



Step Three: Being Ready

Studying to Give a Thoughtful Answer

to the Disciple, the Skeptic, and the Scoffer

Disciples: _____ of Christ who are looking to learn

Matthew 6:19-20 – “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal”

Skeptics: unconvinced, confused, _____

We know that death is coming. It's unwise to pretend like we're going to live forever in this world. Even if we escape to Mars or other galaxies... eventually the end will come. We ought to be serious about finding out IF there is an afterlife... and what the rules there are going to look like.

All religions and philosophies claim to have or reveal the truth - but only one claims that its founder came back to life from the dead! This claim that Jesus Christ was an actual historical person, and that He actually physically rose from the dead... makes it worth seriously considering the claims of Jesus. (reading: More than a Carpenter, Mere Christianity... etc)

I also hate the idea of death and hell and judgement. But if we really have a deadly problem... and there really is salvation available: then the most loving thing possible is to be honest about the problem and the solution.

Romans 3:23 – Romans 6:23 – Romans 5:8 – Romans 10:9-10

Scoffers: mocking, uninterested, _____

2 Peter 3:3-5 – “Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of...”



Step Four: Shine as a Light

Living out an Answer with our Lives

If we believe that there is an afterlife and a day of judgement...

→ We should Live for the _____ and the _____

Titus 2:12-13 – “Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”



Ready to Give an Answer

Answering the tough questions with our words and with our lives

Part 6: “Is There Really an Afterlife?”

The Text: The Book of Ecclesiastes

1:1-11 – The Endless Emptiness ‘_____ the _____’

“The Preacher” = *qōheleṭ* = the speaker in the assembly = Solomon

1 Kings 3:12 – “...lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.”

1 Kings 11:1-6 – “...For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods”

“Under the Sun” = *taḥaṭ šemeš* = only considering earthly things
= the KEY phrase of Ecclesiastes. Repeated 27 times in this book!

3:19-21 – The death of our _____

→ For all our music and art and literature and medicine and rocket ships
At the end, you die just like a bird smacking into a window – and you’re just done.

2:16-19 – The death of our _____ and works

→ Some people try to _____ their own death through their accomplishments... by leaving a legacy...

→ But the wisest man to ever live points out the _____ of this strategy: eventually, the fools will come, you won’t be relevant anymore, things fall into ruin, and then they’ll forget you anyway

→ Consider Solomon himself: _____ rules from his palace, no one worships in the temple he built, no one enjoys the gardens he built, and the secularists now doubt he even existed.

12:13-14 – The Conclusion: Live for God’s _____

“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.”



Step One: Understanding

Honestly Considering the Hard Questions

- ➔ Shouldn't we just focus on the one life we're _____ we have?
 - Every graveyard in the world tells us this is doomed to fail!
 - Just living for pleasure is doomed to fail!
- Ecclesiastes 2:1** – "I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also is vanity."
- ➔ Certainly a _____ God wouldn't send anyone to Hell!?
 - If there really is judgement after death – if there really is a hell – how much would you have to hate someone to NOT warn them so they could avoid going there?



Step Two: Strengthened Belief

Being Thoughtful About What We Believe

Faith ~ Reason ~ Experience

Faith: A _____ trust in the _____ of Jesus and the Bible

Trust Jesus: He warned us not to trade our _____ for this world!

Mark 8:36 – "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

Trust Jesus: He warned us about the _____ waiting after death

"The same Jesus that we trust about the glories of Heaven, is the same Jesus that urgently warned as about the dangerous reality of Hell."

Matthew 10:28 – "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

Mark 9:47 – "And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire"

Matthew 25:41 – "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels"

John 3:3 – "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Trust Jesus: He came to _____ us from judgement and give us _____!

John 3:16-17 – "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

Trust the Bible: it says there certainly will be a day of _____

Hebrews 9:27 – "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."

Trust the Bible: it says the delay of Justice until death is _____!

2 Peter 3:3-14 – "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Reason: consider the _____ and _____

Evidence:

- ✓ Entropy: The whole _____ is eventually going away
- ✓ There is clearly more to you than just complex _____
We experience love, appreciate beauty, create art...
- ✓ The universal human longing for something _____
"A baby feels hunger: well, there is such a thing as food. A duckling wants to swim: well, there is such a thing as water... If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world." – C.S. Lewis

Logic:

- ✓ **Free Will:** Would it really be better if God _____ our choices and forced people to love and serve Him?
- ✓ **Justice:** A good and fair God cannot _____ evil. A good judge must punish criminals. There must be ultimate accountability.
- ✓ **Standards:** Are we sure _____ should be the final judge of what's right and fair? Can we tell God that He is unfair?

Experience: finding it to be _____ in our own lives

Pastor Josh's experience with death:

- ➔ Death always feels deeply 'wrong'
- ➔ There is too much 'supernatural' and 'unexplainable' in the world