Socrates believed that the unexamined life is not worth living. Socrates lived to teach this truth to others. When accused of corrupting the youth and acts against the state because he challenged Athenians to lead the examined life, Socrates’ insults and ridicule provoke the jurors to understand and agree with his life's purpose. To do otherwise would violate all Socrates believed about living a good life.

Socrates’ choice to goad his jurors cost him his life, but it furthered his mission to educate Athenians to live the good life of philosophy. Socrates believed he had to obey the god who directed him to philosophize. In order to fulfill the prophecy of the Oracle of Delphi and to stay consistent with his own philosophy, Socrates could not use common techniques like begging for mercy or admitting he did wrong. So Socrates used ridicule to awaken the Athenians and challenge them to examine their lives just as he did. Rather than making his life more important than his message, Socrates continued to exhort Athenians to his beliefs. This included the insult that the jurors charged with knowing something did not know anything unless they listened to Socrates.

Even in the face of death, Socrates exercised insult and ridicule to continue to challenge, teach, and provoke Athenians to lead the examined life. His defense itself served as an example to Athenians of fealty to his path to knowledge, wisdom, and the good life.

Word Count: 242 with my name 240 without.