, that fact applies to the majority of human beings (**Mt. 7:13**).

--No He is not, and wherever you got that idea, I can 100% assure you that it was not from God or from the Bible. Ultimately and spiritually, the thought comes from Satan/hell, because it is both false, and dangerous, in leading lost people to a false sense of security that things will be alright, when they will actually be terribly not alright—and that, forever. If all will be saved, why trust Jesus Christ and His sacrifice on the cross? Why so many exhortations to do? Are they meaningless statements, or mere formalities God has to put in His book to cover all the bases?

#### **Answer(s):**

- Scripture does not teach universal salvation. Christ died to render all men "savable," but only those who believe and appropriate what He accomplished on the cross will be saved. (Jn. 3:16, 36, Ac. 10:43, I Jn. 2:2, Rev. 20:11-15, Isa. 59:20).

**Source:** Adapted from Bible Training Centre for Pastors: Missions, Evangelism, Discipleship, p. 131, by Dennis J. Mock, Sept. 1991, Atlanta GA

#### **For Further Study:**

Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 746-750, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

### **130. What's the big deal about salvation—you may lose it later anyway?**

#### **Response(s):**

--To think that it is not such a big deal is to have under-appreciated both its value and the seriousness of your present condition before God. Also, if you are graced to possess eternal life, you do not lose it. After all, it is called (and is by substance), "eternal" (vs. temporal) life!

--1) It is first a big deal because you are going to hell, if nothing changes in your life, and 2) it is also a valuable big deal, because salvation is forever. Contrary to what some who name the name of Jesus may have told you (known as Arminians of various denominations), you will never lose the eternal (vs. temporal) salvation (after all, it is called "eternal" life) gift, unless, of course, you never possessed it, which is the case of all who have never prayed to receive Christ for salvation. No one loses salvation, but some people, unwisely choose never to take God up on His most gracious offer—a pitiful decision they will kick themselves all of eternity for having made (if, of course, one can kick oneself while contemporaneously fending off flames, in hell—not to be too dramatic but accurate in graphical depiction).

--To ask, "what's the big deal," in the same sentence as salvation, indicates to me that you do not know very much and have not yet begun to grasp the full content of the Gospel, your own helpless position as a sinner, and the immeasurable and invaluable worth of freely being graciously allowed to miss out on a punishment no one will be able to withstand, and which, understand it or not, now awaits you and will

be faced by you at an unknown (to you) time which could even happen today. Do you not fear The Lord enough to recognize your penniless plight of moral corruption, and severe need of His salvation this instance? Should these realities have escaped you, I ask for the privilege of reviewing again with you the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**Answer(s):**

- Since you didn't earn your salvation by works or personal merit, you can't lose it by doing bad or not doing something good, either.
- Salvation is by grace through faith alone, based on God's mercy.
- You don't have the power to save yourself, and, conversely, you don't have the power to unsave yourself.
- Salvation is secured by the very power and person of God. (Eph. 1:13-14, I Pet. 1:3-5, Jn. 10:27-30, Tit. 2:11-14, 3:4-8, Rom. 8:31-39).

**Source:** Adapted from Bible Training Centre for Pastors: Missions, Evangelism, Discipleship, p. 133, by Dennis J. Mock, Sept. 1991, Atlanta GA

He gave you ETERNAL vs. Temporal life, and He says you have/possess it NOW.

**For Further Study:**

Salvation is Forever, by Robert Glenn Gromacki, Chicago: Moody Press, 1973

**131. I think you're making too big a deal about this.**

**Response(s):**

---The allegation of going "overboard" about salvation, though conceivably a behavioral possibility, is hardly ever a problem American Christians suffer from. It would be difficult to over-state the importance of making sure you do not go to hell, when you could be leaving for that destination at any time, and especially when you read in the Bible about what hell will be like for you, maybe even today. In evangelism, there is both an urgency and a sober seriousness that can never be detached from the activity of evangelism, if you are conducting Biblical evangelism.

---Tell me honestly...How big a deal will it be when you die, and face God on judgment day, and where you spend the rest of eternity is up for grabs—heaven or hell? How is that date of transaction any more serious then, as now, when you do have the opportunity to positively respond to the offer that the destination be heaven, and not hell, rather than on that day, when the choice will have already been made for you, by your non-response in this life?

---If death, heaven and hell, sin, life and God/Jesus Christ are not big issues, what is your definition of a "big" issue?

---If you think I am over-blowing the proportionality of this subject's importance, or if I am accurately giving it it's proper perspective, but that action makes you uncomfortable inside—either way, you may choose to decide to drop the subject, and let time "heal all," but it is my responsibility before God to at least warn you that I do not consider it a light matter (or even a matter one can easily over-emphasize), and that you leave this subject having been warned of the potential consequences if you never do settle the matter in your heart, before God, to whatever extent you do consider it important, as a man without Christ in this life is a man without any hope in the next.

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1343 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

## **PSEUDO-THEOLOGICAL/PHILOSOPHICAL/RELIGIOUS OBJECTIONS**

**132. What do you know of Greek, Hebrew of textual criticism? (i.e., are you a Bible scholar?).**

**Response(s):**

[If you know some, use that asset to your credit, as human leverage].

---Though I do not personally know any/much of those languages, by God's design I do have full access to a great number of works and reliable scholars who do, and who have properly translated (something different from interpretation) the original languages, and there are so many helps/resources to aid my understanding that my lack of knowledge of those languages—especially with the presence of the Holy Spirit resident within—makes the difference practically negligible. This is NOT to say there is no value in learning the languages, or that certain nuances and more details can be derived there from. I simply do not feel that God has lead me—yet—to make such a study, as I am fully able to learn the Scriptures as they presently stand, and since I have no intentions in going into the career ministry profession.

---Have you studied them? Perhaps your studies have uncovered some information I really need to know

about that would make the clear translational works provably 100% wrong. If that is so, I want to know about it, as I am not going to follow an untruthful religion.

--yes or no, but more importantly I personally know the Author who inspired the Greek and Hebrew originals... 1. What do you know of them? Are you able to discuss the matter intelligently enough to be able to understand the Bible in ways significantly different from what learned scholars have diligently slaved over to produce in the form of our English version Bibles? Does the Bible require that one know those languages expertly before they can understand “Jesus loves me, this I know,” or the verse, John 3:16? It does not take becoming a scholar (as important as that is) to understand the basics of Christianity, especially to act on the Gospel’s invitation to invite Christ to forgive all your sins and come live in your heart. There are scholars who are experts in these areas, and I would be happy to refer you to them—and maybe they’d contact you about any concerns you have which would legitimately be keeping you from placing faith in Christ. A study of the original languages can be rewarding and impactful, but is not necessary for you or I to intelligently discuss the message most important for you to hear. Truth is communicated through words, and God is fully capable of communicating through English, as He has in all other languages (tongues ex.), so the barrier to great understanding of what He wants to tell you is not so much in the intricacies of linguistic differences, but in the sinful resistance and rebellion of the fallen human heart. “If anyone will hear My voice/is willing to do His will, He will make Himself known...” (Jn. 7:17).

--If you’re a layman/layperson, like myself, probably as much as you. (~joke).

#### **For Further Study:**

Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 86-91, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

The Case for Faith, pp. 19-130, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2002

### **133. You can know God without “receiving Christ,” or being “born again.”**

#### **Response(s):**

--You can know about God, or have a feeling or experience after which you think you know God, but the Bible clearly teaches that no one can know God apart from a saving relationship to Jesus Christ. Period, and no exceptions.

--The only Christian that exists is the born-again type. Anyone claiming to be a Christian, who has never been born again, is “Christian” in name or denomination only—which serves no eternal purpose toward any access to heaven or God in the afterlife. (cf.: “**Christendom**” and **Protestantism?**).

--A person can know about God, have learned facts about Him, but it is completely unbiblical to hold that anyone can relationally know God (in the salvific sense of that term) without both being born again and receiving Christ—both synonyms of the same necessary experience for anyone to see the kingdom of God. To say it another way, if you have never received Christ or been born again, rest completely assured that you are facing an eternity separated from God, and that you have yet to know God in the biblical way God has intended for you to “know” Him.

--Not according to God and His Word, and I’ll take His word as final on the matter rather than a mere man’s.

--Don’t be confused—man can know the “god” of this world—the devil—just by being physically born. But to know the God of the universe requires one to personally put their faith in Him, through Jesus Christ, to forgive all their sins and give them eternal life.

### **134. Why are we here? Why did God make us?**

#### **Response(s):**

--May I suggest to you that if you do not yet know the answers to these two questions, finding the answers would be the most important thing you could do from here on out. How can you live your life not knowing what life is all about and why or how you are to live it?

--If you do not hold the Bible to be your ultimate authority for truth in this life, I would guess that question appears baffling and to be a good one to ponder. However, the Bible is not unclear as to the answer to your question one bit, and might not even consider such a question to be “philosophical” in nature, as it is simply asking for information the Bible contains. As can readily be seen from the life of our spiritual forefather, Adam, man was created to live in reliant/dependent relationship with the heavenly Father; that is, to walk by faith. Nothing could be clearer, and this answer explains how both the obedience that faith walking engenders, and the resultant effect which benefits God—both before men and within Himself—that of being glorified thereby, explain very clearly the answer to your question. Some will say man was made “to glorify God and enjoy Him forever,” but I believe that to

glorify God is done but walking obedient to the faith He gives, and our mindset ought to be intent on doing His will, knowing He will receive glory there from. Also, whether we enjoy the experience all the time, or sometimes wrestle with the issue of being faithful, it is our “job” to do God’s will, by faith, as recipients of His gracious salvation through Jesus Christ. Joy is to be the expected outcome of such a walk, but our purpose in life is to do God’s will, in my own yet studied opinion.

--You have no idea what the answers to those questions are, yet you are predisposed to question the Christian answers to your questions?

--God created us to have eternal and intimate fellowship with Him, which no person unrelated to Him, spiritually, can do.

**135. Heaven and hell are not real (symbolize euphoria and punishment/judgment for evil). Hell is only a state of mind.**

**Bible Reference(s):** See Answer to Question #58, above.

**Response(s):**

--Not according to the Word of God—the Bible. (improvable?). Tell that to Lazarus and the rich man. Tell that to all the people you have known who never trusted Christ and are now deceased. The Bible says otherwise. Sure, your experience can be a figurative hell, and you can think in extremely negative ways, but that is not the same thing as what you will literally, spiritually face when you die—an eternal flame, darkness, where the worm does not die and you are totally separated from God forever.

--Are you more knowledgeable and honest than Jesus, because He said that they were?

--How do you know? Where did you get that opinion, or who told you so? Unfortunately, ultimately and spiritually, that lie is from Satan, and I would caution you to re-think your opinion, lest you personally experience hell for yourself, with no hope of extraction, because you stubbornly and conveniently chose to continue to hold that wrong but comforting viewpoint.

**Answer(s):**

- Scripture teaches the absolute reality of both heaven and hell. Heaven is a place of conscious and eternal blessing in the Lord’s presence, while hell is a place of conscious torment, eternally separated from God. (Mt. 25:41, II Th. 1:8-9, Lk. 16:19-31, 22:33-43, Rev. 20:7-22:21).

**Source:** Adapted from Bible Training Centre for Pastors: Missions, Evangelism, Discipleship, p. 129, by Dennis J. Mock, Sept. 1991, Atlanta GA

**For Further Study:**

The Case for Faith, pp. 191-194, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000

**136. The devil is not real. Haven’t we outgrown belief in the devil? Are you one of those who believe there’s a demon behind every doorstep?**

**Response(s):**

--Just the opposite, your stating a belief that he is not real just goes to show he’s not only real, but successfully doing his job to your detriment. Just because you cannot see something does not mean it does not exist. The evidence of his workings is everywhere, and, though it takes supernatural revelation to know about him, we have that revelation, if you choose to believe what God has said, over and above your own, less-informed (than God) opinion as to the devil’s existence.

--He’s so real he’s already worked his deceptive magic on you, because you’re merely mimicking beliefs he wants you to hold (to your own destruction—Jn. 10:10).

--The devil is a personal, powerful, created yet fallen creature whose intent is only and always evil, even as regards what he desires to do to even to you. (**See: doctrine of the devil**).

**For Further Study:**

The Complete Book of Bible Answers, pp. 241-253, by Ron Rhodes (Harvest House: Eugene, OR), 1997

Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 683-684, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 18-19, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000

**137. If Satan does exist, so what?**

**Response(s):**

--So what? Since he does exist, if you know anything about his goals for life and work/activity, you will quickly see how important and serious a matter it is that he and his forces are at work in our world, to evoke and produce evil. That question is sort of like saying they just let loose a thousand rabid bulldogs onto our town—so what, or, there is a convoy of hazardous nuclear material transport trucks out of control, without drivers, heading for the city—so what?

- You know, unfortunately you and your question are prima facie evidence of his work in this world—not that you are not sincere in wanting to know if the devil exists, but in the fact that he has already deluded your heart into having little concern for what impact his reality could have on you. Don't you see that he has already influenced you negatively, in your thinking that his existence is of no consequence. Let me tell you frankly, his existence is extremely relevant, as his plan is to take you eternally to hell with him, and for anyone to doubt his existence, or to doubt his evil intentions already bears witness that he is not only alive, but that his evil schemes are working, at least to a certain extent.
- The “so what?” question can easily be answered in/with the question of where the devil will eventually live, forever, according to the Bible, solely because that same place or torment is the promised eternal abode of all who reject Jesus Christ, which I hope you will not do for the rest of your life here on earth.

**For Further Study:**

Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 22-23, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000

**138. Isn't demon-possession really mental illness?**

**Response(s):**

- I am not a psychologist, or Bible historian, but it appears to me that sometimes the two can be essentially the same, only re-named, but it is even more clear to me that most mental illness of today never reach the point of seriousness as those demon-possession experienced catalogued in the Bible. Soul and spirit are different, yet tied together, and when one is predominantly the cause, to the lessening of the other, is not often easy to tell. However, the effects and manifestations of demon-possession do not often line up with the behavior we typically see in the modern-day mentally ill.
- In some cases, it may be the same thing. Clearly in others there is a marked difference. The distinctions may not always be obvious to the casual observer, but certainly God knows the difference, and I would presume that psychologists, ministers, psychiatrists and others who have ever witnessed the real thing would be able to discern the difference between “normal crazy,” if you will, and demon-possession.
- Some Bible opponents have alleged that the New Testament writers were simply describing mental illness without the sophistication and knowledge that we now possess. However, that view would not be taking into account that those authors were inspired of God, and so what they wrote was true and accurate, as God would not call one thing X, if it were in fact NOT X, but Y. Certainly, I shy away from fellow brethren's viewpoint that there is a demon behind every doorstep, and that every cough or hic-up is demonic. However, I DO take seriously the Bible's injunctions when it instruct us as to the spiritual condition of certain ill people it labels demon-possessed.

**For Further Study:**

Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 20-21, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000

**139. Respect others' beliefs (i.e., “tolerance”).**

**Response(s):**

- I will agree with you that we ought not to disrespect others' sincere if not misguided or errant beliefs. The attempt at believing something is humanly noble, yet we are not required to not allowed to buy into or accept beliefs which are not consistent with the Word of God. There is a difference between respecting one's right to their opinion, and having the right to be wrong.
- Respect does not require accept and/or Other Religions they are Wrong? don't try to convince
- You can respect the believer and not need to show respect for the devil's doctrines. Do not make the adherent feel as if they are stupid for holding such a belief, but see them as victims of satan (which they are) and try to help them and give convincing reasons and evidence to try to get them, by grace, to change their views.
- Respect is not the same as accepting, or obedient responsibility to reprove false doctrine, as God tells believers to do.

**For Further Study:**

True for You, but Not for Me, pp. 35-37, 78-81, by Paul Copan (Bethany House: Minneapolis, MN), 1998

**140. Religion is whatever you feel is right.**

**Response(s):**

- At least for s time, Charles Manson likely believed what he did felt “right.” But did that misguided feeling have any basis in fact? If one's “feeling” that his way is right, when it is contrary to what God has said about salvation only in Christ, which do you truly believe must give way/yield. Remember, the Bible says that “There is a way which seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.” (Pv.

**14:12). See also: Judg. 17:6.** “The popular adage in America, “if it feels good, do it,” has no place in determining biblical and ultimate truth!

- That may be what you define as “religion,” but that experience or concept is nothing like biblical, true religion, as it’s contents are set and established, and what you feel about it’s truths and ways has no effect toward their changing one iota. Adolph Hitler certainly believed in his cause...but was he “right?” He probably felt he was, but we have in the Bible objective criterion to say unequivocally that he was dead wrong. In immoral relationships, the unmarried male may feel abortion of his illegitimately conceived child is right, while the mother may feel just the opposite. Can their feelings about morality both be right at the same time, and if so, how could you implement both alternatives?
- Hitler, Jim Jones and suicidal Jihad terrorists felt that way too. Were they right?

**141. That’s your opinion. [a very popular modern American slogan/response].**

**Response(s):**

- It IS my opinion, but it was not at all first MY opinion. It is God’s opinion—I simply, later on, adapted it as my own as well, but the sheer grace of God. It now is my own opinion—but my opinion is BASED on something—not just a view I hold just because I happen to feel or hold it for no particular reason, or because someone told me I should. What are the bases for the opinions you hold on this subject, and have you ever checked into and analyzed the truthfulness and evidence supporting any bases you may assert?
- You are correct in asserting that that thought is my opinion, yet you are wrong if you believe that it is solely my opinion, as opposed to being accurately consistent with and reflective of what God says in His Word. If I have derived my own, personal opinion, by merely accepting and believing what God has said is the case, and true, the truth is, at the same time, God’s word on the matter, as well as my own personal opinion, which, you must face up to, is the case in point on this matter we are discussing.
- There are standards for determining truth, and though it is my opinion, it is not just my studied opinion, it demonstrably complies with the many rules for determining truth—does yours?

**142. Everyone has God in them (i.e., Universalism/Secular Humanism/New Age Movement).**

**Bible Reference(s):**

**Response(s):**

- If God is in everyone, why is everyone a sinner? Trust me, the Bible says God is not in lost people, so the only thing deep within that you could tap into or rely on would be the deceptive representation of God by the father of lies—the devil. Don’t be deceived or deluded by him.
- If, as you assert, God is within me, why do I do wrong, and will that alone get me to heaven—God’s home?
- Don’t confuse the image of God still resident within even lost men, with God already existing within men. God is morally perfect, so if He is within them why are they so evil? The Bible teaches that none only has Christ resident within if they receive the forgiveness of all their sins through placing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Spiritually, all men have within them is a sin nature, being sinners, and their only spiritual father is the devil.

**For Further Study:**

Reason to Believe, pp. 88-89, by R.C. Sproul (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 1978

**143. Everyone must live by his own moral compass (moral relativism).**

**Response(s):**

- What about the deranged psychopath? Do you truly want him to live by his “own moral compass?” What if two people’s compasses have opposite magnetic readings, as when two lovers disagree as to whether abortion is the proper decision for the life of their illegitimate, unborn baby? Will fully living out your own subjective moral standard end you in heaven or hell? Will you ever achieve moral perfection (the standard required for heavenly entrance) by living that way? If not, then the philosophy loses its value, as an ultimate rule for life.
- The image of God” still, in part at least, generally resident in man, whereby we are not all Hitlers in our moral experience, may serve, by the general work of the Spirit’s restraint in the world, as a hedge against our experientially fulfilling the true depths of our soul’s moral depravity, but that does not negate the fact of that fallenness, and as “moral compasses” vary from individual to individual, culture to culture (etc.), how could there be no absolutes to determine right and wrong? For instance, what if my moral compass tells me to force castration on young virgins is a virtue—is that decision for

someone else solely a matter of my opinion, or where my “compass” may lead me, as opposed to many others, who believe that act to be inhumane and not your right to force on another?  
---Man living by his “own moral compass” will only land him in an eternal hell, as even our best instincts fall short of God’s standard of perfection (and glory). (**Rom. 3:23, Jn. 3:16-18, 36, I Jn. 5:12, Rom. 3:10**).

**For Further Study:**

The Necessity of Ethical Absolutes, by Erwin Lutzer (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 1981  
Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 501-502, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

**144. I am seeking, but I cannot find Christ.**

**Response(s):**

---Then you obviously have been searching in the wrong places, because we find in the Gospel and in the Bible the fact that Christ is discoverable, and quite easily, as you understand the Gospel message.  
---Well then, perhaps you need to change the approach of HOW you are “seeking,” because the Bible promises that God will be found by ALL who seek Him. May I suggest that he can only be found in the Person of Jesus Christ, by positively responding to His message of the Gospel. God is no mystical experience or emotional state, and the only way to approach or “reach” Him would be to be on His stated and revealed terms, as laid out in the Bible. After all, He authored the Book.

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1348 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**145. Wouldn’t the world be boring if all believed the same and no one had any fun (i.e., sinful type)?**

**Response(s):**

---You are assuming that all Christians believe the same, and that there is no room for alternative viewpoints on some theological matters. Also, how bad would it be for all men to believe in being kind to your brother? Boo hoo—no more fights, wars or meanness...would you miss that. Much more seriously errant is your assertion that Christianity prohibits people from having fun—that’s the devil’s lie. The difference is that, when you are born again, the things which make for fun change, in many ways, if “fun” is described as doing immoral things (drunkenness, sexual immorality, etc.). Until you have experienced it, the Bible says that there is a veil and blindness on your heart where you could never understand how ceasing from doing those sorts of things could be fun. I will not try to supersede that spiritual principle...only try to testify that, from my own experience, it is true, and I prayerfully wish salvation upon you.  
---I’m sorry to have to inform you, but if you do not like the prospects of all people behaving morally and understanding the truth fully, you will not feel at home in heaven, and that could be a sign that is not yet your spiritual home.  
---Christianity is not opposed to people having fun. The problem often arises when we use semantic games to name something evil with a positive term, as in when we warp the concept of wholesome “fun” to be such things as drunkenness, immoral sex games, and the like.  
---You hardly need to worry that anyone will ever fully agree with anyone else in this life, even among Church members. Quite the opposite is too often true and the case we see, as the American spirit of independence often squelches God’s desire for sincere Christians unity and fellowship in the (one) truth.  
---Yes it would be; we’d all work hard, enjoy this earth, have no wars, crime, hatred, be at peace dress differently and have different hobbies and interests and treat each other rightly--wouldn’t that be less preferable to today’s world (sarcasm).

**146. Jesus is going to solve every problem and I’ll enjoy a life on a bed of roses thereafter (i.e., pie-in-the-sky philosophy).**

**Response(s):**

---This is not Pinocchio, and whoever taught you that falsehood did not get it from the Bible.  
---In this life, even for a believer, God has nowhere promised a trouble-free life, and any such characterization of the Christian life is misleading at best, and a fraud at worst. However, it may be a fairly apt description for the believer’s afterlife, and it is true that when Christ returns, He is going to make all things right and new again.  
---Are you sure you’re going to have that type of life, past judgment day? [**saints sin, by 100% standards**]

**+147. All Americans know the story of Jesus (i.e., America as a “Christian” nation theory).**

**Response(s):**

- First, it is very likely some have never heard the message. More importantly, it benefits you little (and nothing, eternally) to have merely heard the message. One must receive it into your heart/life, personally, before it will do you any eternal good. If by your statement you are asserting that the message is worn out, boring, and nothing new for you to hear or learn, that would be like the guy dying of sickness who had heard about the drug that would cure his ill, but, because he had already heard about the drug—but never taken it—he was disgruntled to have a caring doctor again “hassle” him with news of it’s existence.
- First, you would have to have conducted a 100% poll of every American citizen, and been able to be assured that all responses were forthright and honest, for your statement to stand. Secondly, nowhere in Scripture does God teach us to aspire to the bare-bones minimum, of simply making sure your country has access to the Gospel, or merely has heard it one time. The Great Commission does not end with evangelism, but begin there, and many more waves of harvest are yet to be done, here in America, especially in light of the fact that it is extremely doubtful that a genuine first wave has successfully been fulfilled to-date, in our generation.
- Have you gone door-to-door (i.e., person-to-person) and personally experienced the fact that MANY people will listen, benefit from hearing it again, or believe false theology, especially about works getting you to heaven? Having heard it once is not the goal/end—getting them, by the Spirit, to receive/accept the message is the issue, no matter how many times they hear it. There are various degrees of accuracy of presentation, God could have been working in their lives to prepare their hearts to hear it this time, and “most” Americans having heard it (if they have) certainly has not benefited enough/the way God wanted/intended, because most Americans are not believers (yet).

**Answer(s):**

But to someone in your same shows Christ said, “You must be born again.” And you are born again by trusting Christ as your Savior, not by trusting your church membership to get you to heaven. Taking a car to a garage doesn’t make you a mechanic any more than putting a person in a pew makes him a Christian. The fact that a person is a member of a church doesn’t prove he is on his way to heaven (Jn. 3:1-15).

**Source:** Adapted from N.E.T.S., p. 107, by Larry Moyer (EvanTell: Dallas, TX), 1992

**148. I know God already. I attend church regularly. I am already a member of a church.**

**Response(s):**

- If by this statement you are equating “knowing God” with being a church member, you could not be farther from the truth. Going to church, even regularly, no more makes one a Christian that frequenting your garage makes you a car (Chad ill.). Do note that it is neither in the church membership decision, nor the practice of regularly attending the church one is a member of, when ensures ones entry into heaven.
- Can you please relate to me the exact circumstances and date upon which you came to personally “know God?”
- So that we understand each other properly, can you please tell me what you mean by the term, “know God?” The Bible uses that term to describe the experience of salvation.
- For a more thorough description and/or definition of what is meant by the term, “salvation,” please see the answer to question #101, above.**
- If you have never personally prayed to and received Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of all your sins, you do not know God PERSONALLY, and, at best, you simply know of Him—which will never get anyone to heaven.

**149. I believe in God (i.e., intellectual assent only)...For example, the Apostle’s creed (though never appropriated). I already believe in God—I’ll choose Him later.**

**Response(s):**

- There is a difference between intellectually assenting to the truthfulness of a given set of facts, and personally trusting Jesus Christ for one’s eternal salvation. As has been said, the difference between head faith and heart faith is not 12 inches, but the distance of the gap between heaven and hell, forever. The demons believe in God! The issue is, do you rely upon Him, in a dependent/leaning/trusting sort of way. That definition of the English term “believing,” is what the Book of John (whose purpose is to get people saved) is all about. The Bible requires believing on Jesus Christ “with all your heart.” Have you ever done so?

---Are you aware of or can you at least conceptualize the difference between what is referred to as “intellectual assent,” and “biblical, heart faith?” That is, do you see as the same agreeing to certain propositions, say that the earth is round, as compared to actually trusting a doctor with a scalpel to incise your abdomen? You may believe that the doctor is qualified to operate, but until you let him so do, you have not fully “trusted,” and that letting him do his work is what the Bible refers to as the faith that saves—God being the One who does the saving, in response to our faith (which he inspires).

**150. I used to be a Christian, but that was last week (i.e., lost my salvation or salvation as a temporal experience). I tried Christianity once.**

**Response(s):**

---By the way you have stated this assertion, I am very concerned that either someone has taught you a wrong concept about what it means to be a Christian, has taught you a wrongful view about the duration of salvation, or that you have otherwise misunderstood a properly presented Gospel presentation. May I be allowed to tell you exactly what God, in His Word, wants you to hear and understand regarding the eternal, one-time with eternal effects type of salvation Christ has secured for all who will “believe in Him?”

---Technically and biblically, what you say has happened to you is impossible. Either you lost something you really never possessed, or you feel like you have lost it, possibly corroborated by some misbehavior, and your understanding is merely lacking as to eternal verities regarding the salvation you do in fact possess (if indeed you do). Let me explain...

---Salvation is not a temporary experience, so if you had something last week, but have lost or misplaced it in the ensuing week, I would suggest that we review again just exactly what you heard and did the day you believe that you got “saved,” and let's finalize both our understanding as well as the reality before God of that eternal experience/transaction.

**151. I did that when I was a little boy.**

**Response(s):**

---Please allow me to clarify—Are you certain that if you were to die today, you would go to heaven? <response> That is simply another way of probing exactly what you mean as well as what you did or did not experience as a child. To ask it another way, when you “did” it as a little boy, exactly what did you do? Can you give me your testimony and tell me what happened to you as a boy that day? Did you personally pray to and receive Jesus Christ as your Savior? Did you place your faith on Him alone for your heavenly access? If that is true, you need not and must not merely see that experience as a point in time decision and experience which has no effect on you now. The Bible teaches that that one experience changed your life, literally forever, and that we are to allow that experience to daily impact our behavior, as we learn more about it, by reading God's Word and prayer. One who was saved as a child, and does nothing more with God in his life (as was my own testimony for 10 years, until someone took the time to explain the Bible more to me) is living a life which is displeasing to the Lord, and which both insults His saving work, and causes the one so living to be rightfully expecting few if any rewards when he does arrive in heaven. God has a great plan for your life, and wants/desires to be intimately involved in your life. May I share with you a few minutes how that fact can become a reality in your life?

---Are you telling me that when you were younger, you sincerely and fully trusted Jesus Christ to save you from all of your sins, and that he, therefore, lives within you (and has ever since that experience/time)? To state it another way, are you certain, or were you certain back then, that God saved you? (because once God has made the eternal transaction, He never un-does His work, though we may lose our confidence that He is still there and working, especially as we drift farther from Him, through sin).

---WHAT did you do, specifically, when you were a little boy? Please tell me your story/testimony of when you say you were saved at a young age.

---Do you begrudge your decision—are you now dissatisfied that you responded to God?

---I could be wrong, but the way you say that makes me sense there could be some disconnect between your present experience of God, and what happened to you as a small child. Is that true? Tell me about it. Do you wish that difference didn't exist (it need not be that way)?

**152. I have tried before, and failed.**

**Response(s):**

---What did you try (to do)?

---You “tried” to fully trust Christ for your eternal salvation? Trying is not what is called for—trusting

Jesus Christ is.

- Excuse me for having to be the person to point this out to you, but if your moral failures, as a Christian, are the reason you feel you have either never been saved or lost your salvation, either your theology/thinking is wrong, or you were relying on your continued commitment to good works/living to get and keep you right with God, which would never work in the first place—None of us can live up to God’s standard, on our own, and no one lives perfectly, and, worse than that, that is the wrong way to approach God, depending on your good deeds, as the Bible teaches that salvation is a free gift from God. So, let’s start at the beginning, and try to get and do it right this time, because your eternal future lies in waiting.
- If you were indeed saved at that time, the Bible teaches that you are still saved, and will never lose that status before God. However, your “failure” is a problem in maintaining a good, on-going friendship with the Father, which, if that is your case, I would be happy to try to assist you with to get your walk/life with God back on track.

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1347 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**153. I ask forgiveness for my sins everyday (i.e., Catholic penance, and confession to human “fathers”).**

**Response(s):**

- I would like to clarify that I am not referring to a repeated set of acts of asking forgiveness of the one and only Father God. Salvation is not a process of good works. What I am referring to is what the Bible calls being “born again,” or “saved.” And, just as one is physically born only once, with life existing thereafter (until physical demise), spiritual death is a one-time act, with consequences which have no death, or end, but it is a one time event of becoming right in one’s standing before God, by asking God to forgive all your sins, and for Christ to come live within you to eternally save you from your sins. Has there ever been a point in your life where you know you have done this, and, as a result, that you can say with confidence that you are sure that you will go to heaven when you die?
- Let me be very clear about this...The Bible never teaches serial repentance as the way to get to heaven. That is, it never teaches anyone that by repeatedly asking God for forgiveness of certain sins to-date (known or unknown), you are saved up to that point, so long as you maintain asking for continual forgiveness. What it does teach is that salvation, or being “born again,” is a one time, once-and-for-all experience of being completely washed and forgiven of all sins you have committed, are presently engaged in or ever will commit—period. After you experience that pardon, by asking Jesus Christ to forgive and come live within, the Christian WILL ask for forgiveness, to keep a short/clean account with his newly-related Father, so the lines of communication, or “fellowship,” do not get blocked or broken down by sin. That type of forgiveness, what theologians refer to as “fellowship” sins, differs from any other, all or even the same sins committed by someone not yet related to God, commonly known as “family” or “familial” sins. Let me give you an example—I will always be my father’s son—I cannot lose that relatedness; However, if I beat up my mom, or cuss out my dad, our friendship (not our relatedness) will be severely affected. What it means for the Christian is that the blessings and power and joy of walking with God daily will be lessened/dampened. No, one does not come to God, like unto a Catholic practice of continually confessing their sins to a human priest, to absolve themselves till they get another washing. That would truly be a salvation based on works—the work of continually maintaining one’s forgiven status. The Bible teaches a once and for all relatedness experience, with eternal consequences and benefits in this life, which I would love to tell you how to enter into.
- Well, are you yet fully sure that you are eternally saved and secure with God? Does that philosophy on how to relate to God give you the calm assurance that you will for certain end up in heaven? The Bible teaches that you can daily live with that assurance, and not have to wait to the end of your life to find out whether you were fully faithful to keep confessing specific sins. Even if one were able to and did do that, what happens to unknown sins, or sins committed after their last “absolving,” which occurred just before their death, and before they had opportunity to confess them—perhaps on a deathbed. If salvation were based on those works, that person would have a great big problem with entry into heaven, because one sin makes one guilty of all. (Jas. ). Fortunately, God has not laid out/designed His plan of salvation that way. May I now please tell you what the Bible DOES say about how you can be sure you will go to heaven?

**154. I was born a Christian. I was raised a Christian.**

**Response(s):**

- I think I know what you are trying to say... You were raised belonging to a family of either all or primarily/mostly Christian people. That's a good environment to be raised in, if those Christians were living for God, but the Bible says that all men are BORN sinners—not Christians. Becoming a Christian happens by asking Jesus to come live within, make you a new person and forgive all your sins. You may have been raised being taught Christians beliefs, and you may have been born to Christian parents, but you, like every other human being (except Jesus, who was fully human but also fully divine) were BORN a sinner. Finally let me underscore that one does not get “raised” a Christian, as if becoming a Christian is a process sort of like osmosis, that it slowly creeps into your life until some point you feel it has settled, or you are somehow “confirmed” as having arrived at the condition of being saved. No, salvation is a definite time in a person's life, when, by the grace of God they choose to place their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for their eternal salvation. The distinction in these concepts is no mere semantic difference, but the difference between having personally received Jesus, and relying on one's parent's spiritual condition or the way that they raised their kids can end up being the difference between where you spend eternity, if you do not properly understand the Gospel message God has for you.
- Let me be very clear about this one fact—you, like every other human being, save Christ—were BORN a “sinner.” The Bible tells us that. What you may have meant to say was that you were born in a so-called “Christian” family, where at least one, and likely both of your parents were Christians. The problem with relying on your religious heritage is the same problem in logic you would face if a person came to you and said that he was a car, because he had stayed in the garage a very long time. Just being born into a Christian family, or even being raised to learn and intellectually believe the orthodox doctrines of the Christian faith does NOT mean you yet are a Christian, because the Bible teaches that salvation comes as a free gift which we are to accept, based on letting God forgive us of all our sins based on Christ's sacrifice for us on the cross. Unless and until you do that, though your religious past is helpful to make you amenable to hearing these truths (or the opposite—could have turned you away from the faith), that history has nothing to do with whether you have ever personally prayed to receive Jesus Christ and the forgiveness and eternal life He freely offers. Do you know of a time where for sure that transaction took place, because, if it has not, I would be happy to tell you what you need to know, to make that decision his day.
- From what you have told me, I am assuming you were raised going to Sunday School/Bible Study and church on a fairly regular basis—is that true? I need to warn you that, though that is a great way to raise up a child, it is not the same as that child, for him or herself, personally praying to God to forgive them of all their sins and invite Jesus Christ to come live eternally in their heart. One act is preparatory, humanly speaking, but if the latter invitation is never made by you, you have not yet come into a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ, and you need to have that if you plan on spending eternity in heaven.
- You would be the first person in history born a Christian, because all people are born sinners. We become Christians by... [tell them the Gospel and invite them to respond].
- You may have been raised to believe right things from the Christian faith/religion. The problem is, right thinking will not get you to heaven. It is a good foundation, but a right relationship with God through trusting Jesus Christ for your eternal salvation is the only thing that will get anyone to heaven.

**155. I'm Catholic, or Jewish.****Response(s):**

- See:** [Evangelizing Religions paper.](#)
- I respect the fact that you are following a faith or religion, and are seeking to be faithful to God. We certainly need more people not living for sin and their selves. However, may I please inform you that, no matter your religious affiliation, God desires to have an eternal personal relationship with every person, and He has promised that if you will admit you are a sinner, and ask Him to make you a new person on the inside by receiving His Son for the forgiveness of all your sins, you will have that right relationship with Him, and can start living according to that right relationship. This is not “religion” in the sense of an organized set of beliefs and practice, per se—the issue in your and everyone's life is do you personally know God, by having received the forgiveness of all your sins. Stating it another way, no matter what your religious background—I'm not trying to get you to join any particular church—do you know for sure if you died today that you would go to heaven?
- [To Jews: That's great that you are a practicing Jew. Jesus was a Jew, and gave meaning to prophecies directly addressed in the Hebrew Scriptures. In fact, my own faith is directly tied to Judaism, and wouldn't exist

- apart from it]
- Have you ever found anywhere in the Bible where being a Catholic will get you to heaven?
- I would much rather place my faith for my eternal destiny in what the Bible says, rather than any human leaders of any world religion!
- Oh, really? I used to be/my mother was a Jehovah's Witness [if TRUE; builds common ground]. Here's why I am no longer in that faith...
- Really? I've recently been studying that religion... (if TRUE).
- [As a \_\_\_\_\_ (name the religion)], I've got a question for you... When I (regularly) do this, can you guess how many people from different religions I may encounter? I could never know enough about over 100 religions to talk to everyone in detail about their religion, but what I do know is that Christ paid all the punishment you'll otherwise pay for your sins when He died on the cross, and if you'll only pray to...

### **156. I pray to Mother Mary daily.**

#### **Response(s):**

- Mary was blessed to be able to house the son of god in her womb the term of her pregnancy, but, like all other strictly/only-human beings (i.e., Christ was both human and divine), she was a sinner, and the Bible nowhere says that God chose her to bear her Son because she was perfect, or even holier than all the rest (necessarily?). God alone answers our prayers, and He alone is the object and Person we are to address our prayers to. Mary, though I believe her to be in heaven, as she exercised saving faith in her Son, can no more help you or answer your prayers as any other believer now in heaven, and to try to seek her or any other deceased believers/saints' blessing or answers to prayer is clearly contrary to the Word of God, and will not result in God answering a prayer only He can answer. You ought to curtail that practice, confirm from your own study that what I am teaching you is true, and then you can really start enjoying the benefits of truly answered prayers, and begin to have the kind of attitude toward Mary that she wants you to have: "Whatever He (Jesus Christ) tells you to do—do it (**Jn. 2:5**), and He said to pray to the Father God (alone). Also, there is no credit offered anyone for using beads in our prayers. Jesus and the apostles never did such, and never asked anyone to do so, and I would suggest that if you really want to see answered prayers—even miraculously answered prayers, you go directly to God with your concerns, leaving behind the beads, and having no man come between your direct access to the father, if you are one of His spiritual children through the new birth.
- [Revered?, blessed woman, but a sinner; Mary is only the mother of Jesus—not our "holy Mother" and certainly not a part of the Trinity, or to be worshipped or "venerated" to "sainthood"]
- As ethical as Mary was, I must respectfully tell you that that will get you nowhere.
- Praying to Mary for your salvation, as close as she was to the Lord, is as far away from helping you as if you had asked the devil, because, though moral opposites, neither have been authorized by God as the way to get you to heaven—only by asking Jesus Himself.

### **157. My mother is a saint.**

#### **Bible Reference(s): Jn. 1:12,**

#### **Response(s):**

- That either means that she is deceased, or that she is a living, born-again believer in Jesus Christ. Which definition of that term are you using?
- If I may, may I please let you know that the term, "saint," can be used in at least two different ways. In the Bible. God's Word, the term refers to all people who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. That is, it describes all "Christians." Finally, there is a belief prevalent now days which teaches that some people are so personally holy in their behavior that they achieve some level of status before God that men should obviously notice that above-the-norm achievement by officially dubbing them "saints"—a term used within this belief to set special persons apart from the crowd, as, we might say, "super holy." The Bible nowhere makes such a classification, would decry such a focus on man (which leads to the pride of self-accomplishment), and teaches that even our so-called "good" deeds are rubbish before God, if not brought about—not by our great efforts to merit favor before Him, but His great power to those of us who know Him, and who rely on Him to change our lives. Whatever you may have meant by referring to your mother as a saint, I hope you now know that God says (through His word) that no man is perfect, has reason to boast before Him, that our works can never merit favor or make God indebted to us—even as Christians, and that if your mother was a born-again believer in Jesus, that was great for her, but will help you none unless you follow in those same steps of faith.
- I want to make sure that you realize that any spiritual position our family members hold—be it lost or

saved—has absolutely no relation or impact on whether any other person, for themselves, has ever personally received the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

**158. I'm going to purgatory. Why doesn't God give man a second chance?**

**Response(s):**

- God gives every man plenty or sufficient enough chances to receive his Son, that there will be no tongue standing in His presence on judgment day which can say that they are going to go to hell for reasons other than they stupidly chose or allowed their selves to end up there. No one will be allowed to pin that destiny on any lack of effort on God's part. As if it were not enough, He has already slain His sinless Son on your behalf; yet, He still is pleading with you to receive Him for eternal forgiveness. No, our ending up in hell for rejecting God's Son is purely and solely for us to take the blame, as we consciously or unconsciously listened to and followed the deceptive tricks and will of the devil.
- The Bible nowhere teaches any such concept as Purgatory, and, in fact, it would require me to warn you that if you are relying on any "second chance" or time to "mend your ways" after your body is six feet under, you can know with certainty that, instead, you will spend eternity in hell, because you obviously had never solely trusted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior in this life. As far as making a decision to accept God's offer of salvation, we have only this life, and we have no promise or certainty as to when it will end. As the Bible says, "Behold, today is the day of salvation." (**II Cor. 6:2**).
- How can someone go somewhere that does not exist?
- If you didn't respond to God here on earth, you wouldn't and won't be allowed to do so after. God gives us enough and all the time we need and will ever get, in this life.

**Answer(s):**

- Scripture does not teach a second chance to believe after death. (Heb. 9:27-28, Lk. 16:25-31).

**Source:** Adapted from Bible Training Centre for Pastors: Missions, Evangelism, Discipleship, p. 131, by Dennis J. Mock, Sept. 1991, Atlanta GA

**159. I may be punished, but not eternally.**

**Response(s):**

- And how do you know that? By what authority are you confident that that belief is correct?
- If the Bible states that one sin makes you guilty of all; therefore you are as guilty as a mass murderer, and even we human beings kill them through the death penalty, how can you escape a worse fate, being guilty of much more than they ever dreamed of actually doing/committing?

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, pp. 1344-1345 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**160. I'm an agnostic: I don't know if you can know there's a God. The bottom line is I just don't know. See also answers to # 20, above.**

**Response(s):**

- See:** Evangelizing Religions paper.
- What is the process we humans undertake in order to know anything that we know with certainty? If you value your eternal soul enough, and have a healthy self-love enough to care where you will spend eternity—either in heaven or hell—or even if you can conceive of the intellectual possibility that there could be some information available to those who take the effort to seek it out which could show you that possibly either you are wrong, or that I may be right, I would suggest that you invest the effort to at least investigate further—at least if you value your soul enough to put some effort toward such a critical and important matter.
- How do you know that? What authority source are you using and 100% relying on to risk eternal damnation on the truthfulness of their assertions?
- Well, why don't you find out? If there IS a God, you're in a heap of trouble to have not discovered that fact, because you will face eternal punishment for your (unforgiven) sins, and if there IS a God, you will have missed out on so many blessings and joys, and rewards in the life hereafter. Let's get going, and not remain ignorant when knowledge, information and evidence exists for you to investigate—if you value your life, and life hereafter.
- That sounds like an innocently and harmless neutral position to be in, but the truth of the matter is that God holds everyone responsible for knowing of His existence, through all the evidence ("Hints," if you will) which He has provided (Rom. 1:18-32). On the day of judgment, if simply will not do to plead ignorance, and I care enough about you to let you know ahead of time, so you don't find yourself in an eternal predicament/"pickle" for having not known of both His existence, and way provided for your

salvation. [Proceed to tell them Bible revelation on these two subjects].  
---You had better find out soon, or you'll be a fatally "igno agno."  
---That seems to be a genuine, honest answer, but it is an insufficient for facing your own mortal demise or even as a basis for living a stable life before you meet your Maker. Learn and study more—it doesn't take more knowledge that child-like faith can engender.

**For Further Study:**

Christian Apologetics, pp. 13-28, by Norman Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1976

Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 3-4, 10-14, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

**161. Are you one of those Jehovah's Witnesses (i.e., a cult). You've been brain-washed.**

**[I have been asked this question on a few occasions, despite the fact that I wore no white shirt, dark slacks and no tie; the door-to-door method may be associated with the Jehovah's Witnesses, but it needn't be, and God's Church needs to reclaim this holy and effective method!]**

**Bible Reference(s): Ac. 26:25.**

**Response(s):**

---No mam, I am not a member of either the Moonies, Mormons or Jehovah's Witnesses. I am simply going door to door on behalf and on the instruction of my Lord Jesus Christ to tell everyone I can what God says in His word about how you can know for certain that if you were to die today, you would be in heaven.

---Mam, if you will allow me just five minutes of your time, afterwards, you may feel free to ask me any question you think would help prove to yourself that I have in fact *not* been brain-washed. Let me begin by asking you, do you know for sure that if you were to die today, you would go to heaven? Later: Brain-washed people often follow one human charismatic leader, can only think about a limited number of tunnel-visioned topics, and usually have a dazed glare in their eyes, and the intonation and inflection in their tone commonly expresses to their hearers that they are merely repeating phrases they have learned and memorized from someone else's thinking. I trust you are able to discern that, by God's grace, that is not the condition you find me to be in today.

---[No, words of sober truth Ac.]

**162. Look at the Mormons (religious and moral, but you call them a cult).**

**Bible Reference(s): II Cor. 11:14, Mt. 7:15-20,**

**Response(s):**

---First, what constitutes "the real thing," in religion, from a false system, is what God's Word says about the subject, related to both their beliefs and practices. Because Jesus, who was God, said that He was the only way of salvation, and because Mormon doctrine does not teach that faith alone in Christ the Lord alone for forgiveness of all sins and eternal life is how one gets to heaven, for that reason alone we should refer to their system as false. Also, if you examine both their official dogma/doctrine/teachings, and compare them to Scripture, as well as if you are able to get your hands on information as to some of their secret ceremonies, handshakes and other very private, unannounced activities within the temple walls, again you will see just how far off they are from what God says is the real thing. Groups espousing "holy" books in addition to and on par with, supplementing or even superseding the Bible also run afoul and violate clear tests of Scripture for what a "true" Christian is (supposed) to do, as opposed to what the Mormon church does regularly. Also, under the standard definitions of a "cult" (**See:** "Cults Generally"), using the tests and descriptions of what constitutes a genuine "cult," one would have little trouble discerning from that criterion that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints fits the bill. Of course, this is not to say that there could be no true Christian believers among the church members, or even to say that the average Mormon is not what we humans would call a "good person." One could hardly deny that the typical Mormon aspires to and to some extent achieves a high moral lifestyle, which we find extremely commendable. There are many moral issues in which Christianity agrees with Mormonism, and, too often, the moral achievement level they attain (possibly, in part, due to motivation to secure their version of "heaven," and to miss hell, by continual good works—unbiblical motivation and false teaching, though it produces dead but appearing to men to be "good works"), puts to shame the average Christian—and this is shortcoming among God's Church is wrong, deplorable and should be reprov'd (if we had many spiritual "leaders" with backbone enough to care more about the flock's morality than whether the pastors may lose some carnal church members, and especially the chance at receiving their Jewish "tithe"). Those weaknesses of our own behavior being admitted (**See also answer**

**to question #28**), the truth still remains that an organization which purports to be representing God, whose efforts and message lead people to hell (even if the biblical falsity of their beliefs is unbeknownst to the average Mormon), can and must accurately be labeled a false religion and deceptively harmful to humanity, despite their many other humanly-called “good works,” which we do commend. To say so is not “un-Christian” (better: un-Christ-like) behavior, as it is exactly what God has told us we must say about their system (not necessarily individuals, but the religion itself, primarily in its beliefs, but also in some of its practices), and to do otherwise would be biblically irresponsible, morally weak and un-courageous, and to hide the truth, even though doing so is not a popular undertaking in politically correct and “tolerant” America, and its pervasive influence in the anemic American “Church.” We do and should and must continue to love Mormon people—that is not in question and is a totally separate issue, and you will get no disagreement on that point. However, contrary to the emotionally-charged, societally-defined mushy depiction of “love” we are all too familiar with, which does not correspond to biblical love, biblical love care enough and stands for the truth enough to reprove, where necessary, and to not hide behind a facade of being “kind,” and “not hurting people’s feelings,” to expose and identify false doctrine, a major reason being due to its biblically harmful effects and influence on God’s Church.

--I don’t disagree that their adherents try to live moral lives. But, as a religious system, is it moral to be part of a system, which ultimately sends people to hell, by not rightly teaching people how to avoid hell?

**163. Jesus is going to make me become a monk, be unmarried, miserable, poor or a foreign missionary.**

**Response(s):**

- Your fear is not based in fact, as you have no idea whether that is true! God may call you into full-time ministry (He has no biblical ministry of “monk”)---possibly even foreign missions work--and He may not. Statistically, at least if Christians are being obedient to God, He does not call a lot. And, even if He does, He will give you the grace to find full contentment and joy in that calling—but you must first be rightly related to Him to know, either way. We’re getting the cart before the horse, as, until you have your eternal destiny settled, it doesn’t really matter what could have been your rightful service to the Lord!
- God has a biblically wide-range of financial plans for individuals, ranging from some in the Bible who were godly and wealthy, and many who were also godly, and were moderately to poorly situated. Whatever God’s specific plan is for your financial future, you can rest assured that He has a far better plan for you than your current spiritual father, who wants only to steal from, kill and destroy you. You can trust that God knows what is and has His best in store for you, but, once again, we are getting the cart before the horse, as you could die tonight, unexpectedly, and it would have benefited you none at all to have known about God’s provision and plans, because you will not be spending eternity with Him until you settle the issue of what you will do with his Son.
- On the authority of God’s Word I can say that the charge that God may want you to be miserable is totally false. God gives joy to His people, and Scripture clearly teaches that misery is not His plan for His children’s lives.
- As to whether God may have you be celibate, if He were to call anyone to that lifestyle, He would also give the grace to live it content and joyous, because, after all, the Bible says that it is a preferable lifestyle even to the blessing of marriage—though, the Bible declares, only those called to such could have the grace to see things that way. I give you no guarantee, but at least statistics will bear out that very few appear to be called to such a lifestyle today (unless many are rebelling to their calling), but, whatever His decision is for you in this matter, you can and are to trust that He has the very best in mind for your particular life, and to miss God’s best is to have missed out on something great.

**WORKS/RELIGIONS**

**164. God grades on the curve. I’m a good person and have hurt no one (i.e., the 10 Commandments, or Golden Rule argument (likened to the rich, young ruler). Won’t God accept me?**

**Bible Reference(s):** Mk. 10:17-27, Eph. 2:8-9, Jas. 2:10

**Response(s):**

- The Bible nowhere says that God compromises His standard of moral perfection, or grades on any sort of “curve.” That belief is the fallacy of superimposing secular realities to spiritually revealed truth, and works about as well as mixing oil and water. There is no curve in the entrance requirements for

heaven. And if, by the way, you are thinking about passing the exam, or how else you may gain entry, let me assure you that you will be unable to make it to heaven on your own, despite all good intentions and best efforts. As was said before, the standard is perfection, and you are already disqualified. However, God desires for me to tell you His good news of how you can gain admittance anyway, totally based on His Son having paid your debt of sin on the cross, 2,000 years ago. The Bible says that if you will pray to receive that full and eternal gift of forgiveness of all your sins, God will save your soul, based on His Word, and you will enter the kingdom based on the merits of (or, using a political/presidential analogy, riding the coat tails of) His sinless and perfect Son, Jesus Christ.

---[1 sin leads to hell]

**For Further Study:**

A Ready Defense, pp. 420-421, by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1993

**165. I am good enough as I am.**

**Bible Reference(s): Rom. 3:10-18, 23**

**Response(s):**

---Let me ask you, have you ever done anything wrong? Have you ever lied, cheated or stolen, for example? God's standard for entrance into heaven is PERFECTION—that's why men can only enter based on the merits of the perfect Son of God, Jesus Christ, who died to pay YOUR sins' penalty.

---I am so honored to be in the presence of one who is PERFECT, because unless you are, God says you are NOT good enough. (Rom. 3:23).

---What are you good enough for? Do you know anyone in history who was morally superior to you (take, for example, Mother Theresa)? Do you have any evidence or authority which tells you that there are gradations in God's standards for entry into eternal life in heaven, because He has revealed in His Word, the Bible, that He has only ONE standard, and that is the moral perfection standard only His Son has accomplished (for us).

---Would you mind telling me the deeds or traits you possess which give you that confidence that you'll be O.K. on judgment day? I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but even your confidence in those accomplishments the Bible calls sin, in that pride and self-reliance are not virtues before God.

Therefore, we come back to the realization, which the Bible tells us of, that, just like every other person on earth, you too are a sinner before God, and have need of resolving that problem if you are to have a future hope, being the certainty of eternal life (vs. death) through Jesus Christ.

**Answer(s):**

“The Bible says, There is none righteous, no not one’ (Romans 3:10b). ‘For by grace are you saved through faith and THAT NOT OF YOURSELVES, NOT OF WORKS, LEST ANY MAN SHOULD BOAST’ (Ephesians 2:8, 9). It is not your righteousness that salvation concerns but rather your sin.” Go Tell: The Soul Winner's Encyclopedia, by Freddie Gage, p. 46 (Freddie Gage Evang. Assn., Euless, TX), 1980

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1341, (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**166. Works are required for Christians. Aren't works automatic once you're a Christian?**

**Response(s):**

---That is true, but bears no relation to the issue you are now facing, because one has to BE a Christian before that adage applies! We in no way minimize the importance of good works in a Christian's lives (though, technically, they are not exactly the same as “good works” produced by lost people, in part because of the new nature and access to God's power which a believer possesses), but to discuss “good works” before one is sure that he will go to heaven is getting the cart before the horse. It is only after you have experienced the new birth in Jesus Christ that we can accurately and with full and experiential understanding be able to discuss the role of “good works” in the lives of believers. Your most immediate need right now is making sure you are in the family of God. That question can be settled, first, by my asking you “do you know for sure that if you died today, you would go to heaven?...”

---Regarding the issue of whether good works happen automatically for every believer in Jesus Christ (i.e., with no effort at all on the believer's part), **See:** Lordship Salvation paper.

**167. What do you think about the various alternatives to Christianity, such as Agnosticism, Atheism and Humanism?**

**Response(s):**

---For more specific responses to given religions' beliefs, **See:** the Evangelizing Religions paper.

---Frankly and as lovingly and gently as I can be out of deference to the individuals following those belief

systems—as Christ has died for their souls as well as my own—I know and believe their teachings to be absolutely false, and ultimately attributable to the devil and his deception, by trying to keep people lost and heading toward hell, so that they will not personally know the joy and liberation of being fully at peace with, forgiven by and rightly related to God, through the Lord Jesus Christ. I have studied those philosophies somewhat, and knowing that Jesus Christ—who is God—said that salvation for men is *only* through Him, I can therefore, on the authority of God’s Word, easily conclude that any teaching other than that which Christ has announced is both false, accursed, and will lead a person knowingly or inadvertently to an eternal hell, because salvation is through exercising faith in Jesus Christ as one’s personal Savior—not faith in anyone or anything else, and not even Christ plus something else added to Him. I am certain that there are sincere and even right-motivated followers adhering to those beliefs, but one can be sincerely and DEAD wrong, as is the case of all who do not know Jesus personally!

---Should the thought ever enter your mind that such an exclusive claim to truth in Jesus is exclusivistic, narrow-minded or elitism (even though the gift and message is available to all who ask, thus countering completely any such claims, spiritually originated in the gates of hell), **See:** answer to question #9, above.

---Despite any and even all positive aspects of those belief systems, on balance/in the end, they present their adherents a huge and irresolvable problem, in that following those systems will lead the followers to hell, because none of them teach the individual to place their faith in Jesus Christ alone for their eternal salvation.

---How would you expect me to answer that question? What do you think I will say? What do you want me to say, because if you are willing to hear the truth—if you can “handle the truth,” as they say—I will tell it to you. What I will not do is to deceive or lie to you on such an important matter as this.

**For Further Study:**

Answers to Tough Questions, pp. 106-107, by Josh McDowell (Moody Press: Chicago, IL), 1980

When Skeptics Ask, pp. 37-38, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1990

Christian Apologetics, pp. 215-236, by Norman Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1976

Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 55-58, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

**168. What is the difference between a cult and a mainstream church?**

**Response(s):**

---First and foremost, the Church is comprised/composed of true believers in Jesus Christ, who are striving to follow Jesus Christ from the day of their salvation forward. Cult leaders, and their duped followers, in some form or fashion, are NOT doing the same thing, either because they are following a human leader, a misrepresentation of Jesus or His teachings, or other bizarre, non-normal practices which the Bible forbids or does not condone. This is NOT to say that all Church members live like saints, or that all cultists live like the devil—many of them are sincerely striving for the truth and to live for God. The problem is, they are failing to achieve their goals, and, inadvertently or consciously, end up fulfilling the devil’s whims, usually through false doctrine and sometimes from straying off track through unbiblical practices.

---From a purely secular definitional perspective, Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary defines “church” as ‘a body or organization of religious believers/the whole body of Christians,’ while it defines a “cult” as “a religion regarded as unorthodox or spurious; also: its body of adherents.”

**For Further Study:**

Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 56-57, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000

**169. Does Christianity welcome or reject ‘New Age’ teaching?**

**Response(s):**

---We accept New Age adherents, and respect some aspects of their desired intentions and aspirations (ex.: get in touch with the spiritual world, realizing that this life is not all there is, and having a desire for some form of “religion,” or “spirituality”). What we do not condone, nor should we, is commitment and adherence to any belief system which will eternally damn a person’s soul to hell, because what it teaches about how to get to God and heaven is in error—something which New Age teaching and all other false systems of philosophy or religion do. We simply do not want and hope to refuse to let the devil keep any human creation, or physical “child of God,” miss the opportunity to go to heaven, because of misguided leaders or mis-instruction. Do you see anything wrong in our desire to help people avoid going to hell by a mistake they need not commit?

---What particular/specific teaching do you have in mind? What do you know about New Age teaching,

- [and what subjects which it teaches do you agree with?].
- I'm just curious, and, to get to know you better, if you'll let me ask you, do you THINK Christianity would have a problem with New Age teaching(s), and why? What do you know about Christianity, especially as it differs from what you know of New Age teaching(s)?
  - As a system—that is, the complete package of beliefs and practices—since following it will NOT get one to heaven, we reject it. That is NOT to say that every aspect of it is abhorrent. (the devil usually puts some truth in all his lies).

**For Further Study:**

Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 16-17, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000

**170. Have you been around the world and seen how different cultures believe different things**

**Response(s):**

- 1) God nowhere requires anybody to have to spend the money it would take to “go around the world” to learn how to go to heaven. 2) One can learn quite a bit about other cultures both from books, television, and talking with people from different backgrounds. 3) I have investigated and studied somewhat the various religious options available around the world, yet I needn't have even done so in order to have concluded that if Jesus, who was and is God, said that He is the only way to salvation and heaven, no matter what other research or traveling I may undertake, it would not change the fact or impact of his words on the subject.
- Different cultures DO believe different things. That's a given. But, as regards how a person can end up in heaven, do they all believe the RIGHT things, and does their non-agreement on the answer to that issue cause us any need to worry that what God has said in the Person of His Son, Jesus Christ, might have really been a lie coming from His sinless mouth? You can “search the world over,” and become a cultural anthropologist, if you would like, but a lot of what you would find is that the devil is a powerful and influential being, and to the extent that many people in given cultures choose to believe in anything but Jesus Christ alone for their salvation, at least for the time being, the devil has been (successfully) at work duping the poor souls, and attempting to keep them in darkness until the day, he hopes, they will join him in hell. We have the message that can free them all from such a future, and it is both my job and your job –if you are a Christian—to get the message of forgiveness in the Gospel to them. If you are not already a Christian, the message is for you today, and you need no longer face an eternity of fellowshiping with the devil (in hell) either. One does not have to be a member of a third-world country to need this message and our evangelistic efforts. If you are not—today—absolutely certain that you would go to be with Christ if, God forbid, an 18 wheeler were to boll you over today, you need to admit your sinfulness, and call upon the name of the Lord to forgive all your sins, and trust Him to save you right now!
- Our sophisticated and highly educated American culture values “open-mindedness” and the “man about town/world traveler” wisdom of those rich or intellectually gifted persons who have that background, but salvation is not to the wise and powerful, but to be found in the humble, seemingly foolish and yes, even offensive message of Jesus Christ, which tells men that they cannot get to heaven on their own (**I Cor. 1:19-29**).
- I am fairly well read, have watched many Television programs on other cultures, so first-hand exposure to those countries by spending much money travelling would have gained me no more insight needed to make my decision than learning from them second-hand.
- Group peer pressure, from family and others like you (i.e., your countrymen and “culture”) can be strong, and the “sheep” mentality that can come with it can influence most in a group to do wrongful things, if the majority approve of it, but that fact in no way changes the reality of right and wrong.
- [There are some absolutes(i.e., they don't change: 4 laws)]
- Have you? How cruel a God He would indeed be if He required every person to go to that much trouble and expense simply to learn how to get to heaven and avoid hell! I'd venture that no one person has ever done such a feat, and surely if that were necessary, basically no one could ever go to heaven (and I do not believe that).

**171. I'm going to be reincarnated in the after-life. Isn't reincarnation more reasonable than hell? (i.e., fulfillment, peace, meaning and satisfaction in New Age (meditation, hypnotism, inspirational audio tapes, retreats/seminars, unification movements, men's movement, etc.).**

**Response(s):**

- On the basis of what firm and credible authority do you base that opinion? Are you willing to consciously take the huge gamble and risk that that future is absolutely certain to be yours, weighed

against and in light of what the sinless, perfect Son of God, Jesus Christ, has said regarding the actual, literal and certain fact of the existence of a fiery hell where everyone who rejects Him as their Savior will live (in torment and punishment) forever? That's a pretty bold confidence to have, and I would think it more "reasonable" to at least have investigated an authority on the subject, to make sure it was right (THE authority, of course, being the God of all creation). Christ, having conquered death through His resurrection, is certainly in a better position to tell you what is "on the other side" than any source you may cite to give you your hope that things are not going to turn out for you the way I have described.

---Not according to Christ who is Lord of the dead How do you know and are you certain? Based on what valid authority do you make that claim, as, if you are wrong, and just living off a whimsical opinion, self-derived, the consequences can and will be devastating.

---How is it "reasonable" to conclude that you have lived in the past (i.e., before your birth into this world), that a cow or monkey could be a fallen relative who did not learn the lessons in his past lives, that the somberness of a funeral is all fake—because we simply move into a new life and new beginning)?

**For Further Study:**

Defending Your Faith, pp. 179-195, by Dan Story (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, MI), 1997

The Case for Faith, pp. 189-191, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2000

When Skeptics Ask, pp. 233-245, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1990

Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 639-644, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

**172. God's name is Allah.**

**Response(s):**

---Abba is a name used by those close to and familiar with God, but nowhere in Scripture is such a name attributed to Him (YHWH).

**For Further Study:**

Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, pp. 96-99, 368-374, 502-514, 621-629, by Norman L. Geisler (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI), 1999

**173. You've never read the Koran, so how do you know?**

**Response(s):**

---I actually have (if true) skimmed through it for some time, but even were I to become a Koran expert, Jesus is the source of life and standard for truth—no one else, nor any other writing but His word.

## **CHURCH/CHRISTIANITY**

**174. Don't you really just want to increase your church membership (ulterior agenda/motive argument).**

**Response(s):**

---You are always welcome to visit our church, and we would welcome you and love to have you, but what matter much more, both to us and to yourself, is settling the matter of where you will spend your eternity—either with God, in heaven, or in hell, with the devil. Whether you ever step foot in my church is of no significance compared to the importance of this urgent question.

---If after you're saved you decide to join the fun, love and excitement of our church, we'd consider that a blessing and appreciate another family member; God meets our needs, with or without increased membership?

---Some people in ministry—even some you may have encountered—want you to join their church, for wrong motives. All I can tell you about our visit today is that we have taken time out of our schedule just to make sure that you do not end up in hell when you die. May we please tell you how to make sure you will go to heaven?

**175. Have you ever known a good preacher's kid (offered as proof that the more serious one takes our "religion," the more its morals fail?).**

**Response(s):**

---To the extent that you have identified a problem many pastors encounter, I agree with you that it is not a good thing which you see. However, **it would be better to know for sure you were going to end up in heaven**, and have to deal with a rebellious child, than to have an angel of a child, and go to hell, because one neglected to ever put their trust in the lord Jesus for eternal, personal salvation.

---“Good” preacher’s kids have lived (ex.: Billy Graham’s son). Not all ‘P.K.’ end up in the stereotype you are depicting. Certainly any “minister” of the Lord who neglects his family at the expense/forfeiture of his child has radically failed to truly serve God, and we know that people can, on their own, independently rebel—especially if they have “grown up” with religious teaching, perhaps been over-exposed to it, or simply when they reach the age when they seek to express their independence, and some rebellious teen-aged times when kids get a glimpse of wilder lifestyle choices (being exposed to such by some classmates in school, for example) and choose to.

#### **176. Christian theological disputes and church splits (Lordship vs. Saviorhood Controversy ex.).**

##### **Response(s):**

---Church splits are not a pretty thing, and show us none of us is perfect. However, it would be a poor choice indeed to let the failings of a church member to be used for you to decide to go to an eternal hell, just to avoid such people as that. That would be cursing your eternal soul to spite someone who probably does not even know you. Don’t make such a misguided sacrifice of an eternity in hell, in order to not be like a church-splitter. Get saved, join a church, and become part of the problem, rather than a critic and bystander on his way down the road that leads to hell.

---Generally speaking, church splits and theological debates are not a pretty thing. However, sometimes they are necessary, and can occur in a godly manner of agreeing to disagree agreeably. The issue, as far as you need to be concerned, is where are you going to spend eternity—not which side of a debate or split you will side with, as you can be on the wrong side of an issue or dispute and still end up in heaven if you never pray to receive Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of all your sins.

---No two people on earth agree exactly on every issue with anyone else, so, as the issues become more personal and serious—as with where you will spend your eternity—people get emotional, and sometimes they conclude that it would be better to separate, so as not to constantly have to hear teachings with which they disagree. The issue, for you, is whether if you were to die tonight, you know for sure you would go to heaven. What others do will not matter one little bit when you face god on judgment day, and He asks whether you ever trusted his Son for eternal life.

## **PERSONAL**

#### **+177. I’m too bad to be/get saved. I am too big a sinner. God could not love me.**

##### **Response(s):**

---Christ’s death covered each, every and all the sins of men, so that would include whatever you have done.

---Its good that you do not feel right or proud of the bad things you have done, but you need to be forgiven for those sins, and full forgiveness is available for all who ask.

---Excuse or belief? If belief, 2 thieves on the cross, and Paul saved ex. Poor self esteem: faith in Bible fact; no doubt of the Bible. Glad to know you are sensitive to how wrongfully you may have acted in your life, and to know those things are evil, but no sin is outside the radar range of God’s love and the work of the cross.

##### **Answer(s):**

I can prove to you from the Scripture that that is not true. **One thing we learn from God’s saving the apostle Paul is that there is no one beyond the reach of God’s saving power and ability.** Paul, in essence, said, “God saved me to show how patient He is.” Whatever you have done, it is not nearly as bad as what Paul had done, since he was responsible for the death of Christians. If God could save him, He can surely save you (I Tim. 1:15-16).

**Source:** Adapted from N.E.T.S., p. 108, by Larry Moyer (EvanTell: Dallas, TX), 1992

“I usually say, ‘You may say that... Other people may have told you that. But that’s not what God says.’ I usually share one or more of these verses with the person: I Jn. 1:9, Rom. 5:8, Rom. 8:38-39.”

**Source:** How To Win Others to Christ, p. 131, by Jerry Wiles (Thomas Nelson, Nashville 1992)

“Christ said, ‘I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance’ (Matthew 9:13). ‘The Lord is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance’ (II Peter 3:9). Also refer to I Timothy 1:15, Luke 19:10, John 6:27, Isaiah 1:18 and Romans 5:6-8.” Go Tell: The Soul Winner’s Encyclopedia, by Freddie Gage, p. 46 (Freddie Gage Evang. Assn., Euless, TX), 1980

##### **For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1342 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

#### **178. I think I have committed the unpardonable sin.**

##### **Response(s):**

- I would like to be the first person to give you relief and good news...If you fear that you are guilty of the unforgivable sin, the fact that that worries or bothers you shows me signs that God is still working with your heart, so you truly have not (yet) committed it. If it's not an embarrassingly personal one, What sin did you commit, which you fear will eternally separate you from God?
- Do you know what the unpardonable sin is? Then how could/did you come to think you had committed it?
- No matter what you've done, are you willing to face death/the grim reaper with no further attention to this matter, and risk an eternity in hell, because you are THAT certain that you have committed the unpardonable sin? That is, if you had not committed it, but felt or thought you had, is it worth the risk of hell not to make sure you had or had nor committed that sin?

**Answer(s):**

“Some people do have a concern about whether they have blasphemed the Holy Spirit. It's pretty amazing to me that of all the statements that Jesus made, the one in which He speaks of the unpardonable sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit seems to be the one most people remember if they are in the category of 'I'm too bad to be forgiven...' You can always assure people that if they are concerned about the question, they haven't committed the unpardonable sin. The Holy Spirit is still working in their lives. In fact, He has brought them to this very point where their question can be answered, the issue can be settled, and today is the day they can know the reality of Jesus Christ in their lives. You can readily say, 'I'm here as living proof to you that God still cares about you. He's still reaching out to you...'

**Source:** How To Win Others to Christ, pp. 132-133, by Jerry Wiles (Thomas Nelson: Nashville), 1992

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1347 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**179. I am afraid Jesus will not receive me.**

**Response(s):**

- Why are you afraid Jesus will not accept you?
- Have you ever read in the Bible where Jesus accepted the thief on the cross, the woman caught in adultery, and the greedy, manipulative tax collector? Surely, whatever your sins be, you could be in no greater company than these who received forgiveness.
- What is it that you believe about what God requires for someone to be able to receive forgiveness.
- You seem sincere and repentant concerning whatever it is you have done wrong. It's great for you to have reached the point where you know that you have sinned before God, but I have GOOD news—not the bad news of God shunning you—to announce to you, especially because you obviously know that you have done things wrong, and therefore need a resolution to that problem (through the forgiveness of Jesus Christ).
- Please be informed that fear—at least that type of fear—is not from God, but is from satan. The devil would like nothing more than to keep you in his eternal family, and ultimately reside with you in the place he's destined to stay forever—hell. So don't let him deceive you as to the free, available grace and forgiveness God has provided to and for all men through the death of His Son on the cross as payment of the punishment duly owed all sinful men, both you and I.
- Have you ever heard or read anywhere in the Bible anything that leads you to believe He would not accept you?

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1347 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**180. I am not respectable enough to be a Christian.**

**Response(s):**

- Just how much respectability does God require, and how do you know?
- God is not looking for respectability, but a repentant heart which acknowledges it's sinfulness and seeks and relies upon Him to deliver them from that condition through the forgiveness which is found in Jesus Christ alone.
- Do you know any people who claim to be Christians, who are not very respectable, or at least not as respectable as others who claim to be Christians? Might those facts lead one to reasonably conclude that it is not a matter of a certain amount of 'respectability' which god is looking for or requires, for men to be rightly related to Him? If this is not the case, certain people claiming to be Christians are not (which IS a possibility), and to the extent you ever see any differences in respectability levels among Christians, God has an arbitrary, or at least unclear range of standards for entry into heaven, and He indeed does “grade on the curve.”

---I sincerely appreciate your honesty and candor with that statement. I'm taking it that you are saying that you know you are not yet able or ready to live fully committed to being a holy person, at least at this time, is that right?

---Do you know any respectable human beings who claim to NOT be Christians? I do! If respectability is the issue as to entry into either heaven or hell, what will god do with those people?

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, pp. 1346-1347 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**181. I have no encouragement at home.**

**Response(s):**

---That's a tough situation to be in, and I feel with you (and will pray for you) about that setting.

However, as I once told a teenaged boy, are you going to let your family's distaste for Christ sentence YOU to hell? As the old adage goes, don't cut off your nose to spite your face. Each individual is personally responsible before God for their OWN life, and when you choose to pray to ask Jesus into your heart to forgive all your sins, there are certainly plenty of new spiritual family members who will pray for and support you in your difficult circumstances, especially when you find a good local church to join. Don't let discouragement from those outside your heart keep you from doing what you must do to accept God's eternal salvation, whether or not they ever see the light.

---I have personally witnessed believers in Muslim countries shunned from family and friends because they chose to trust Jesus Christ and go to heaven—the devil HATES it when he loses one of his children. That same elderly lady was so full of joy and peaceful contentment, somehow I came to believe God had given her an extra measure of grace to deal so victoriously with that situation. And He can (and will) do the same thing for you.

---When it come to eternity in heaven or hell, ultimately, life is NOT a group decision or a team effort. It can help one to have a supportive Christian family, but, when all is said and done, when we all face God in judgment, it will be a matter of whether each individual personally accepted Jesus Christ for their forgiveness, or whether they chose to reject Him, for whatever reason(s).

---Just so I understand you properly, you mean that you have little or no encouragement toward or for what? For accepting Jesus? For living life as a Christian? I first want to know what you mean, so that I can adequately know how to respond to you...is that fair?

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1341 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**182. I'm afraid of persecution.**

**Response(s):**

---Let me assure you, first, that nobody naturally likes or necessarily enjoys persecution. I have experienced it and it is not enjoyable/fun. Secondly, persecution is promised to EVERY believer in Jesus Christ. Sometimes we think that because we live in America, persecution and suffering for our faith only occurs in far off places—but that is not the case. And finally, not in any way to frighten you, but to be sure your thinking is sound and sober, it is much more worth suffering for a little while in this, than to spend eternity with those persecutors, who are promised and assured to endure eternal suffering and punishment, with no let up, in hell. One may escape some persecution in this life, by rejecting receiving and living for Christ here and now, but the trade-off is in no way comparable to the suffering and duration or intensity of the judgment they will face for having rejected the free gift of salvation through Jesus Christ (which can bring with it persecution, at times). You've got to weigh your options, and not be deceived by temporal pleasure now in exchange for eternal pain later, without end.

---If you were to welcome persecution with open arms, I might send you to a psychiatrist! Just realize that the Bible teaches that to the degree that any believer suffers for Christ's name, there are both rewards for so doing, and a whole host and company of fellow believers experiencing the same things in this world. You are never alone in it—God will always be for you, and believers will always be sharing in it with you (and the "payoff," if you will, far outweighs the short-lived pain).

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1345 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**183. I've heard that so many times before.**

**Response(s):**

---Great. Since you know the message, perhaps this time you will listen with an attentive heart, and

- respond to this all-important message of eternal life.
- Is there any good reason why you never responded to the message you have heard?
  - Great! Do you know why you didn't you respond, or what's wrong with message what were you told?
  - Repeating a message can benefit your understanding, and, at the same time can turn you off to what you're already familiar with (i.e., over-exposure), but the information/message is not given just to educate you, but to elicit a response (which you have already told me you have not done).
  - Well, have you ever heard it in your heart and responded to it? No great message will ever personally benefit you unless you act on what you have heard.

**184. I don't know enough yet to make that decision.**

**Response(s):**

- Let me assure you that everything you need to know to ensure that you will go to heaven, by God's grace I am prepared right now to share with you. And, in fact, it is not as much information as you may think—you think. **(I Cor. 15:3-5).**
- Don't risk missing out on heaven over an issue of being uninformed. It does not take a Ph.D. to teach you, and I certainly do not have one, but I do know the message which can bring you eternal life. May I share it with you?
- Tell me what you do know, and we'll fill in any gaps you may have. I wouldn't want the devil to steal your opportunity for heaven over something that easily resolved.
- Would you please I'll tell you more about what particular aspects of what I've been speaking to you that you feel you could use more information concerning? what don't you know/understand

**Answer(s):**

"You must exercise simple childlike faith." "Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it at all." (Lk. 18:17). "Must you master electricity to turn on the lights? Would you refuse to eat until you understand the digestive system?" Go Tell: The Soul Winner's Encyclopedia, p. 46, by Freddie Gage, (Freddie Gage Evang. Assn., Euless, TX), 1980

**185. I cannot understand.**

**Response(s):**

- Well, I have the time, let's go over it again until you do get it.
- Is there any specific thing which I have said that you can identify that you did and did not understand? What part of the message I just told you didn't make sense to you?
- I will be happy to re-visit God's greatest message in life, so that you CAN understand, but please do realize that it is only by God's Spirit that anyone can understand the message to the point that they will respond to it, and I am praying, as I explain it to you again, that He will graciously open your eyes to His revealed truth(?).
- I know this may be one of the first times you have ever heard these things. Fortunately, the Bible says that a child can understand enough about God's saving message to respond, so I am certain that if we go over the parts that you do not understand, God will allow you to understand to the point of being able to respond. The willing is up to you.
- [Do you desire to understand, and simply need some more clarification?].

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1342 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**186. You need to speak to my wife (pawning you off method).**

**Response(s):**

- I would love to speak with your wife, but may I first ask you a question...Do you know for sure that if you were to die today, you would be in heaven?
- I will welcome speaking with your wife, but before I do, as the head of the household/man of the house, may I ask you...If you were to die today, do you know for certain that you would go to heaven?
- [**I would love the opportunity to speak with your wife, but before I do, let me assure you that what I have to tell you affects you directly, as all men need to learn how to go to heaven and to avoid hell—its not just for others, women and children.**]

**187. I'm really busy right now. Not Now. [one lady was getting married the next day—a valid excuse; others will lie to avoid the God issue]**

**Response(s):**

- I understand! I have a lot of things going on too, but I just wanted to make sure to take the time to tell

- people how to go to heaven. Is there a better time when we could discuss this further?
- I'm sorry to have bothered you while you are busy, is there a better time when I could return.
- [if you discern a hard heart] I'm sorry I interrupted you...is there a better time for me to tell you how you can go to heaven and not go to hell when you die?
- I didn't mean to interrupt you—would it be better if I returned next Saturday or next Sunday? [**sales technique you may or may not be comfortable using**].

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, pp. 1342-1343 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**188. I'll deal with that subject (and with death) when I'm older (i.e., the death as million-to-one odds argument). I am going to have a good time in this world and let the next world take care of itself. I want to wait awhile.**

**Response(s):**

- What day will you die? How old are you going to reach in this life? How certain are you that you will absolutely be alive tomorrow, and not hit by a car, drop dead of a heart attack—in other words, be careful presuming on God's mercy, in delaying till later a decision you should make today, as if you know the end from the beginning as to the certainty of how long you have to make this decision. do you have a good life insurance policy, psychic or 3rd sense that you are the first person to know for sure when they re going to die? a bit harsh).
- What would you say if I told you that the type of “fun” and “playing” you most likely are referring to—the type you are allowing to keep you from God—has consequences, and though you choose not to face them yet, you WILL face them, and it will only be worse and harder for you to get saved (due to hardness/callousness of heart from rejecting God's message) the longer you wait?
- Are you “older” today that you were last year? Are you absolutely certain that you will live to the ripe old age of, say, seventy-five? How do you know that? I'd love to buy stock in your life, as I've never known anyone so sure of the future.
- I have heard many Christians who met God later in life, and regretted they had not done so earlier, and spent the remainder of their days in an intense commitment to make up for time lost. Don't let yourself be one of those.
- A person can put off the decision as to where they will be buried, and what their tombstone and plot will be like, but no one can safely put off the decision as to where they will go after that, and be certain that the option will be left in their hands indefinitely.

**Answer(s):**

The Bible says, 'Do not boast about tomorrow, For you do not know what a day may bring.' (Pv. 27:1. 'behold, now is "THE ACCEPTABLE TIME," behold, now is "THE DAY OF SALVATION"-- (II Cor. 6:2d-g. "God said TODAY. To say some other time is to say 'NO' to Christ. (See also James 4:13, 14). God's Spirit will not always strive with man (Genesis 6:3).” A man who hardens his neck after much reproof Will suddenly be broken beyond remedy.” (Pv. 29:1) Go Tell: The Soul Winner's Encyclopedia, by Freddie Gage, p. 46 (Freddie Gage Evang. Assn., Euless, TX), 1980

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1343 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**189. I'm too young or too old.**

**Response(s):**

- To Kids: If you are old enough to understand my message, and delay it till you're more mature, you're held morally responsible for having heard and rejected God's message.
- How could anyone be too old to secure their future in heaven? To not do so IS to secure for ones self a life in hell, in just a few short years. If you are old, yet still mentally competent, you can still pray to receive Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of all your sins—and you need to do so soon, as time (and your life) are running short.
- What does age have to do with it? You have a huge need, and God has a gracious solution. If you are breathing, its not too late.
- I must warn you, whatever you may mean by that statement, that there are no credible excuses which will stand up on judgment day, for having willfully rejected God's offer of eternal life through the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Too old for what? Perhaps it would help you understand what God requires of you if I might have the privilege of re-sharing with you the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ...
- [**You are not too old, but I hope your thinking is not slipping, as that statement makes no sense.**]

---[Will you have the audacity to actually tell God on judgment day that you willfully rejected His gift of eternal life because, though you were able to accept it, your age played some legitimate role in spurning His gracious offer?. Are you capable of still receiving Christmas gifts from your grandchildren? Your excuse has vanished.]

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1345 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**190. I do not think I am old enough to make a decision.**

**Response(s):**

- Do you understand what it means to do the right thing, as opposed to doing something that is morally wrong? To state it another way, have you (or are you aware that you have) ever done anything which was wrong, bad or evil? Then you are clearly old enough, my friend.
- Everybody comes to their own “age of accountability” at different chronological ages, but I have never heard of anyone not having reached such maturity by age eight, and I know that you, pretty as you are, are older than that.
- I have a son who, when he was four years old, knew enough and was aware enough of his own sinfulness and desire to go to heaven when he dies to have made the decision. Smart as he is, he is no Einstein, as it does not take any more capacity than that, and I am sure that you know well more than those essentials.
- Do you realize that to make that statement you are MAKING a decision to reject Christ. If one is old (or mature) enough to reject Christ, they certainly are old (or mature) enough to accept Him, as they are simply rejecting the offer, which shows that they knew or understood it was an offer which they did not want to take.

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1345 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**191. I'll take my chances.**

**Response(s):**

**For Further Study:**

- That confession shows the utmost lack of love for ones self, to risk burning in eternity, rather than to at least further investigate the things I am telling you from God. **[Didn't your mother raise you better than that?]**
- Are you a professional gambler or loan shark, because I've never seen someone so non-chalantly make the biggest gamble of their eternity and life, in so short a period of time with so little thought given to their wager.
- You will not be taking any chance at all, as there is no uncertainty about the consequences of so grave a decision. The Bible is clear that inaction on your part, as regards the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is and amounts to direct rejection, guaranteed to seal your eternal fate in a place a truly thinking person would not consciously choose to go to.

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1343 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**192. I'll worry about that in the next life.**

**Response(s):**

- I assure you as sure as I'm standing here, on the authority of God's word, that if you wait that long, it will absolutely be too late, and you will be damned, with no further chance of deliverance from an eternal hell. God gives you plenty of time and opportunities in this life, and if you do not choose to take him up on His offer, His patience eventually runs out. There are no second chances for those who forever spurn the grace of Christ in this life.
- There is punishment awaiting those whose lives are devoid of God in this world, and a preoccupation with the things only of this world is the epitome of short-sightedness and foolish living with blinders on, as we all face death and God's judgment day!
- There are no reincarnations in the afterlife—The Bible speaks only of a resurrection to either death (i.e., in hell) or life (i.e., in heaven, if one knows Christ).

**193. Would not suicide be the best way out of my trouble?**

**Response(s):**

- Absolutely not! That would only exacerbate their problem, as the problem would not have gone away,

but that act would have ensured that they could never correct the problem between them and God, as they would have sealed their own fate, as there are no decisions as to Christ ever to be made post-mortem.

- Not in the least! It is not just one's physical demise which sin hath wrought upon the human race, and God's punishment for our sins is never ended simply when the body expires. Death, in the biblical sense, also includes eternal death and separation from God, in hell, which is a fate all people without Christ face, whether their body gave out, or was snuffed out by that selfish act of sin. It doesn't matter how you died, but how you lived—either knowing Jesus Christ personally, or not!
- The devil would like you (and many other people) to believe that, but it is simply not true. What good would that do? God is not concerned with your leaving this world, but with you living in this world and leaving this world rightly related to Him, through His Son.

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1347 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**194. I see no harm in worldly amusements.**

**Response(s):**

- Some "worldly" amusements are truly morally harmless. Take, for example, a roller coaster. But many are harmful to the moral and spiritual health of an individual. The issue is not so much what one does, or what they do not do, but who they know. That relationship will affect what they do or don't do from that day forward.
- So that I am clear, what particular "worldly amusements" do you have in mind?
- We could discuss what worldly amusements are morally good or morally bad, but our focus would have shifted/changed from what God has done to secure your eternal salvation (a God-focus) to what you have done or not done (a proudly human-focus), and I would rather spend my time talking with you about how you can go to heaven, rather than specific acts you can do to temporarily "clean up your act," especially since that clean-up job will not suffice to keep you from going to hell.
- I would not for an instant want you to be under the errant notion going around that Christians have no fun! I have had more fun, fulfillment and enjoyment since walking with the Lord, than any of the temporary pleasures the devil brought my way before Christ affected my living. [Can I tell you more about it?].
- It is the devil who has spread the rumor that Christians are fuddy-duddies, who are stoic and have no thrills in life. True, some misguided Christians take their moral stances too seriously (Ecc. 7:16), but far too often I think you will find claiming Christians taking too much liberty and participating in sinful activities, abusing the security they find in Jesus.
- There are many wholesome and even exciting things that Christians can engage in, and when you live your life knowing that you are engaging all of your activities alongside the eternal Creator of the universe, there is nothing more fulfilling or exciting as that!

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1346 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**195. I'm happy, and like my lifestyle, living in sin. Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die. I like my life as it is presently, thank you. Won't Christianity cramp my style?**

**Response(s):**

- There may be many aspects of your chosen habits of life which are amoral or moral, which do not need changing once you become a Christian.
- Don't let the devil deceive you by "the passing pleasures of sin" and sin's deceptiveness (:), as "there is a way which seems right to a man, but the result thereof is death" (i.e., in hell-- :).
- Are you willing and prepared to pay the price and accept the consequences of that choice? Can you endure hell? Have you ever stepped into a scolding hot tub you neglected to add enough cold water into, and found that to be the way you'd like to spend your eternity?
- What authoritative basis do you have and have you consulted or read that guarantees you this confidence that there will be no judgment after you die? I'd like to meet that authority myself, because I have met Him, and He says exactly the opposite.
- If you are determined to maintain that position/attitude, at least let me pray for you, and I must warn you that you will end up in hell if you continue down that lifestyle path without receiving Jesus into your life.
- Will you be happy (vs. sorry/regret) with the consequences, ultimately? There is nothing intrinsically evil about having fun. Christ experienced joy, attended a wedding in Cana, dined with sinners, and

God gives believers “all things to enjoy,” but to live for having fun (hedonism?)—that is, to have one’s main or sole aim and purpose to acquire wealth and things and to be primarily or exclusively focused on this life only (i.e., as priority one, or greater than the spiritual world and life to come) is evil. This life is only a glimpse and a smidgen of time all of us will live (one place or the other). To live for pleasure, as opposed to enjoying pleasures with/in God, is to live for the devil, and this philosophy (and Bible verse) speaks to one living his life based on having a good time and only concentrating on the here-and-now.

**For Further Study:**

Hard Questions About Christianity Made Easy, pp. 38-39, by Mark Water (John Hunt Publishing) 2000

**196. There’s too much to give up.**

**Response(s):**

- What, specifically, do you believe you have to give up?
- God is speaking of your receiving something. The only thing you will be “giving up” is a future in hell, and faith, if you have any, in anything else but Christ to get you to heaven. [Of course, this does not mean God will call you to give up sins, as you are sanctified].
- What do you have to lose, and what is so important to hold onto, which can never qualify you to avoid hell and obtain heaven? Is that obstacle important enough to you—temporary as it is—to risk going to hell forever for what you deem to be a pleasure, which, at best, will last you another \_\_\_ (choose a number) years?
- Really? Like loneliness, lack of peace, fear of death and the frightening and certain thought that one day you will face your Creator and be held accountable for every deed and word you have ever committed, to pay their punishment yourself?

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1342 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**197. I would like to be a Christian, but I cannot forgive my enemies.**

**Response(s):**

- As important as it is for people to forgive their enemies, you do not yet have the spiritual capacity to do so—at least not nearly the same capacity as once God lives within you.
- God has instructed mankind to forgive their enemies, but He has not conditioned His free gift of salvation upon your so doing. That would be a salvation based on your works—works you are ill-equipped to perform. Said another way, that would also mean that your forgiving men earned you the right to get saved by God.
- I would not expect you to be able to forgive them. Wait until God changes you on the inside, and thereafter leads and empowers you progressively to do so.
- Where have you learned (or heard) that God requires that to occur first, or He will not forgive you?

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1348 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**198. My friends mean so much to me.**

**Response(s):**

- Are you feeling that if you become a Christian, your present friends will desert or abandon you? If they would do that, 1) they were never true friends, and 2) I can assure you that the friends God would replace them with will be of a superior quality of friendship you have yet to experience—if you get lined up with sincere and committed, godly believers.
- Your friendships will last, at best, the remaining number of years you have to live on this earth. A friendship and relationship with God lasts forever.
- Do you value your friends’ relationship so highly that you would choose to follow them to hell—assuming they are not Christians—in order to remain their friend, so long as that friendship would last? Stated another way, are your friends worth more to you than your eternal destiny? A friend can be an asset to you for a few years. There is a Friend who is closer than a brother, and can be such for the rest of time to eternity, Jesus Christ. That is, are you willing to let friendships with humans send you to hell, by valuing their opinion of you more than God’s view of you, on judgment day, when he will determine whether you will spend eternity in heaven or hell?
- Why, or where do you get the impression that you will lose all your friends if you become a Christian? Tell me about it/that. That fear may be ill-founded, both because your friends may not abandon you, as well as the fact that you may have, somewhere, gotten the idea that God will absolutely require you to give up all friendships with all friends—something which may be based on a misunderstanding of

certain doctrinal subjects covered in the Bible.

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1343 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**199. People would laugh.**

**Response(s):**

- What would they laugh at? Who, or what type of people would laugh?
- Would it affect/impact your decision to know that anyone who would laugh at your becoming a Christian is a nobody to God, and evidences the fact that they will not be going to heaven with you?
- Better to endure a little persecution in this life, than a lot more punishment in the next, and for eternity!
- God has promised rewards for those who suffer for His name's sake, and the joy of pleasing God is superior in value to the comfort one may feel from having evil persons support their sinfulness.
- Let me be honest with you...the Bible does address the fact that in some cases, immoral friends of believers may mock them and wonder at their no longer desiring to live a life of sinful pleasure. However, those who do such things are not worthy of the kingdom of God, and would not be the type that you would be wise to retain as close friends.
- Is that the real definition of a true friend...Someone who would insult you for finding the greatest gift a man could ever discover? It may not be "cool" to be a Christian in our modern and sinful country, but it is a lot cooler than the heat one will certainly feel in hell, without Christ.

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1342 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**200. Does this have to be done publicly?**

**Response(s):**

- Biblically, it does not have to be done publicly, but it is very beneficial to do so, as a testimony to others, and as a way to cement your experience before God, in your heart. Also, when you are publicly baptized, that act is an external picturing of the work God does in your heart internally.
- It is not absolutely mandatory, but I would wonder if there is some reason why you would not want to share such a joyous experience with others?
- Are you proud of what Jesus Christ has done for you, or a little ashamed? He died on the cross publicly, and it is of value to follow in His footsteps.
- Some people have argued from I Tim. 6:12 that this is the case, and, though I disagree with their interpretation of that verse, I do agree with them that there is valuable psychological benefit for so doing (though it is not biblically required—Joseph of Arimathea was a secret disciple).

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1346 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**201. I'm Not Interested.**

**Response(s):**

- You are not interested in avoiding hell and going to heaven by having all your sins forgiven? May I ask, what is it about that offer that is not interesting to you?
- That's your decision, but I must warn you that people who reject God's free offer do end up in a literal hell.
- Well, I'll be praying for you [and do], because you don't want to leave this world without Jesus Christ.
- I wasn't interested in God either, until someone took the time to personally introduce me to the God of the Bible, and accurately explain how I could be sure I would go to heaven. Is that what you thought I was going to discuss with you?
- [Bad answer: OK, thanks anyway.]
- Well (tell me), what would you do if you were me and you knew the most important message in the world about how all men can have eternal life, and you encountered disinterested people?
- You're not interested in avoiding a sure future eternity in hell? What's un-interesting about missing a certain hell in the future?

**202. Please do not talk to me about it.**

**Response(s):**

- Is it uncomfortable to face the reality that you are headed to hell when you die, with no knowledge of how to get out of that jam?
- Oh, you don't love yourself enough to be willing how to save your soul from an eternal punishment?

- Is there a personal reason why this subject is discomfoting to you?
- The God of the universe has sent me here to tell you how to go to heaven, and if you do not want to hear about that, I certainly cannot (nor could anyone else) help you.
- The devil gives many people a similar emotion of desiring to avoid the subject, so that they will spend eternity in hell with him.
- I have been commanded by God to tell the good news about heaven's availability to you, but I have not been instructed to let you in on that opportunity if you stubbornly insist on going to hell, so I will respectfully leave your premises.
- Are you afraid that, perhaps, you MIGHT open up, and end up going to heaven instead of where you otherwise will be going... hell?

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1343 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**203. My parents preached religion to me so much, I want nothing to do with it.**

**Response(s):**

- I'm sorry your parents may have over-sold you on the greatest gift a man can ever received, and thereby turned you off. However, there are many Christians who do not over-preach, whose company you need to get yourself within, because to let a sin of one's parents influence our lives to the point we let ourselves end up in hell is—before God—not a valid excuse for willfully rejecting God's free and gracious gift of love. The issue is your response to the death of Christ for you/on your behalf—not what good or bad things anyone else has done to you. Because you, as we all, are a sinner, YOU must deal with God on the terms He has established for getting right with Him. No person will be able to cover or vouch for you on judgment day, and you will not be able to do so for anyone else, even your children. Each man is personally responsible for either accepting or rejecting Jesus Christ, and you would not make a wise decision to reject a loving and perfect Savior because of something He had nothing to do with—that's illogical, and a damning mis-conclusion.
- Will you choose to spend eternity in hell, just to spite and rebel against your mother? That's not a very intelligent decision/response.

**+204. I'm just not ready yet.**

**Bible Reference(s):** II Cor. 6:2, Heb. 3:15, 19, Mt. 25:10-13, (Mt. 24:37-40--(Today is the day—do not delay); Heb. 9:27, Jas. 4:13-14 (death is imminent, for all men).

**Response(s):**

- Not ready to receive the greatest gift of all, and to make sure you will go to heaven and not hell?
- I understand, and will not force the issue, but I do want inform you of the risk you take upon yourself should, God forbid, anything happen to you before you're ready, as none of us know the day we will meet our maker.
- What are you expecting to happen or change, before you think you would be ready?
- Please know that it is completely possible to wait too long, and God's Spirit give up striving with you. Fell free to think it over, but the bible says that 'today is the day of salvation,' so don't take too long, put it off or procrastinate on such an important decision. (ill.: the people in Noah's day who wouldn't enter the ark)
- We humans (often) feel we can always make the decision, but not so, as God will not forever strive with us to offer eternal life.

**Answer(s):**

Sometimes that is true. Sometimes when people hear the good news about Christ, it is so simple they need time to think it over. But, **it is easy or you to practice the things that are not important and procrastinate on the things that are important.** Therefore, you put off the most important decision of your life, which you ought to make, until it is forever too late (Lk. 12:16-21).

**Source:** Adapted from N.E.T.S., p. 107, by Larry Moyer (EvanTell, Dallas, TX), 1992

**205. I want to get established in business first. After that, I'll become a Christian.**

**Response(s):**

- What does becoming a Christian have to do with the progress of your career? That is, how is becoming a Christian a barrier to the successful achievement of valid goals for oneself?
- You do need to be alerted to the fact that the Bible says that God will not strive with man forever/indefinitely, and, though you may think and it may feel like the decision is totally in your hands, to do with as you please anytime you choose, there is a hardness which creeps in when a soul

rejects God's truth, and there will come a day—no one knows when for any given person—when God WILL give up on YOU, and after that time, you could not trust Him for salvation even if you wanted to/were inclined to do so.

--Being established in business is a worthy ideal. God is in the business of helping His children do His will in business. However, you can be more certain of the uncertainty of when you will meet your Creator than you now feel certain that you will establish yourself in business over a given period of time. Go with the sure thing, as you may not even be around long enough to see your goals through, no matter how successful you become, but you can rest assured you WILL be around on judgment day, and you could settle that issue in your life here and now.

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1341, (Nelson Publishers Nashville), 1985

**206. Door slammed in your face (rudeness). [RARE, in my experience—can happen, but don't fear it! They're rejecting Christ—not you, personally]**

**Bible Reference(s):** Mk. 6:11, Eze. 3:18-19, Mt. 7:6; **Personal Promise:** Tit. 3:10-11, Lk. 21:17-18.

**Response(s):**

- Be warned—you choose to go to hell if you knowingly/willfully reject this message/Christ
- God loves you, but you will go to hell if nothing changes in your life.
- Pray to receive Jesus or you will go to hell!
- Hell is a severe/serious and eternal risk!
- Literally shake the dust off your hands and shoes, and say "I'll be praying for you."
- God bless you. (**may show love, or turning of the cheek, but no Gospel or warning given**)
- Don't shut the door of your heart to God! You'll seal your fate in hell forever.
- the fool has said in his heart, 'there is no God.' (**rude?**)
- Do you really want to go to hell? (**rude?**)
- I'll play the door stop if I can stop you choosing to go to hell.
- "You're doing to me what you're doing to God in your heart—shutting the door to your heart." (Rev. 3:20).
- Say: "Blessed are you when men cast insults at you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me (Mt. 5:11)." "I'm blessed!"

**Answer(s):** (combinations of the following may be appropriate, but time is of the essence):

**207. Sharing one's faith is too personal.**

**Bible Reference(s):** II Cor. 4:13, II Tim. 1:7-8, (Mt. 10:32-33?);

**Jn. 19:38 (silent disciple exception, to save/spare his life?)**

**Response(s):**

- if the greatest and most important thing in one's life is too personal to speak about, and one does not desire to share their joy over their experience with another who has had the same experience, one could rightfully wonder either how joyous it was for the person, or whether he had, in fact, yet received that gift.
- then, it seems to me, your "faith" is too personal (i.e., in an immoral and overly-subjective sense), because the Bible does not teach about a salvation that is too personal to share—in fact, having experienced salvation, we are told to share it regularly, to help out those who still do not know God (and to edify those who have). Don't deprive a fellow Christian of the joy of camaraderie.
- I understand that you may be shy, and, ultimately God knows your heart—just make sure that you have received the gift of eternal life, as all will be revealed and exposed someday—but then it will be too late.
- If what you say is true, then Christ lied and sinned in speaking His final words before His death, known as the Great Commission and addressed to those who know that they belong to Him (Mt. 28:18-20).
- If salvation is that personal, how will anyone ever discover how to be saved?
- If salvation is that personal, how will a Christian be able to contain his joy in having gained eternal life, if he is not allowed to share that great joy because of some supposed rule of impersonableness?

**208. That's none of your business: keep that to yourself.**

**Response(s):**

- I respect that you feel that way, but God and His Word tell me I am to care enough about you to make sure that you get the opportunity to go to heaven by my telling you how.
- Don't let yourself go to hell, eternally, because of defensiveness, pride or ego. Then the devil will really

- win the battle for your life/soul.
- I'm sorry you feel offended speaking about God--I merely care about you and your destination beyond this life
- If you've got eternal life already figured out and are assured you will go to heaven, great. I'll be praying for you.
- Sir/Mam, I was not asking you intimate questions which invaded your personal space, or life—I'm just trying to make sure that you do not end up in hell, as so many people are going to because they will not listen to God's message of how that fate can be avoided.
- Well, may I leave you some materials which you could study on your own? [NO]. Then, clearly, privacy and the subject being too personal is not your true objection. Be warned not to ignore God's message forever.
- Very unfortunately, if no one ever makes where you will spend your eternity enough of a concern to them that they make it an issue they bring up to you, you will go to hell. It was God's business to send Jesus to die in your place, and He has commanded me to lovingly ensure that you are aware of His gift of eternal life offered to all who will trust Jesus Christ to save them.
- Your finances, and whatever you do inside your own home is none of my business, and I prefer to know nothing about that, but, simply because you are a human, it is my commissioning by God, in His Bible, to tell you how to live forever with God, if you will listen.

**209. I prefer to remain open-minded. I want to be absolutely neutral about this matter.**

**Bible Reference(s): Josh. 24:15, II Cor. 4:4, Mt. 12:30; II Cor. 6:2.**

**Response(s):**

- A life-long open-minded man will end up in an open-ended pit in the Lake of hell. You simply have to come to grips/deal with and face up to the Lord—in this life, with forgiveness through Jesus Christ, or in the next, with only judgment and eternal punishment. Better this life than the next.
- I respect open-mindedness, and after a man investigates the claims and evidences of Jesus Christ, God holds him eternally accountable for what he did with that knowledge.
- Open-mindedness is certainly a virtue in many areas of life (as opposed to closed/narrow-mindedness), but your experience will tell you that in most areas of life, when action is to be taken, we must make our best decision, based on the facts, and take action on the thoughts we have opened our minds to evaluate, and your eternal destiny is one matter—to be sure—you cannot remain neutral about, as indecision is decision, to end up in hell.
- You have not remained open-minded about your spouse, career, health or financial well-being, why would you take such a risky, non-committal attitude toward your eternal destiny?
- Evaluate the evidence and investigate the facts—God's word can stand up to scrutiny--but please realize that if you never conclude or decide, you have, by inaction and default, chosen to remain in your lost condition, which ultimately leads to hell. That is 'the repentance (i.e., change of mind) which leads to life.' (Ac. 11:18).
- Riding the fence, in the matter of eternal salvation, only leaves one sore between the thighs, and eternally separated from God's heavenly presence. It's like trying to live on a highway center stripe!

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1343 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**210. Moralistic, dogmatic Bible-beater fanatic extremist/fundamentalists turn me off.**

**Bible Reference(s): II Cor. 5:10-11, 14-15, 20, Mt. 5:16, (II Cor. 6:3; Eph. 4:15).**

**Response(s):**

- They turn me off too. However, it is easy to choose guilt by association in labeling anyone who will speak to you about eternal life as fitting into that category, because of some inner desire not to address/deal with the issue of your own mortality and place of residence after death. Would you say you are open to hearing the message of eternal life in Jesus Christ, or are there inner turmoils the devil uses to keep you in his kingdom?
- That's bad, and I'm sorry that happened to you, but please know that on judgment day, the only issue God will be dealing with you about is what you did with His Son, Jesus Christ. If anyone has wronged you, that will be between them and God, but if you have not received forgiveness of all your sins through the death of Christ on the cross, any excuse that people presented the message is a less-than-perfect way will not save your soul from eternal torment.
- They turn me off too, and their manner (not necessarily their message) is wrong. Please hear the message, which God has intended for you, because you need to hear it despite any failed means men

- may have used to get that message of eternal life to you. After all, no one is perfect, except Jesus, who wants to save your soul.
- There are a very few people I have met who can only think and talk about religion—and that’s an over-emphasis, but that does not at all negate the importance of the message you need to hear about how you can have eternal life through the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - Truly, those people need to learn how to better, and more lovingly, share the message of eternal life, which is precisely/exactly what I would like to do with you right now, if I may...
  - Radical or militant religionists are not serving the God of heaven. On the other hand, sometimes others appear to us to be “zealots,” simply because our consciences are unclear due to the apparent increased commitment we see in others, compared with that within ourselves. Be clear which type of “extremist” you are referring to.

### **211. I’m not religious.**

**Bible Reference(s): Jas. 1:26-27, II Tim. 3:1, 5, (Mk. 7:6-9).**

#### **Response(s):**

- Religion is man reaching up to God. Christianity is God reaching down to man, in the Person of His Son, so that man can have an eternal relationship with Him, and I desire to speak with you only about the latter.
- Neither am I. Religion is what man does to try to please or appease God. I’m here to tell you how you can have an eternal personal relationship with God, through the Lord Jesus Christ.
- In many circles of our American culture it is not “cool/hip” to be “into religion,” but following that philosophy is like sheep following each other over a cliff or to the slaughter, because every man will give an account of himself to God, one day, and to have been ashamed of or to have ignored God in this life does not at all bode well as an indication of where one is heading in the next life. Remember, when it come to worrying whether men think you’re cool, its more important to concern yourself with what God thinks of you. **(I Cor. 15:33, Lk. 6:26, Gal. 1:10, I Cor. 4:5).**
- God cared enough about you that He sent His only Son to die in your place to pay for your sins—what’s not cool about that?
- I am not here to try to sell you on “religion,” but to introduce you to the Creator of the world!...
- I’m not exactly sure what you have in mind when you use the word, “religious,” but I can assure you that rituals, fancy ceremonies and ornate buildings with Gothic, dry music and a lifestyle in which there is no fun or joy does not turn me on either, and is NOT what I am here to offer you today...

### **212. I’m trying to be a Christian.**

**Response(s): know you are saved verses.**

- I appreciate the fact that you are seeking to please God and behave like a Christian, but I need to inform you, according to God’s Word, the Bible, that one does not become a Christian through a process of doing good works, but through establishing a personal relationship with God, by praying to ask Christ to forgive all your sins and to come live within. Good works will follow, but one must possess eternal life as a free gift—something we could never earn or work for.
- So, you would describe yourself as a “seeker” of God? May I please have the liberty of showing you from Scripture that we are all sinners, and that no one rightly and sincerely seeks God, which is precisely why He sent His only Son to die in your place, on the cross, so that God could find you, through your praying to receive Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of all your sins. **(Rom. 3:10).**

#### **For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1344 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

### **213. I’m already religious. I am religious.**

#### **Response(s):**

- To understand you fully, how are you describing or defining the term, “religious?”
- Be clear, sir, that I am not asking you to become religious—either more religious or less. I am speaking about establishing an eternal relationship with the God of the universe, through Jesus Christ, His Son.
- By ‘religious,’ many people speak to intellectual beliefs and certain rituals or behaviors they perform, often in a church, synagogue or mosque. Is that what you are referring to?
- Being “religious” has never ushered anyone into the presence of God, in heaven.
- Depending on the particulars of what you are calling “being religious,” there are some practices (or beliefs) you may presently do or hold which are not contrary to the Christian faith. God is neither

asking you to discard those, or to rely on them as your reason(s) to believe that you will end up in heaven. What He is telling you is... [go into the Gospel, here].

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1344 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**214. I am doing the best I can.**

**Response(s):**

- Even if you were to do the best that any human being ever has, the remainder of your life, it would not be enough.
- God does not ask you to do your best. We are all sinners, so the “best” we can do, ultimately, is sin and sin-tainted.
- If God was asking you to do your best, Christ would never have had to have given His best.
- I’m sure that is true and that you are sincere. The problem is, none of us has the ability to do enough, as our very best falls short of God’s standard, which is moral perfection.
- Are you aware of the fact that “doing your best” focuses on what you can do for God, rather than what God has already done for you, by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to die for your sins so that you can be eternally related to God? (Eph. 2:8-10).
- Would it disappoint you to know that a person who does their best, but does not have Jesus Christ in their life, will suffer the same fate of confinement to an eternal hell as a person like Adolph Hitler? Both of them rejected God’s free offer of eternal life in Jesus Christ, and, although there may be degrees of suffering in hell, any suffering there is torment, unbearable and forever.
- That is noble, but does not get you the results you are striving for. Let me explain...

**For Further Study:**

The Open Bible, p. 1342 (Nelson Publishers: Nashville), 1985

**215. Can I be a Christian without losing my moral integrity?**

**Response(s):**

- It’s funny that you would ask that question, because, when you are more grounded in the beliefs of Christianity you will come to realize that it is the exact opposite experience that you will have...becoming a Christian, and thereafter living for Christ will heighten and support, not take away from your integrity.
- You must have had some really weird experiences with Christians in your past, to ask that question. If, in your mind, becoming a Christian lessens your integrity, you have either learned from or observed Christians who were not living as such, or who merely claimed the name.
- I can assure you that whatever your moral standard of integrity is, if it is consistent with what common sense thinking people would call “ethics,” the Bible nowhere asks you to less than that, once you become a Christian. [Can you tell me what specific standards of behavior and conscience you fear you may have to compromise, as a Christian? Ex.: scientific integrity to data and verifiable knowledge?].