

Lesson 10

Answering Common Objections

Thesis: This lesson is designed to help the believer understand the importance of being ready to give an answer to the lost by responding biblically to common questions and objections.

Memory Verses:

† **1Peter 3:15** - *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:*

- Have you ever been asked a question by an unbeliever you did not know the answer to? If so, how did it make you feel? What did you do?
- Before you were a Christian, did you have questions and objections to the Gospel? What kind of questions did you have? How did Christians respond to your questions? How did their answer or lack thereof, affect you?
- How do you feel about being asked questions or facing objections to your faith by someone who is not a Christian? How prepared do you feel?

Does God expect me to be ready to share the Gospel with the lost? How much study do I need to put into preparing myself to share the Gospel? How do I answer tough questions? What if I am asked a question I don't know the answer to? Today we will look at these questions and others as we learn the importance of being prepared to answer those who have questions and objections to the Gospel.

Be Ready Always - 1Peter 3:15

1Peter 3:15 - *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:*

1. **1Peter 3:15a - “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts...”**
 - a. To “sanctify” means to “set apart”. For a believer to be a ready witness they must first have Jesus Christ set apart in their heart as “Lord”. You must affirm His Lordship over your life and live in submission to His perfect will for your life.
 - b. Those who do not share the Gospel, are not living with Jesus as Lord. The heartbeat of Christ was to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10), and that same leading will be in the heart of anyone who has Christ dwelling there. Followers will be fishers. (Matt. 4:19)
2. **1Peter 3:15b - “...and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you...”**
 - a. When an unbeliever questions your faith how often does God say you need to be ready? always
 - b. **“give an answer”** – is from the Greek “apologia” from which we get the word “apologetics”. This is a word that was used in Scripture of both a formal defense in a judicial courtroom (Acts 25:16; 2 Timothy 4:16), but also in an informal sense when anyone would question your faith (Philippians 1:16-17).

- c. Christians are called to be ready always to give an answer, or literally **make a defense of their faith** to anyone who asks you to give a reason of the “hope” that is in you.

3. 1Peter 3:15c – “...with meekness and fear.”

- a. This lets us know the right spirit in which we are to have as we make a defense of the Gospel.
- b. **“with meekness”** – this speaks of having a gentle and mild spirit. The opposite of yelling and having an overbearing, argumentative attitude. God calls us to be humble and kind in sharing His Gospel (Ephesians 4:15 – “*But speaking the truth in love...*”).
- c. **“and fear”** - this is not a fear of the person but rather speaks of having “reverence” for the Word that you are sharing and the God on whose behalf you are sharing it. You are not declaring your message, but Gods and it is a fearful and awesome message to share.

Study to shew thyself approved unto God – 2Timothy 2:15

2 Timothy 2:15 - *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

1. **“Study”** – (Gr. Spoudazo) means to be diligent and labour. Have you ever diligently labored in studying the Word so that you are ready to share the Gospel? When you have not had an answer, have you gone back and studied it out so you would have it next time?
2. **“To shew thyself approved unto God”** - “*approved*” means pleasing and acceptable. The efforts of our study are to show ourselves as pleasing and acceptable to who? God
3. **“A workman that needeth not to be ashamed”** – unpreparedness results in shame, both before man and before God.
4. **“Rightly dividing the word of Truth”** - **rightly dividing literally means “cutting it straight”**. It speaks of the precision and accuracy that is required in such work as carpentry or masonry. Christians are called to have precision and accuracy in sharing the truth of God’s Word with others.

Things to Consider in Answering Questions and Objections

1. When answering questions and objections, the goal is not to win an argument, rather the goal is to win a soul. It is possible to win an argument and lose a soul.
2. The goal is not to simply answer an objection to the Gospel, the goal is to make sure you give them the Gospel. Satan loves giving questions, and some will follow after foolish questions and miss the opportunity to share the Gospel.
3. The goal is not to look smart in the eyes of people, the goal is to show yourself as an approved and unashamed workman before God.
4. No matter how good and clever and powerful a truth may be that you present, you cannot change a person’s heart, that is the work of God.
 - † **1Corinthians 3:5–7** - *Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.*
5. The more you know the truth, the brighter you can present the light of truth. (Matt. 5:13-16)
6. Prepared vessels produce more fruit. Those who are prepared and willing to share the Gospel will be given more opportunities to bear fruit for God’s glory.
 - † **1Timothy 1:12** - *And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;*

† **Romans 1:15** - *So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.*

7. It is important to know the difference between a sincere objection and a scoffing question. We are called to avoid foolish debating and strife and to withdraw from such people (I Timothy 6:3-5, 20-21, Titus 1:14, 3:9-10).
8. In facing objections and questions, know that though some may challenge your faith, there are many who will receive Jesus Christ. Don't allow fear of those who may challenge you keep you from sharing with those who would be saved.

10 Common Objections to the Gospel

Write out your response to the following objections with verses to support and review in class.

1. **“I’m a good person, I have done a lot of good things in my life, I believe I will be okay with God when I die.”**
 - Ephesians 2:8-9 – What does this verse say will save you and what will not save you?
 - If you could make yourself right with God, why would Jesus have to die?
 - Going through the law with these folks exposes them to their true condition (Lesson 4)
2. **“I don’t believe there is a God”**
 - People are not usually atheists because of intellectual reasons, rather they had a bad experience with a Christian(s), or for moral reasons (John 3:19-21). Ask them, “What brought you to this conclusion? Why don’t you believe in God?”
 - Atheists won’t believe in God by a clever argument, rather they will be persuaded when they see your genuine faith in Christ and love for them.
 - The goal in witnessing to an atheist is not to argue with them, but to give them the Gospel. You can say, “If you were wrong, and God was real would you want to know? (anyone open at all would say yes); then share with them what God says in the Bible about why they need to be saved and how. Don’t shove the Gospel down the throat of an atheist, give them an opportunity to hear the Gospel and show them true love and kindness.
 - The Bible never seeks to “prove” God’s existence, it assumes God exists (Genesis 1:1, Romans 1:19-22)
 - No one can truly say “God does not exist” because they cannot prove He doesn’t exist. At best someone can say, “I don’t believe God exists”. You could ask someone, “How much knowledge do you think you have of all things? (Their response is usually just a couple percent). Then ask, “Do you believe God could exist outside of your couple percent of knowledge?” In other words, you cannot make absolute statements on the foundation of imperfect knowledge.
 - A Good resource to offer them is “Case for a Creator” by Lee Strobel (former atheist)
3. **“Well I don’t believe the Bible, it was a book written by man and is filled with contradictions.”**
 - This is often an objection by those who have chosen to reject the Bible. Simply ask them, “What has brought you to that conclusion? What are a couple examples of contradictions you have found that has kept you from accepting the Bible? (You will find most people use this as an excuse rather than a genuine objection).
 - Some questions you can ask:
 - If the Bible is God’s Word, would you want to know it?

- Have you ever read the Bible? Would you consider yourself to be open-minded?
- If there was a chance you were wrong, would you want to know...; consider for a moment that the Bible is true (then share the Gospel with them)
- Verses that support the Scriptures trustworthiness: 2 Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Peter 1:20-21 - God's Word is truth – John 17:17, God cannot lie – Titus 1:2; what most people think are errors are difficulties; when all the facts are weighed and studied out, the Bible is always proven accurate.
- A good resource is "Cold Case Christianity" by J. Warner Wallace (former atheist)

4. "I just cannot accept that God will send people to hell, how could God be loving and send someone into a burning flame forever?"

- Ask them, "Would you believe hell is real if Jesus said it was?" Jesus spoke about hell as being real and spoke about it more than everyone in the Bible put together. Here are a few examples: Matthew 5:27-30, 10:28, 13:42, 13:49-50, 18:6-9, 23:15, 25:41, 25:46; Lk. 16:19-31.
- Have them read Revelation 21:8 and tell you what they think it means/
- The reality of hell doesn't refute the love of God. God loves man but He also loves holiness and justice. The consequence of sin is eternal separation from God in hell. It is God's love that died for man's sin to deliver him from that punishment. God gives man freedom of choice to accept or reject His free salvation. By man rejecting salvation and choosing sin they are then under the judgment of God (John 3:18, 36; Revelation 20:15, 21:8).
- Satan has always tried to lessen the punishment of sin, you see this in the garden of Eden in Genesis 3 "ye shall not surely die".
- **Resource for study: Gotquestions.org – "How can a loving God send someone to hell?"**

5. "Why is there so much evil in the world, if God is loving, why is there so much pain and suffering?"

- God didn't produce sin, but He did produce volition (choice); God gives man a free will to make wrong choices – God doesn't force man to do right. Man chose sin, and the consequence of sin is in the world (Rom. 5:12). The reason for so much pain, suffering, evil and death is because of sin.
- Pain can also be good or bad – without feeling we would die – it protects us; this is true both morally (with conviction) and physically (pain). Pain also reminds us of our mortality, and our need for salvation and eternal life.
- Pain and suffering is how God proved His love to us as Jesus took our pain and suffering on the cross - Isaiah 53:5-6.

6. "I just don't think Jesus is the only way to heaven, that is so narrow minded, surely there is more than one way to heaven."

- John 14:6; John 3:3; I John 5:11-12; Acts 4:12
Truth by definition is narrow; Jesus is the truth; if you had cancer and there was 1 cure, would you be upset there is only 1 cure or be thankful there was a cure!

7. "I think as long as a person is sincere, that is all that matters."

- Some argue that even if a person's religion is false, what really matters is that she's sincere about being a good person. This notion is based on the mistaken belief that God is pleased by "religion."
- Is it possible to be sincere and be sincerely wrong, have you ever been sincerely wrong? Are radical Muslims sincere in their faith? Does their sincerity make them right with God?
- God judges people not on religious sincerity, but on the truth of His Word. Paul spoke of the sincerity of the Jews but their lost condition because their faith wasn't in Jesus (Romans 10:1-3, 9-13).

8. “What about people who have never heard the Gospel?”

- Such a question implies that God lacks compassion because he's imposed his plan of salvation on us. Often such inquirers seem to imply that they are more compassionate than God.
- An important biblical principle to understand is that no one has ever remained lost who wanted to be found. God sent Peter to the house of Cornelius – Acts 10; God sent Philip to the Ethiopian Eunuch – Acts 8:26-29, and Jesus said anyone who seeks Him He will be found - Matt. 7:7-8; Deuteronomy 4:29
- The Bible is clear that the creation evidences God's existence (Romans 1:19-21) leaving man without excuse. Man is responsible for the light of this revelation that if they respond to will cause them
- Some Christians falsely believe those who have never heard will go to heaven, if that is true then why send missionaries?
- Resource: Gotquestions.org - "What happens to those who have never heard about Jesus?"

9. I would get saved except the fact there are so many hypocrites.

- A hypocrite is an actor or pretender. Some of Jesus' harshest words were for hypocrites (Matthew 23), and declared they were not going to heaven (Matt. 24:51)
- There will always be hypocrites in everything in life; the question is not are there hypocrites, the question is was Jesus a hypocrite? Don't go to hell for a hypocrite.
- Jesus' disciples testified that Jesus was without sin (1 Peter 2:22; 1 John 3:5). Even Jesus himself challenged others to prove that he'd ever sinned (John 8:46).

10. “Jesus was just a man, he was not God.” (Often used by those who have been influenced by Jehovah Witnesses or Mormons at some point in their lives)

- **Matthew 1:23** (Isaiah 7:14) – “Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, **God with us.**” Colossians 2:9 – (speaking of Christ) “For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” **Philippians 2:5-7; John 20:24-28; John 1:1-3, 10-14; John 17:5; Hebrews 1:8**

➤ The greatest common objection to the Gospel is me

- Nothing has hindered me more from sharing the Gospel in my life than my own fears, doubts, and lack of concern for the lost. Answer – 1Peter 3:15, 2Timothy 2:15