

Apologetics in Evangelism 101

The Role of an Ambassador

Even if you know the Bible well, you will not be a good ambassador for Christ if you use ineffective tactics.

Three Basic Skills for the Ambassador

1. **CONTENT:** (Strategic) Know the central message of God's kingdom and be aware of the typical issues others will bring to discussions.
2. **METHOD:** (Tactical) Be comfortable using the tools of a diplomat to express yourself clearly and persuasively.
3. **MANNER:** (Operational) Embody the character of Christ as you interact with people. Be gracious and charitable.

Principled Arguing

Avoid quarreling about foolish speculations (2Tim 2:14, 23)

Do confront and urge when necessary (2Tim 4:1-2). Do it in a fair, reasonable, and gracious way. Let the Spirit control your words and actions.

Leave a Stone in His Shoe

Don't rush to reaping in every conversation. Sometimes the fruit is not ripe. Be faithful in planting, watering and weeding. God will reap.

Make a goal to give each person something to consider that is difficult to ignore, like a stone in his shoe.

The Columbo Tactic

What Is It? Rather than quarrel, ask questions that invite thoughtful dialogue.

Advantages of Columbo Tactic

- Sincere questions show that you are interested in what the person thinks.
- Questions can help you learn about the person and begin to build a relationship.
- Questions give you a way to make progress on a point without being pushy.
- Questions can help you guide the conversation.

Basics of Using Columbo Tactic

“What do you mean by that?”

Use variations of this question to gather information. Your tone should be mild and inquisitive. Make an effort to understand **WHAT** the person means. (Sometimes people have not thought

through the issues.) Be patient. Use questions to help the person state his views specifically instead of in vague generalities.

“How did you come to that conclusion?”

Use this type of question to find out WHY the person believes what he believes. Opinions are not proofs. Whoever makes the claim is responsible for providing the proof. An assertion without evidence is not useful.

When someone makes an assertion, ask yourself:

- Is it possible?
- Is it plausible (consistent with other factors)?
- Is it probable (more likely than other options)?

Questions

(Scroll to next page)

Questions

Important

When witnessing to people of other religions, be sensitive to not put their religion down, focus on Jesus, and show the difference in a way to let them see the flaw in theirs. Though we may ask a question about their faith, and use it to make a point, our dialogue and explanation itself must not be around putting their faith down. Instead, focus more on Jesus and the Bible.

Write examples of pretexts for them to pick from:

- (Hindu) Hey, you should tell me about your faith, which God do you believe in? Are you very religious? What's the most interesting thing or something you love the most about it?
- ... you know, I heard this/read about it. What do you think about it?
- Hey, do you have a moment, I was just thinking about this, and since you're here can I ask you?
- Hey, do you have a moment, I was just thinking about this, do you mind me asking you too?
- ... How did your celebration go? I'd like to hear about your traditions, tell me about it! ... What does it mean? (Acknowledge...) Oh that's possible? ... (Thank you for talking about it)

General

Q 1. Do you think all religions/gods are one or the same?

(If yes) How so? Because all teach really different things?

(If no) What is the most reliable? Because all teach really different things? Think about it.

Answer 1-

If yes - It's actually interesting that all religions teach drastically different things. There could be a fraction of things that may be similar, but those aren't the defining factors of each of those religions. So if all are that different how can they be the same?

And if all claim to be true, how can the truth be all these different things? Religious truth is objective, not subjective.

If no: It's not wrong to believe whatever you do, but it's definitely sad to not ask questions and test 3 things about it - It's historical evidence, present relevance and active reality of its power today.

(We will never find any religion that fulfills and satisfies these 3 aspects, except Christianity)

General

Q2. Do you think good works take us to heaven?

Answer 1-

Most religions help people who are sinful be better by morals or doing good deeds, but that doesn't necessarily change or transform our nature. However only Jesus offers us more. Here is what it looks like:

Step 1: Show humanities state-

Would you agree that we live in a broken world where people can be soo evil? There's news about rape, murder, ruthless crimes, and many other things that are more than common. Alongside this, even all other people who are considered good are not completely capable of being good too. Though we're better than criminals, we sin too. We all have our shortcomings, and that makes all people guilty. We are all guilty of sin and we are completely incapable of being good (ex. our addictions).

Step 2: Consequence of it-

The single consequence of sin for all people is hell/death. There is emptiness in such a life, we always chase after things that never satisfy us.

Doing good works still doesn't change our sinful nature and guilt. God is holy and just, so we are all guilty of sin.

Step 3: Our Hope-

"Good" doesn't complete the equation that qualifies us for heaven. But only God's grace and our faith in Him. Because we are completely incapable of saving ourselves and being without sin, God paid the price for us and forgave us, receiving us back to himself.

Atheists & Agnostics

Q3. We agree that there is evil and suffering and nothing stops it. So does that suggests God doesn't exist?

Answer 1: Evil

Would you agree that people can do really evil and wicked things? Bad things happen around us every day.

Then we must agree that if our conscience view these things as bad, there is a moral standard by which we are measuring what is good and bad. There is no "good" without any authoritative source. If there is a moral standard, there is a moral standard giver.

But if we think there is no moral law giver, where does our understanding of good and evil come from?

Answer 2: Suffering

The Bible begins with the account of creation, showing God's authority and perfection. However, God gave us free will, and the birth of choice made way for sin to create an ever-building series of occurrences that we call moral suffering and natural suffering. The Bible talks of how Jesus died on the cross as a sacrifice for the forgiveness of all sins, and eventually ends with a glimpse of a new creation where there will no more suffering.

Answer 3:

Christianity has the best explanation while atheism's statement only hangs on an assumption.

(The ontological argument) Most human beings have a rooted idea of a supreme being. Where did this idea come from? It points to the creator who we are aware of subconsciously. Thus God must in fact exist.

However, our lack of understanding of an issue or an occurrence, can not possibly deny God's existence.

Atheists & Agnostics

Q4. What's your take on evolution and creation?

(Did you know that you need more faith to believe in evolution than in creation?)

Answer 1:

(Kalam cosmological argument)

(i) Whatever begins to exist has a cause of its existence, (ii) The universe began to exist, and (iii) Therefore, the universe has a cause of its existence.

Answer 2:

- There is no missing link discovered. If man evolved from apes, there should be evidence of half-man-half-ape.
- Cross-breeding of animals can be done only within its kind. If two animals mated like a lion and a tiger, the result species will be infertile and cannot reproduce itself, hence numerous species could not come out of one kind. The bible says God created according to their kind.
- It is claimed that chimps are the closest cousins to man and we evolved from them. But from the 6 out of 10 similar points between us and chimps, the other four that chimps don't possess is language, communication, creativeness and intelligence. When did these differences come in humans? Which chimp was found to be in it's mid-transformation to man?

Muslim

Q 5. Most believe that Jesus never claimed to be God so he isn't God, and he's just a prophet. What do you think?

Answer 1:

The basis on which Jesus was crucified was the fact that they easily understood that he claimed to be God. They found no fault in him, but they easily understood this and it was their biggest problem.

Also, the Muslim scriptures were written 600 years after the time of Jesus.

I think its safe to trust the eyewitness testimonies of those in the Bible, which were written within the first 100 years.

Q 6. Is Quran is a direct narration of Prophet Mohammad or was it compiled by people after a long channel of narrations? Do you think they could have written it word by word as per the first narration or the actual events?

Answer 1:

The writers of Quran to whom this burden was given to compile it together argued and fought amongst themselves to decide what goes in the book and what doesnt (written in Sahih Bukhari Vol 6 Ch 6)

Hindu

(In a real-life senerao with a Hindu, if time permits, always ask general questions about their faith, or tradition or practices, to genuinely hear from them. Only then use apologetical questions to help them think. In fact, get them to ask you about your faith when you genuinely ask them about theirs, it opens a natural door for you to speak and for them to listen.)

Q 7. All religions teach fundamentally different things, and all claim to be true. Do you think there can be many truths?

Answer 1:

(If yes,) Claim that truth about a supreme being is objective and can not be subjective.

(If no) Then how can we know what's truer or the truth?

It's not wrong to believe whatever you do, but it's definitely sad to not ask questions about what could really be true. I think we should ask 3 important questions- It's historical evidence, present relevance and active reality of its power today. (We will never find any religion that fulfills and satisfies these 3 aspects, except Christianity)

Hindu

Q 8. What is your position in your faith, what's your idea of God?

Answer 1:

In most cases don't contrast christian and hindu beliefs, it may come across as arrogant. Also we may not have much understanding about their extremely diverse faith or won't have more answers. They will appreciate us not putting them down, but when we show that we have found love, joy and peace in Christ, that will be attractive. So share your testimony and how God has changed your life.

Hindu

(Use this only with someone you are already talking to or know, as it's not meant to be a 1st question)

Q 9. What's your understanding of "sin" and it's impact on our life?

(Hinduism has no concept of sin, and that we determine good or bad consequences for ourselves based on our actions, in some point in the future. karma)

Answer 1:

Would you agree that we live in a broken world where people can be so evil? There's news about rape, murder, ruthless crimes, and many other things that are more than common. Alongside this, even all other people who are considered good are not completely capable of being good too. Though we're better than criminals, we all sin. That makes all people guilty. We are all guilty of sin and we are completely incapable of being good (ex. our addictions).

The bible teaches us that God is holy and when humans first sinned, they created separation from God because of sin entered our life. Then we see how God planned to restore mankind back to him and made a way for us to be forgiven and transforms us, because we could never do it by ourselves, no matter how much we try. Jesus paid the price for our sins and forgave us, makes us clean and transforms us too.

Catholic

Q 10. What do you think about worship of Mary as God? Since it's prominent for catholics, what's your take on it?

Answer:

- Only Jesus is the mediator and God - 1 Timothy 2:5 For, There is one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and humanity—the man Christ Jesus.
 - Jesus promises that we can ask him and he will do it.- John 14:13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.
 - An angel responded to John saying - Revelation 19:10 Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God." For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.
 - Isaiah 42:8 I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.
-

Catholic

Q 11. What's your take on purgatory? No scriptures talk about it as a fact.

Answer:

Scriptures don't talk about purgatory. All the scriptures that are that to imply purgatory, don't really imply it. It is an assumption and not certain by scripture. Infact Romans 3 teaches that we are made righteous by faith (it is complete) and we are justified by Jesus, but we are being sanctified and made holy. If not all sins are forgiven and we aren't made perfect, Jesus is not just in punishing us or the Holy Sprit didn't do a good job at sanctifying us.

Catholic

Q 12. Deeds over faith -

Answer:

The verse that the catholics quote is ?

"You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone." **James 2:24**

The Bible also says for ^zby grace you have been saved ^athrough faith. And this is ^bnot your own doing; ^cit is the gift of God, ^dnot a result of works, ^eso that no one may boast. **Romans 3**

This verse talks specifically about the deeds of faith and not deeds of charity or service that you are justified with.