

- **Becoming a Person who sees the different values and attitudes in those to whom we speak**
  - I don't know and I don't care:
    - We can't be overly gentle with those who remain indifferent to sin and the gospel.
    - These must be confronted and warned
    - If they truly DO NOT know, then we must patiently tell the Story...the Truth...and show them love (Jn 4-woman at the well)
  - Self-righteous
    - Non-religious: these simply despise the idea of sin
    - Nominally Religious: Stony hearts that must see their reflection in the mirror of God's Word...Luke 18:9-14 (Pharisee and Tax Collector) your self-righteousness is relative
    - Teach the difference between external acts only and the singular devotion to God in Christ by the Spirit of outward acts that stem from inward change of faith and repentance because of the Person and Work of Christ
  - Pretend Christians
    - Christian in word only
    - Must be shown the character of the new birth by the Spirit in Christ
    - Good to work through the evidences of true salvation in 1 John
  - Deliberate Atheists
    - While intellectual objections are offered, it is far less about intellectual objections and far more about the moral problems of the "heart" ...I like darkness rather than light...John 3:14-20; Romans 1
    - Real questions must be answered to the best of our (or someone else's) ability-honestly and as thorough as possible--- (more on some of those key questions later)

- Learn to appreciate the skeptic and provide “honest answers to honest questions”
- Modest and Hostile Agnostics
  - Modest: Simply do not know what to think about faith and religion in general
    - Do not deny that there is truth in the area of faith and religious thought, nor do they deny that others may know about this truth. They simply know that they do not know it...at least not yet.
    - I enjoy this crew. It is a mostly philosophically reasonable position to hold. When these folk come to know Christ, their convictions will be real and genuinely their own.
  - Hostile Agnostics on the other hand
    - Not only say that THEY do not know the truth about faith or religious convictions, they claim NO ONE knows...Therefore EVERYONE should give up any and all religious convictions.
    - Yet to claim that NO ONE knows anything about a particular area of knowledge is to claim a certain superiority over those who claim to know.
    - This person actually claims an almost godlike knowledge of the human condition even though they claim to have no true knowledge about religious things
    - Inherent problem it seems to me...Do we live as agnostics? CAN we live as agnostics?
    - Biblical Christianity’s beliefs (and other religious beliefs in general) are not merely intellectual theories about which we could suspend judgment...it wouldn’t really matter if a theory were true or not if it had absolutely zero impact on life I suppose

- Problem is that religious conviction...biblical convictions, concern life and how life should be lived
- Since we cannot suspend judgment about life itself (try as you may) in the end we cannot be neutral about religious faith.
- We are not neutral people when it comes to issues of faith...we make very practical decisions which show basic convictions day in and day out...for good or for bad!
- Sincerely Interested
  - The Holy Spirit has prompted a need within these people...
  - There is some conviction of sin...and usually some conviction of guilt...Now what am I supposed to do with this? Can anyone help?
  - Show difference between Me-centered (works-centered) and God-centered (Christ-centered grace)-John 3
  - Stay on point---don't get caught up in silly tangential arguments
  - What's your story in your context anyway? These people are around us, perhaps even here
- **Becoming a person who asks good questions**
  - Purposed Conversation that is going somewhere-(chart)
  - Moving from Common Interests/Shared Experiences to Values and Attitudes to Personal Beliefs

## C. Stephan Evans, Why Believe

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### Clues to God's Reality

1. **Cosmic Wonder:** There is something or someone behind this whole deal
2. **The Mystery of Purposive Order:** That something is more like a someone with intelligence and purpose for the order and design of the whole deal
3. **The Mystery of the Moral Order:** But what is this Mind or who is this someone? What might they be like? What is this person's character?
4. **The Mystery of Persons:** Who are we anyway? How do I explain human nature? How might I explain human desires?
5. **God's self-revelation (WORD):** If God is real and I really want him, how can I find him?
6. **Who is Jesus and why does he matter?:** Was Jesus really God? Why should I accept the Christian Scriptures as true and authoritative?
7. **The Questions that follow:** Then why does a good God allow...?
8. **But, in the end, isn't Christianity just...**a) an unscientific joke that cannot answer serious questions b) a psychological projection. c) sexist and oppressive of women. d) a tool of reactionary political and economic perspectives
9. **So, here's the Gospel again: New Life in Christ:** There's good news and bad news
10. **So what are you going to do?:** Surrender/Repent/Believe or Walk Away?