

# Evangelism - Part 6

## Common Questions

November 24, 1996

- 2 Timothy 4:1-5

*I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom:<sup>2</sup> Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.<sup>3</sup> For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;<sup>4</sup> and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.<sup>5</sup> But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. NKJV*

- Review & Introduction

We have studied the motivation, message, and methods of evangelism in the past 5 weeks. We have seen why the gospel is necessary and we have considered what the gospel really is and what it really isn't. We should be studying these topics continually so that we become better and better evangelists. Paul commands Timothy to be ready during any season to preach the gospel and give a defense.

As we become involved in the practice of evangelism there are bound to be questions that people will ask, sometimes because they want to know the answers other times because they want to hide from the real subject, their sin.

- The Fallacy of Neutrality

### 2 Corinthians 10:1-6

*Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—who in presence am lowly among you, but being absent am bold toward you.<sup>2</sup> But I beg you that when I am present I may not be bold with that confidence by which I intend to be bold against some, who think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.<sup>3</sup> For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.<sup>4</sup> For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,<sup>5</sup> casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,<sup>6</sup> and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled. NKJV*

- Christians have been perennially guilty of buying into the lie of neutrality. The world wants us to believe that we can find some middle ground upon which to stand before we either move to the right or the left. But as we have seen in these verses, there are only two, not three, kinds of thoughts in the world, those that are taken captive to Christ and those that have not. Note Colossians 2:1-3. Here all knowledge and wisdom is hidden in Christ. Yet we are told to abandon this in order to have a wise debate. But really what we are throwing out is the debate because all knowledge and wisdom must be found relating in one way or another to Christ. When we agree to neutrality we are really agreeing not to debate.

- Apologetics Are Not the Gospel

- There is always a great temptation to think that having the best, all-corners-buttoned-down arguments will produce conversions. The power of God's salvation is not in apologetics. The message of the gospel is the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ in accordance with the scriptures. If someone really wants to know the answers to the following questions then attempt to answer them. But don't be naïve, many times these questions are asked so as to avoid the real topic.

### 1. How do you know God exists?

#### Romans 1:18-25

- Look around. When someone claims that they do not know if God exists, they are telling a lie. All men know that God exists because He has revealed Himself plainly in the creation, but they suppress the truth with lies and they deny that which has been made manifest.

### 1. How do you know the Bible is the word of God?

- Christians should be presuppositional in their thinking about the scriptures. This means that we presume their divine nature and we argue from this truth rather than to this truth. However, the world will want you to abandon this and give some other defense to the internal testimony of scripture. Be careful though, because by doing so we are falling into the

trap of neutrality.

- There are number of ways to defend the divine nature of the Bible. One way might be to begin the with historicity of the scriptures as accurate, reliable, historical documents. If the same standards for measuring historicity are applied to other works are used, this should be very easy. The reliable history in the Bible records the miracles of its authors and messengers which authenticates them as divine messengers. Therefore, their instructions should be received as divine and these instructions include the doctrine of inspiration. Therefore, the progression (which is linear, not circular) concludes with the fact that the Bible is more than a reliable history book. It is a divinely inspired document which no other document can claim and substantiate like it can.

### **1. How could a loving God send good people to hell?**

**Romans 6:23**

*23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. NKJV*

- This question has a true premise but misses the point greatly. A loving God is not sending good people to hell. A wrathful, just God is going to pour out legal justice upon sin and sinners. This is not an act of love it is a pure act of justice. This outpouring of wrath upon the sinner is actually manifesting to those to whom God has extended mercy the depth of His love. Those who go to hell will go there with a "paycheck" in their hands. Those who go to heaven will do so having received mercy and grace; *this* is the hard part to understand.

### **1. Why doesn't God do something about all the evil, pain, and suffering in the world?**

**Psalms 37**

- The holding back of God's wrath upon evil is only temporary. Much of that evil produces the pain and suffering in the world and it will all be judged when He sees fit. People also suffer as the result of accidents or calamity. These are allowed by God for the development of our perseverance and maturity, yet God provides the comfort, grace & maturity.

### **1. What about recent scientific discoveries that refute Christianity?**

- The most common question in this era is the "problem" of evolution. Evolution is taught and believed as fact even though most of its ardent adherents don't realize that their logic is flattened under its own weight. The theory-taught-as-fact of evolution depends on macro evolution yet they cannot substantiate this ever occurring.
- The dinosaurs died in the flood.
- Carbon dating requires the abandonment of the super natural. It assumes progression and cannot handle the supernatural because it does not have the right tools. Any dating technique which requires consistent progression or rates will not be able to handle the supernatural.

### **1. Is the remote villager who never hears the gospel condemned?**

**Romans 3:22-23**

*22b For there is no difference;<sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, NKJV*

- Yes. Not hearing the gospel is not what will bring the wrath of God upon him. The fact that he is a descendant of Adam is what will bring death to him because in Adam all humans fell. If he had heard the gospel and rejected it, it would just further secure the wrath of justice that will be poured out upon him. If he hears the gospel and it pleases God to grant him repentance, then God's grace is secured in him. As we have already seen, all men are without excuse. No one will have an excuse like, "Oh, I didn't know anything about you Lord." All of his divine attributes have been made evident: sovereignty, monotheistic, orderly, logical, omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence.

### **1. Aren't all of the religions of the world really saying the same thing?**

**John 14:6**

*6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. NKJV*

- This question usually arises from a person who has only a cursory knowledge of world religions. In many cases there are some similarities of major tenets between the world's religions. However, Christianity cannot be included in the group because our Lord has specifically instructed that the only way to get to the father is through the atonement of Christ. There is no other name under heaven by which we can be saved. Christianity requires *exclusivity*.