

College Evangelism Training

The “THINK” Method of Evangelism

Dave Geisler, President,
Meekness and Truth Ministries
www.MeeknessAndTruth.org

I wish to thank Eric Patterson, Steve Morrison, Glenn McGorty, David Mendez, and Pastor Chuck Barber for their contribution towards developing this curriculum. Special thanks to Pastor Charles Lee who originally came up with the THINK acrostic. Parts of the THINK Model have been adapted from the ideas behind Glenn McGorty's "Mirror Model" and Dr. Norman Geisler's Apologetic Approach. This model has been developed in co-operation with Hill Country Bible Church in Austin Texas. We are currently developing a version of this model that will be helpful for lay people.

Please let us know if this material helps you train others to more effectively reach others!

Dave Geisler, President, Meekness and Truth Ministries

Overview

Let me explain how this manual should be used: (Normally each week's material takes 1 to 1½ hours.)

Week 1: Teach the THINK Model. (TH) This PowerPoint can be downloaded off of our website.

Week 2: Teach the THINK Model. (INK) This PowerPoint can be downloaded off of our web-site.

Week 3: Do the "quiz" to see what they learned from week one & two.

Review the model from week one & two, making sure they understand all of the key points of the acoustic.

Go through Think Model Application exercise; using the "Answering Objections" Power-point presentation to clarify how to use the THINK Methodology in answering their questions. (This can be downloaded from our website.)

Week 4: Review the Model.

Go over how to use the survey (Terrorism Survey). Work through teaching survey PowerPoint presentation.

Take time to deal with any additional questions that need to be addressed. Make sure they really understand the model. ***Then practice the model by participating in the Terrorism Survey on your campus. Once you are comfortable with the approach, take others with you to pray and observe so they can catch the model as well by observing your interaction with others.***

Week 5: Using the THINK Method (More Practice)

In this exercise we want to teach others how to practice four specific skills of application.

1. How to hear discrepancies
2. How to ask the right questions to illuminate the truth
3. How to uncover the real barriers to the Gospel
4. How to build a bridge to the Gospel

Note: *Our experience has shown that students have difficulty working on all four skills at once, so we suggest they develop some confidence with one before moving on to the next.*

After the training is over:

Get them to look for opportunities to use this model in witnessing to their non-Christian friends on a daily basis. Adapt the survey to meet the needs of your group and use it to do evangelism with others on your campus. (Make sure you keep a record of the statistical data for analyzing patterns of belief)

Supplemental PowerPoint teaching materials:

1. Do all religions lead to God? (by Norman Geisler)
2. The Reliability of the Bible (by Dave Geisler)
3. Does it matter what we believe (by Dave Geisler)
4. A Think Method for witnessing to Muslims (by Steve Morrison & Dave Geisler)

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Evangelism Training for the New Millennium
The “THINK” Method of Evangelism
Meekness and Truth Ministries (Dave Geisler)
www.meeknessandtruth.org

Intro: (Clarifying misconceptions that affect our witness)

Evangelism is a process (I Cor. 3:6)

Being ready means to eagerly anticipate their objections (I Pet. 3:15)

Biblical faith must have an object to be valid (I Cor. 15:14)

- * The Important distinction between “belief that” and “belief in”

Trust in the Holy Spirit

- **To empower us to speak in a way that makes a difference. (Acts 14:1)**
*Remember that we are just an instrument. (I Cor. 2:14)
*Evidence can persuade one to “believe that” but not “believe in” Christ.
(Js. 2:19)
- **To empower us to live godly lives (Phil 1:14).**

Hear the discrepancies / contradictions

- **The contradictions can be between what they say they believe and how they live. (Gal. 2:14-16)**
- **The contradiction can be between two mutually contradictory beliefs that they hold. (Acts 17: 22-30)**

Examples:

Jesus is my Savior. / I can measure up.

The Bible is reliable. / I must do good works to be saved.

- **The contradiction can be in the statement itself.**

Examples:

You should be skeptical about everything.

Always avoid making absolute statements.

God is so far beyond us that we cannot really know anything about Him.

There really is no absolute truth.

Illuminate discrepancies by asking questions

- **Questions that uncover the meaning of certain unclear terms.**

Examples:

Terms like: good, Savior, died for us, Son of God

- **Questions that expose false belief systems.**

Examples:

Does it matter what we believe?

Can all religious views be right?
Why don't you believe that the Bible is reliable?
Do you think people will be held accountable for how they live? If so what is the standard? (Matt. 5:48; Jn. 2:10)

Navigate around barriers

- **Find the right balance in your approach between objective and subjective evidence! (Acts 14:1; Phil. 1:14)**
- **Determine whether the barrier is an intellectual or emotional question or concern.**
- **Uncover the emotional baggage that they are carrying.**
- **Determine whether their issue is a legitimate question or a smoke screen.**

Formula: If I could answer your question, would that help?

- **Find out what their biggest barrier to Christianity is.**
- **Find out what would motivate them to get answers in these areas.**

Examples of Barriers:

Believing all religious views are equally valid

Response: Show them that Jesus is totally unique. (Jn. 10:30; 14:6; Acts 4:12)

Being unwilling to commit to a religious perspective

Response: Ask them if it were possible to know the truth, would they want to know it?

- **Construct a bridge from those beliefs held in common (even those they are not quite aware of) to a point where someone may be open to seriously consider the claims of Christ.**

* Map out a logical bridge from God's existence to Jesus proving He was the only way to God (See our web-site under *Defense of Christianity Outline*).

Building blocks to construct the bridge:

1. It matters what you believe.
2. Not all religious viewpoints can be right.
3. Faith must have an object to have merit.
4. Jesus made unique claims compared to any other major religious leader. (Jn. 10:30; Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12; I Tim. 2:5)
5. The proof of Christ's claims have no parallel among major religious leaders.
6. Without God, some people find it difficult to find meaning in their life.

Keep the door open for sharing the Gospel (2 Tim. 4:2)

- **Remember the goal.**
- **Look for opportunities to transition to spiritual discussions.**

Example:

In talking about evil you could say:

You know _____, there is a lot about the problem of evil that I don't know. But I do know that there will come a day when God will hold people accountable for the evil acts they have committed and the suffering that they have caused (2 Cor. 5:10; Heb 9:27). That is why it is important that we have a right relationship with God!

Has anyone ever shared with you how you can know God personally?

College Evangelism Training
The “THINK” method of Evangelism Quiz
Meekness and Truth Ministries www.meeknessandtruth.org

Do not put your name on this sheet!

1. Christian Apologist J.P. Moreland said in his book, *Love God with all your Mind*, that, “If truth and reasonableness are not uppermost in our presentation of the truth to a pagan culture, already predisposed to regarding religion as a set of private feelings, then we will constantly hear this response. Well that’s fine if having those _____ (fill in the blank)

Love God with all your Mind, P. 30

2. Give one of the three reasons I mentioned why it matters what you believe?

3. The important thing for us as Christians according to I Cor. 15:14 is that we have Faith. (True or False) _____

4. According to I Cor. 3:6 what is the element that I said is missing in many common definitions of evangelism.

5. The phrase “**being ready to give an answer for the hope we have**” in I Pet. 3:15 means to eagerly anticipate their objection or question. (True or False)

6. List the five stages to the THINK model of evangelism

College Evangelism Training
The “THINK” method of Evangelism Quiz (Answers)
Meekness and Truth Ministries www.meeknessandtruth.org

1. Christian Apologist J.P. Moreland said in his book, *Love God with all your Mind*, that, “If truth and reasonableness are not uppermost in our presentation of the truth to a pagan culture, already predisposed to regarding religion as a set of private feelings, then we will constantly hear this response. Well that’s fine if having those feelings helps you. (fill in the blank)

Love God with all your Mind, P. 30

2. Give one of the three reasons I mentioned why it matters what you believe?

Answer:

- **What you believe will affect how you live!**
- **Faith must have an object to be valid (I Cor. 15:14).**
- **If Christianity is true, it makes an eternal difference (Matt. 5:30).**

3. The important thing for us as Christians according to I Cor. 15:14 is that we have Faith. (True or False)

Answer:

False - It is the object of our faith that is important according to the Apostle Paul in I Cor. 15:17.

4. According to I Cor. 3:6 what is the element that I said is missing in many common definitions of evangelism.

Answer:

That Evangelism is also a process. Our goal then should be helping our non-Christian friends take one step closer to Christ every day.

5. The phrase “**being ready to give an answer for the hope we have**” in I Pet. 3:15 means to eagerly anticipate their objection or question! (True or False)

Answer:

True – It was used in Matt. 24:44 & Luke 12:40 in reference to “being ready” or eagerly anticipating Christ’s return. It has the same idea in I Pet. 3:15.

6. List the five stages to the THINK model of evangelism

Answer:

Trust in the Holy Spirit
Hear the discrepancies / contradictions
Illuminate discrepancies by asking questions
Navigate around barriers
Keep the door open for sharing the Gospel (2 Tim. 4:2)

Week 3: THINK Model: Application

By Dave Geisler (Meekness and Truth Ministries) www.meeknessandtruth.org

Instructions:

Pair off in twos. Have one person play the role of the unbeliever and the other the role of the believer. For the sake of this exercise let's just assume the believer has already found a way to transition into a spiritual discussion. Now the person playing the non-believer must bring up one of the eleven points below (which ever one is circled by the instructor). The person playing the Christian should then try to answer the objection raised, while uncovering the real barriers, and help that person move one step closer to a decision for Christ. Remember to use clarifying questions such as, "what do you mean by" to get the person to reveal his or her views. Remember also to listen carefully so that you can clearly understand what they are saying. Also, use the questions under "Navigate" in the THINK outline to discover their real barriers! Review the points on your handout under "Navigate around barriers." After 5 minutes switch roles.

CONVERSATIONAL RESPONSES TO COMMON OBJECTIONS OR STATEMENTS

- 1. "God knows I don't measure up. I just try to do the best I can!"**
- 2. "It doesn't matter what you believe as long as you are sincere and you don't hurt anyone else."**
- 3. "What is so special about Christianity? I thought that all religions basically teach the same thing."**
- 4. "How can you claim there is only one way to God? Aren't you being a little arrogant and exclusive?"**
- 5. "So many people disagree, so doesn't that show that relativism must be true."**
- 6. "What about those in other countries who have never had the opportunity to hear the Gospel?"**
- 7. "It's okay to believe what you want, but it is wrong to try to convert others."**
- 8. "How can we know if the Bible is reliable?"**
- 9. "Can you prove to me that God does in fact exist?"**
- 10. "If God is so loving, how can there be a hell?"**
- 11. "How can there be a loving God when there is so much evil in the world?"**

Week 4 College Evangelism Training

Introduction to Terrorism & Religious Perspective Survey

Dave Geisler (Meekness and Truth Ministries)

Please Note:

One new aspect of the survey is that we want to track each question where the student changes their answer to a particular question after further clarification. For example, if they answer "just a sad event" to question 1, the interviewer should follow-up by asking, "Was it just a sad event, or was it something more?" If the student then changes their mind and says, "Yes, it was evil", do the following. Circle their first answer ("just a sad event") and put a "1" by it, then circle the second answer and put a "2" by it.

Introduction:

Do you have time to do a survey?

What is it about?

It's a survey that explores the connection between religious beliefs and moral values in light of the problems with Terrorism? It will take about 10 or 15 minutes, depending on how many questions you may have.

After you sit down with them say:

"Let me clarify for you a little more about what we are doing."

"We are working in conjunction with a Christian student organization called Impact Texas."

"The reason we are doing this survey is so that we can get a better idea of what people think about religious issues as it relates to Sept. 11th and also to help people think through what they believe and more importantly why they believe it?"

"You will see that as we go through the survey, it may raise some additional questions in your mind that you may want answers to. We will publish the results of this survey in the campus newspaper at the end of the year."

Terrorism & Religious Perspective Survey

Location: _____ Date: _____
Name: _____ Major/Work: _____
Age: 18-25 ____ 26-35 ____ 46-55 ____ 56-65 ____ 66+ ____

1. On September 11th, 2001 terrorists attacked the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, killing thousands of people.

How would you best categorize this event?

- a. Just a sad event
- b. Just a tragedy
- c. An act of real evil
- d. Other: _____

If they say just a sad event or tragedy ask:

"Was it just a sad event or tragedy or was it more than that?"

"Was it really something wrong and therefore an act of evil?"

"Were Hitler's acts just a sad event?"

If they talk about the terrorist being motivated to do it out of political reasons, and therefore may have had good ends for doing it, say:

“My question wasn’t what was their political motivation, but was there something really wrong with what they did? Was it a real act of evil?”

2. All of us were affected by Sept. 11th in some way. Many have confessed that the events of 9/11 have caused them to refocus on what is important in life.

Have you changed any priorities in your personal life since Sept. 11th?

- a. No changes
- b. Some changes
- c. Many changes
- d. Other

If so, would you be willing to share with us in what ways, and why?

3. The people who went to work at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on Sept. 11th were unaware of the events that would take place that day. Some of the lessons we learned from all of this were how vulnerable we are and how fragile life can be.

In your opinion, since 9/11, have you become more open or less open, to discussing spiritual things, or about the same?

- a. More open
- b. Less open
- c. About the same

In what way, and why? _____

4. Keeping in mind the carnage cause by terrorist attacks around the world, how do you determine if any action committed by a person or a group of people is right or wrong?

- a. By just how I feel
- b. By my religious convictions
- c. By a majority consensus or societies customs
- d. By a universal moral law
- e. Other: _____

If they say by how I feel, say to them:

“Do you think it was right for Hitler to kill 6 million Jews because it felt right for him?”

Explain to them that by a universal moral law, we mean it is right or wrong for all people, at all times, and in all cultures.

Clarify that even if there are many things we disagree on as to whether it is right and wrong, if we all agree to at least one thing as being right or wrong, it implies the existence of some kind of moral law.

5. In light of increasing terrorist attacks around the world, to what extent do you think one’s belief system impacts his / her behavior?

- a. No extent
- b. Some extent
- c. To a great extent
- d. Other _____

Why do you believe this? _____

6. In your opinion, does it really matter what we believe about religious truth?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If so, in what way, and why?

7. On September 14th, 2001 during the National Day of Prayer in the National Cathedral in Washington D.C., Muslims, Jews, and Christians came together to pray for our nation. How do you view various religions? (Choose only one.)
- a. They are all misinformed because there is no God.
 - b. All religions are essentially the same.
 - c. Various religions are distinctly different.
 - d. As long as one has faith in one, it doesn't matter what religion one holds.
 - e. Other: _____

Why do you believe this? _____

What if they say, they no longer exist because there is no God? Say:

“What has led you to believe that there is no God that exists anywhere? For example, if most of the people who have ever lived believed in some kind of ultimate reality whether Theistic (One eternal God who created the Universe who is separate from it) or Pantheist (The belief that God is the Universe), why is it that you don't believe there is any kind of reality out there?”

What if they say all religions are essentially the same? Say to them: (Two options)

Option One:

“Either Jesus is the Messiah or He isn't. If He isn't the Messiah, then the Christians are wrong. If He is the Messiah, then the Jews are wrong. So one way or another somebody's right and somebody's wrong! Everyone can't be right at the same time, can they?”

Greg Koukl, Christian Apologist

Taken from web-site at: <http://www.str.org>

Option Two:

“Let me show you a chart to clarify the question a little better.” Show them the chart (see our web-site under outlines). Say, “This chart represents different ways to view the nature of God. For example in these three religions (Christianity, Judaism, and Islam), there is a belief in one eternal God who always existed, who created the universe and who is separate from the Universe. Whereas in Atheism and Theravada Buddhism, there is no God. And in Polytheism and Mahayana Buddhism there are many gods.”

Simple question: “Can there be one God, no God, and many God's at the same time?”

But what if they say, "God can manifest himself in many different forms so they can all be right."?

More complicated Answer:

“Can God be identical to the Universe as in some forms of Buddhism and Hinduism, and separate from the Universe as in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, at the same time and in the same sense?

“Can God be eternal before the universe was created as in (Christianity, Judaism, and Islam) and at the same time be eternal with the universe as in Hinduism and some forms of Buddhism, at the same time in the same sense?

Can a woman be pregnant and not- pregnant at the same time and in the same sense?”

If not everyone can be right, would you agree that someone has to be wrong? This question then naturally leads to, If someone is wrong and something does exist, then there must be some view of reality that is right. How do you determine what that is?

8. Do you think the terrorists who died on Sept. 11th will be held accountable for their actions in the next life?
- a. Yes
 - b. No

Why or why not?

9. Many people died on September 11th. What do you think happened to the dead?
- a. They no longer exist.
 - b. They went to heaven.
 - c. No one knows.
 - d. Other: _____

Why do you believe this? _____

What if they say, they no longer exist because there is no God. Answer:

"Do you have any particular reason for believing there is no God? "

"Why don't you believe in some kind of God? For example, if most of the people who have ever lived believed in some kind of ultimate reality whether Theistic (One eternal God who created the Universe who is separate from it) or Pantheist (The belief that God is the Universe), why is it that you don't believe there is any kind of reality out there?"

10. In a previous survey, we discovered that many students tend to think that Christianity is no better or more beneficial than any other religion. Please answer the following statement for yourself.

Among some of my concerns about Christianity, if I was completely honest, my biggest barrier to embracing it is:

- a. Haven't seen enough evidence
- b. Don't have any reason to consider it
- c. Don't really care to change how I live
- d. I've already embraced it
- e. I don't have any barriers
- f. Other _____

Why do you believe this? _____

If they say, "I don't have any reason to consider it," make a mental note. At the completion of the survey, say to them "Can I ask you one additional question about something you said earlier? You said you don't have any reason to consider it, but if Christianity is true and life now is just a drop in a bucket compared to the rest of eternity, wouldn't this question of whether Christianity is right or wrong be something worthy to consider?"

11. Are you aware of the significant differences between Christianity and all other religions?

- Yes _____
- No _____

If so, can you briefly explain in your words what they are?

Explain to them the difference between "do" versus "done."

To explain "do" versus "done" see Bill Hybel's *Contagious Christian Workbook*, p. 169.

- The best we can do is some feeble man-made formulas to work to God, enlighten ourselves, or try to gain God's favor.
- In contrast to that is the Gospel which says, it has been done, you just need to accept the gift that God has provided.

Note: If you sense that the person is open and the Holy Spirit is working on their hearts, you can say:

"That's the end of the survey but I want to mention this to you; from previous surveys, we discovered that many students had misconceptions about Christianity. We've developed a short 3-minute explanation explaining Christianity in a nutshell, and at the end of the survey we give everyone a chance to hear it. Are you interested?"

Remember! The impact of this survey and the questions that you raise with others will only have a short shelf life with them unless you are diligent to follow up on those who are more open to further dialogue. Develop friendships with them and / or invite them to your gatherings! Always try to get at least an e-mail address to offer opportunities to attend future discussion groups and other events.

Why the specific survey questions?

Questions 1-2 gives them an opportunity to open up about how they "feel" about what happened on 9/11, and how it has changed them in general. It also creates an environment for further discussion about "other" matters.

Question 3 allows them to consider in what ways are they more "open" to spiritual things in light of what has happened. (The idea of being open is a very post-modern concept that we are capitalizing on.)

Questions 4 challenges those who don't believe in God to wrestle with the implications of that belief as it relates to 9/11. Specifically we want them to understand that, if there is no God, their belief that the terrorists were wrong has no real moral foundation but is merely a personal preference.

Questions 5, 6, & 7 ties in belief in right / wrong and religious beliefs.

Question 8 & 9 confronts them about their views concerning the afterlife and gives them a reason why they might want to believe in an after life as it relates to the terrorist who they "wish" will be judged for their actions.

Questions 10, & 11 asks them to be honest about their real barriers to Christianity and to consider the person of Christ.

Please Note:

If you use this survey or adapt it in any way, we would love a copy of it so we can also pass it on to others who might find it helpful as well. Let's stop reinventing the wheel and work together! Contact us at:

Dave Geisler
Meekness and Truth Ministries (www.meeknessandtruth.org)
dgeisler@meeknessandtruth.org
www.meeknessandtruth.org

Impact Texas is our Christian student organization at U.T. Austin that trains College ministries to more effectively reach skeptics using the methodology of the Think Method (See our website) and this survey.

Name of Interviewer(s) _____

Student Organization _____

Terrorism & Religious Perspective Survey

Location: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Major: _____

Age: 18-25 ____ 26-35 ____ 46-55 ____ 56-65 ____ 66+ ____

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How would you best categorize this event?

- a. Just a sad event
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- c. An act of real evil
- d. Other: _____

2. All of us were affected by Sept. 11th in some way. Many have confessed that the events of 9/11 has caused them to refocus on what is important in life.

Have you changed any priorities in your personal life since Sept. 11th?

- a. No changes
- b. Some changes
- c. Many changes
- d. Other: _____

If so, would you be willing to share with us in what ways, and why?

3. The people who went to work at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on Sept. 11th were unaware of the events that would take place that day. Some of the lessons we learned from all of this was how vulnerable we are and how fragile life can be.

In your opinion, since 9/11, have you become more open or less open, to discussing spiritual things, or about the same?

- a. More open
- b. Less open
- c. About the same

In what way, and why?

4. Keeping in mind the carnage cause by terrorist attacks around the world, how do you determine if any action committed by a person or a group of people is right or wrong?

- a. By how I feel
- b. By my religious convictions
- c. By a majority consensus or societies customs
- d. By a universal moral law
- e. Other: _____

5. In light of increasing terrorist attacks around the world, to what extent do you think one's belief system impacts his / her behavior?

- a. No extent
- b. Some extent
- c. To a great extent
- d. Other: _____

Why do you believe this?

6. In your opinion, does it really matter what we believe about religious truth?

- Yes ___
- No ___

If so, in what way, and why?

7. On September 14th, 2001 during the National Day of Prayer in the National Cathedral in Washington D.C., Muslims, Jews, and Christians came together to pray for our nation. How do you view various religions? (Choose only one.)

- a. They are all misinformed, for there is no God.
- b. All religions are essentially the same.
- c. Various religions are distinctly different.
- d. As long as one has faith in one, it doesn't matter what religion one holds.
- e. Other: _____

Why do you believe this?

8. Do you think the terrorists who died on Sept. 11th will be held accountable for their actions in the next life?

- Yes ___
- No ___

Why or why not?

9. Many people are being killed due to terrorism. What do you think happened to the dead?

- a. They no longer exist.
- b. They went to heaven.
- c. No one knows.
- d. Other: _____

Why do you believe this?

10. In a previous survey, we discovered that many students tend to think that Christianity is no better or more beneficial than any other religion. Please answer the following statement for yourself.

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Among some of my concerns about Christianity, if I was completely honest, my biggest barrier to embracing it is:

- a. Haven't seen enough evidence
- b. Don't have any reason to consider it
- c. Don't really care to change how I live
- d. I've already embraced it
- e. I don't have any barriers
- f. Other: _____

Why do you believe this?

11. Are you aware of the significant differences between Christianity and all other religions?

Yes ___

No ___

If so, can you briefly explain in your words what they are?

Week 4 College Evangelism Training
Practical Suggestions in using Surveys to do Evangelism
Meekness and Truth Ministries www.meeknessandtruth.org

Major points to remember!

- Use the survey to discover their belief system. Many students now hold to beliefs that may be derived from totally different worldviews.
 - At each point of the survey, when possible, expose to some degree the problems in their current belief system without making them so defensive that they stop listening to what you are saying.
- * Remember that finding a balance takes practice!

You want to gently show them the contradictions while still keeping them interested in continuing the conversation. In fact, you want to raise their curiosity level so that they even ask additional questions, just like Jesus did with the woman at the well!

Questions to expose problems in other's perspectives (The Detective Columbo Approach)

General Questions:

"What do you mean by _____?"

"Can you help me understand something? How can you hold (Belief A) and at the same time hold (Belief B)?"

"How did you come to that conclusion?"

Specific Questions:

"Does it matter what we believe?"

"If God did not exist, would it make any difference in how you live? If not why?"

"Is it possible to have any kind of moral foundation without a belief in some kind of God?"

- "If right or wrong is determined by opinion, what about when Hitler's decision that it was okay to kill 6 million Jews. Was it okay because Hitler thought it was "right" for him?"
- "If majority rule determines what is right and wrong, what about during the time of slavery in our country when the majority in the U.S. thought it was okay?"

"Can all religious views be essentially correct?"

"Why don't you believe that the bible is just as historically reliable as other ancient books written around the same time period such as Josephus or Tacitus, or Homer's Iliad?"

"Do you think people will be held accountable for the way they live their lives? If so what is the standard?"

- Do you think Hitler will be in Heaven? If not, what is the standard we all need to measure up to?

With those who classify themselves as Atheist, ask:

- "What are your reasons for believing that there is no ultimate reality, whether it be Theistic or Pantheistic (All is God), especially since most people who ever lived believe in some kind of God?"
- "What are your reasons for believing that naturalistic Darwinistic evolution makes belief in God unnecessary?"
- "If something exists, and something cannot come from nothing, doesn't it follow that something must have always existed?"
- "Are you and I a part of that something that always existed? If so why do you believe this?"

More points to remember!

- Pick your battles with people very carefully:

Don't point out every contradiction they hold.
Keep in Mind: *The results we want to create are: a sense of instability, uncertainty, and insecurity in their belief system.*
- Uncover their real barriers to the Gospel whether stated or not.

Ask God for wisdom in discerning what the "real issues" are that you need to address with your non-Christian friends (Js. 1:5).
- Speak to their heart felt needs in a way that will motivate them to search for additional insight.

Questions to get to the heart issue:

1. "Is the issue you are dealing with that you really need to see evidence that Christianity is true, or is it more a matter of you just want to live your life in a certain way?"
2. "If it were possible (I am not saying it is), but if it were possible to know the truth about religious issues, would you want to know it?"
3. "What kind of evidence would you need to see to convince you that Christianity is true?"
4. "What would motivate you to want to get answers to these kinds of questions?"
5. "How certain are you about your belief system? Would you stake your **eternity** on it?"
6. "How can you be so sure about your beliefs?"

Construct a bridge from those beliefs held in common (even those they are not quite aware of) to a point where someone may be open to seriously consider the claims of Christ

We need to realize of course that some parts of this bridge may be based on subjective evidence as well as objective evidence.

Building Blocks to construct the bridge:

1. It matters what you believe.
2. All religious views do not have equal validity.
3. Jesus' claims are unique compared to any other major religious leader (Jn. 10:30; Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12; I Tim. 2:5)
4. If Christianity were not true, it would be the easiest religion to disprove (I Cor. 15:17-19).
5. The miraculous events surrounding Jesus' life are unique compared to any other major religious leader.
6. Map out a logical bridge from God's existence to showing that Jesus proved that He was the only way to God.

Week 4: College Evangelism Training

Practical Suggestions in using surveys to do Evangelism (Teacher Edition)

Meekness and Truth Ministries www.meeknessandtruth.org

Major points to remember!

- Use the survey to discover their belief system (many students now hold to beliefs that may be derived from totally different worldviews)
- At each point of the survey, when possible, expose to some degree the problems in their current belief system without making them so defensive that they stop listening to what you are saying.

Finding a balance takes practice!

You want to gently show them the contradictions while still keeping them interested in continuing the conversation. In fact you want to raise their curiosity level so that they ask even additional questions, just like Jesus did with the woman at the well!

* Remember that one of the benefits of using this approach is that it keeps others - not you - on the defensive regarding their beliefs.

For example, one Crusade Staff person said,

So many times when I share my faith I have the mindset to “defend” my beliefs, and why I feel that I’m right. This model allows me to question the person I’m sharing with and have them “defend” what and why they believe the way they do. It’s a great tool to keep control of the conversation and to show the inconsistencies in other world-views.

Jeremy, Campus Crusade Staff

Questions to expose problems in other’s perspectives

General Questions:

"What do you mean by _____?"

"Can you help me understand something? How can you hold (Belief A) and at the same time hold (Belief B)?"

"How did you come to that conclusion?"

Specific Questions:

"Does it matter what we believe?"

"If God did not exist, would it make any difference in how you live? If not why?"

"Is it possible to have any kind of moral foundation without a belief in some kind of God?"

- "If right or wrong is determined by opinion, what about when Hitler's decision that it was okay to kill 6 million Jews. Was it okay because Hitler thought it was “right” for him?"
- "If majority rule determines what is right and wrong, what about during the time of slavery in our country when the majority in the U.S. thought it was okay?"

"Can all religious views be essentially right?"

"Why don't you believe that the bible is just as historically reliable as other ancient books written around the same time period, such as Josephus or Tacitus, or Homer's Iliad?"

"Do you think people will be held accountable for the way they live their lives? If so what is the standard?"

- "Do you think Hitler will be in Heaven? If not, what is the standard we all need to measure up to?"

With those who classify themselves as Atheist, ask:

- "What are your reasons for believing that there is no ultimate reality whether it be Theistic or Pantheistic (All is God), especially since most people who ever lived, believe in some kind of God?"
- "What are your reasons for believing that naturalistic Darwinistic evolution makes belief in God unnecessary?"
- "If something exists, and something cannot come from nothing, doesn't it follow that something must have always existed?"
- "Are you and I a part of that something that always existed? If so why do you believe this?"

More points to remember!

- Pick your battles with people very carefully:

Don't point out every contradiction they hold. **(Don't show them every imperfection they have!)**

The flesh may lead us to pounce on people and show them why they are wrong and we are right! However, we need the Holy Spirit to lead us to discern, when, where and how to use apologetics tools. Remember, You don't go to war with a peashooter, but you don't go to target practice with a bazooka!

Chip away at the legs of their worldview to help them understand that their worldview perspective may not be stable enough to rely on.

Keep in Mind: *The results we want to create are: a sense of instability, uncertainty, and insecurity in their belief system.*

- Uncover their real barriers to the Gospel whether stated or not.

Ask God for wisdom in discerning what are the "real issues" you need to address with your non-Christian friends (Js. 1:5).

Remember that God is the great physician. If we can discern God's diagnoses, we can give the person the proper medication.

- Speak to their heart felt needs in a way that will motivate them to search for additional insight.

Questions to get to the heart issue:

1. "Is the issue you are dealing with is that you really need to see evidence that Christianity is true, or is it more a matter of you just want to live your life in a certain way?"

2. "If it were possible (I am not saying it is), but if it were possible to know the truth about religious issues, would you want to know it?"
3. "What kind of evidence would you need to see to convince you that Christianity is true?"
4. "What would motivate you to want to get answers to these kinds of questions?"
5. "How certain are you about your belief system? Would you stake your **eternity** on it?"
6. "How can you be so sure about your beliefs?"

Construct a bridge from those beliefs held in common (even those they are not quite aware of) to a point where someone may be open to seriously consider the claims of Christ.

We need to realize of course that some parts of this bridge may be based on subjective evidence as well as objective evidence.

Building blocks to construct the bridge:

1. It matters what you believe
2. All religious views do not have equal validity
3. Jesus' claims are unique compared to any other major religious leader (Jn. 10:30; Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12; I Tim. 2:5).
4. If Christianity were not true, it would be the easiest religion to disprove (I Cor. 15:17-19).
5. The miraculous events surrounding Jesus' life are unique compared to any other major religious leader.
6. Map out a logical bridge from God's existence to Jesus proving He was the only way to God.

*** Important Reminder:**

Don't forget to look for opportunities to share the Gospel!

College Evangelism Training

Week 5: Using the THINK Method (More Practice)

Meekness and Truth Ministries www.meeknessandtruth.org

Here in this exercise we want to teach others how to practice four specific skill areas of application.

How to hear discrepancies
How to ask the right questions to illuminate the truth
How to uncover the real barriers to the Gospel
How to build a bridge to the Gospel

Example of that process of uncovering the real barriers to the Gospel:

Intro:

I find that positive deconstructionism is important because, if for no other reason, it helps to get to the "real barriers" that are keeping someone from embracing Christianity or seriously considering it.

For example, I remember this year talking to Alex, using the survey to deconstruct his beliefs, and finding him more slippery than a bar of soap. He would say all kinds of contradictory things but was unwilling to "see" any of these contradictions. Finally, after the survey was over, I heard enough that I had a pretty good idea of what his real problem was. So I said to him, "Can I ask you one other question?"

I asked Alex this, "Is your real problem with Christianity a lack of evidence, or is it more a matter that you want to live your life your own way?" He then admitted to me that he did know what I was saying was true, but he just wasn't ready to give up some of his habits and make a decision to accept Christ. I pointed out that we don't clean up our life morally before we come to Christ. We make the decision to turn around 180% and go in God's direction, invite Christ to come into our life and ask Him for the strength to change our wants and desires from the inside out (Phil 2:13). He seemed to soften quite a bit after this.

This is one example, but it demonstrates that with some people that we want to navigate around the supposed barriers and really get to the real barriers that keep them from seriously considering the claims of Christ. Another way to state this is to say that we need to find a way to penetrate to their heart.

Here are a few questions I use to surface "the real barriers" after I have deconstructed their belief system or at least demonstrated to them that there are some cracks in their foundation.

1. "If I could answer your questions in a way that would make sense to you, would that help you to more seriously consider a belief in God and Christianity?"

(If they say no, I've determined that it is not an intellectual question and can challenge them to reconsider what their real barriers is towards Christianity)

2. "Is the issue you are dealing with that you really need to see evidence that Christianity is true or is it more a matter of you just want to live your life in a certain way?"

3. If it were possible (I am not saying it is), but if it were possible to know the truth about religious issues, would you want to know it? The reason I ask you this is because the truth may have consequences you may not necessarily want to hear.

(I tend to use this question with real hard agnostics to see if their unbelief is really sincere. If they say "Yes, I'd like to know the truth," then I give them a book like Lee Strobel's, *The Case for Christ* and ask them if they would be willing to read it and tell me what they think.)

4. What kind of evidence would you need to see to convince you that Christianity is true?

(I remember this was the key question that Christian Apologist William Lane Craig brought up in a debate in Dallas he had with an atheist a few years ago which was, I thought, the turning point of the debate.)

5. What would motivate you to want to get answers to these kinds of questions?

For example, the guy who cuts my hair told me that he believes his mother, who died a few years ago, is probably in heaven. I asked him what would motivate him to get answers to the questions we've been talking about concerning Christianity. He told me he would like to see his mother again. So, I know one reason he is motivated to talk with me about working through spiritual issues. I've shared the Gospel with him a number of times. I gave him a Bible and encouraged him to read it.

Another student said to me, "My mother committed suicide three years ago, and I don't believe in God or Christianity, but I realize that if there is no God, there is no ultimate meaning to my life, and I am not willing to accept that." (This student took a whole year of interacting with me and reading to move from a closed minded Atheist to an open minded Theist.)

6. How can you be so sure about your beliefs?

7. If I am wrong about what I am saying about Jesus, would you please tell me? I don't want to believe a lie! The Apostle Paul himself said that if Christ didn't rise from the dead, we are of most people to be pitied (I Cor. 15: 17).

(I've used this approach a number of times with hard core Atheists and I could see it had a huge impact. The key is the person who makes these statements must really believe what they are saying, which goes back to their view of truth)

8. If you are going to reject Christianity, shouldn't you be absolutely certain that there is no truth to what the Bible teaches about Jesus?

I then ask them to read a book that Christians believe shows some of the strongest evidence for Christianity. I point out to them that if they can know what the best arguments are that Christians hold for their beliefs, and yet answer those arguments, then they can have more confidence in their lack of belief. I then invite them to read a Josh McDowell, Lee Strobel, or another solid apologetic book and ask them to get back with me with their feedback. Normally I try to get their e-mail so if they don't get back to me, I'll contact them.

9. Can I share with you one reason why these questions are important to me? (Then I talk about my sister's suicide and how at one point as a child she believed in God but when she became an adult she gave up belief in God and as a result found it more difficult to find any kind of meaning for her life and gave up living)

I usually use the story of my sister's suicide with postmodern feminist women and it seems to always have an impact on them and help them to think more about what they believe and why. I encourage Christians I do training with to find a story that they can share with other nonbelievers that can really connect with them on an emotional level and that will also speak to their heart felt needs.

10. Also another part of dealing with barriers is helping to clear up misconceptions about Christianity and building bridges to the Gospel.

Examples of misconceptions non-believers have:

1. It doesn't matter what you believe as long as you are sincere
2. Everyone can be right about their religious beliefs
3. Christianity and other religions is like comparing apples with apples

Building bridges to the Gospel:

1. It matters what you believe.
2. All religious views do not have equal validity.
3. Jesus' claims are unique compared to any other major religious leader (Jn. 10:30; Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12; I Tim. 2:5).
4. If Christianity were not true, it would be the easiest religion to disprove (I Cor. 15:17-19).
5. The miraculous events surrounding Jesus' life are unique compared to any other major religious leader.
6. Map out a logical bridge from God's existence to Jesus proving He was the only way to God (See our web-site under *Problems and Pathways to the Gospel*).

Important Reminder: Don't forget to look for opportunities to share the Gospel!

College Evangelism Training Survey Responses

Meekness and Truth Ministries www.meeknessandtruth.org

These situations are all based on actual conversations I've had with non-Christians on the U.T. Austin campus. The names however have been changed. They represent some of the kinds of issues that as Christians we need to address as we attempt to reach others with the Gospel on college campuses (1 Cor. 9:22).

Dave Geisler - Meekness and Truth Ministries (www.meeknessandtruth.org)

Situation 1

At first Alex talked and talked about his beliefs, barely giving us a chance to ask our survey questions. I could tell this guy really had been through a lot of bad stuff in life. I told him about my sister's suicide and it really helped to connect with him from that point on. He kept telling me he believed that Jesus was the Tao, and yet at the same time believed that the Bible was somewhat reliable. He believed that people will be held accountable for the way they live, but couldn't quantify what the standard was. He seemed to think everyone could be right about their beliefs, and I could not seem to persuade him to see his contradiction. He seemed to say one thing one moment and another thing at another moment.

Now imagine that you were friends with Alex. What are you hearing between the lines? What would you say to him?

Situation 2

Mary represents what the average post-modern woman on a college campus with some kind of religious background believes today. First she was suspicious of anything that sounds too preachy. She said to me she would do our survey as long as we were not trying to "recruit" her. Second, though she was raised Catholic, she did not really believe in anything. She said that she saw growing up a lot of "Sunday Christians" and that it really just turned her off towards religion in general. She believed Jesus was no more than an amazing man, but really had no desire to form any other conclusions about him. This is very typical of the kind of attitude I see a lot on campus with those that know from their religious training that Jesus did something miraculous.

Now imagine that you were friends with Mary. How do you think you could help her to take one step closer to Jesus Christ? What would you say to motivate her to think more deeply about these matters and come to grips with the issue of sin in her own life?

Situation 3

Fred represents one of the more radical post-modern groups on campus. After my conversation with him, I found out that he was the guy that yells at Apologist Cliffe Knechtle when he comes to U.T. Austin every year. I am told that he even once "mooned" the camera. He told us that because we didn't try to "preach" to him like a lot of other Christian groups on campus, he liked talking with us, even though we were challenging his beliefs and asking him to defend what he believes.

He told us that he did believe there is some evidence for the miraculous surrounding Jesus' life, but couldn't say what that really implies about who Jesus is. He also indicated an interest in participating in a panel discussion sometime with other groups on campus.

Now imagine that you were friends with Fred. What are some of the things that you could say to him to help him take one step closer to Jesus Christ?

Situation 4

Tony grew up in a Christian home, but rejected Christianity for reasons that were not very clear to me. One of the things he did say was that he was never given any intellectual basis for the Christian faith and drifted (my words) further away. He answered most questions to the survey in a skeptical manner.

Now imagine that you were friends with Tony. What kinds of things could you say to him to break through his skepticism?

Situation 5

Kirk is a philosophy student. He said he knew U.T. Austin Christian Philosophy Prof. Rob Koons. At first he suggested there is no afterlife. I asked him what his reasons were for believing that there is no ultimate reality, whether it be Theistic or Pantheistic (all is God), especially since most people believe in some kind of ultimate reality. I pointed to things he studied in philosophy like the Cosmological Argument for the existence of God (that every effect must have an adequate cause) and the Kaalam Cosmological Argument (specifically arguing that you can't have an infinite amount of moments, because today would have never arrived), and how they point to a creator. He seemed to soften a little after this. He seem to understand the problem with saying that the Bible is not recording reliable history if we accept that certain historical books written at that same time period can be reliable. He also understood that Jesus was at least a special man. He could not easily escape the idea of how difficult it would be for someone to tell a lie for 2000 years and no one be able to expose it.

Now imagine that you were friends with Kirk. What resources might you suggest for him to read? What would you say to Kirk?

Situation 6

We got to the end of the survey with Paul and he said, "If no one can measure up to God's standard of perfection, this is not good news!"

What would you say to Paul at this point?

He also said that the thing that is keeping him from making a decision to accept Christ is that he is not convinced Jesus is the only way to God. (Though that is what he was raised to believe).

What would you say to Paul to help him see that Jesus is the only way to God?

Situation 7

Abdul is a Muslim student from Pakistan. I asked him if he prayed five times a day and he said he didn't. I asked him if he thought he was going to heaven even though he did not pray five times a day. He said he thought so, but I can tell the question really hit him hard. He believes that the Bible is corrupt, as all Muslims are told.

What would you say to Abdul? How would you help him see that the Bible is not corrupt?

Situation 8

Sam grew up in a very legalistic Church. His view tends to be a mixture of Theism and Pantheism (All is God and God is all). This is a typical of college students today living in a post-modern world. They tend to pick and choose from different belief systems, rather than holding some internally consistent worldview. He understood, being a student of anthropology and studying archeology, that the Bible is pretty reliable and accurate. He even said the Discovery Channel has some really good things to say about the Bible in archeology. He also realized the problems with rejecting Jesus' claim to be the only way to God, since he accepts the Bible as somewhat reliable. Again, he realized like others have said how difficult it would be for someone to tell a lie for 2000 years and no one be able to expose it. He wavered on whether people would be held accountable for what they do in this life. He agreed to read the Strobel book. However, he admitted to us he wasn't that motivated to want to know the truth.

Now imagine that you were friends with Sam. What would you say to him? What could you say or do to help him become more motivated to know the truth?

Situation 9

Thomas grew up with a religious background, but never really understood what it meant that Christ was our substitute who died in our place and for our benefit (Rom. 5:8).

What would you say to Thomas? How would you illustrate to him more clearly that Jesus was our substitute?

Situation 10

Susan was visiting her friend at U.T. Austin from California. She goes to U.C.L.A.. She told us her boyfriend is a Christian and has been trying to witness to her. She said she believed in God, but not heaven or hell. Going through our survey questions, she realized that she had some things to think about.

Now imagine that you were friends with Susan. What would you do to help her take one step closer to Jesus Christ?

Situation 11

Ahmad is a Muslim who believes that Jesus did not die on the cross.

What would you say to Ahmad?

College Evangelism Training
Survey Responses
Teacher's Edition (Answers to Responses)
Meekness and Truth Ministries www.meeknessandtruth.org

These situations are all based on actual conversations I've had with non-Christians on the U.T. Austin campus. The names however have been changed. They represent some of the kinds of issues that, as Christians, we need to address as we attempt to reach others with the Gospel (I Cor. 9:22).

Dave Geisler - Meekness and Truth Ministries (www.meeknessandtruth.org)

Please note: As the students practice with these situations, have them also practice building the four specific skills of application, and to be prepared to discuss the use of each as the situations are discussed in class.

1. How to hear discrepancies
2. How to ask the right questions to illuminate the truth
3. How to uncover the real barriers to the Gospel
4. How to build a bridge to the Gospel

Situation 1

At first Alex talked and talked about his beliefs, barely giving us a chance to ask our survey questions. I could tell this guy really had been through a lot of bad stuff in life. I told him about my sister's suicide and it really helped to connect with him from that point on. He kept telling me he believed that Jesus was the Tao and yet at the same time believed that the Bible was somewhat reliable. He believed that people will be held accountable for the way they live but couldn't quantify what the standard was. He seemed to think everyone could be right about their beliefs, and I could not seem to persuade him to see his contradiction. He seemed to say one thing one moment and another thing at another moment.

Now imagine that you were friends with Alex. What are you hearing between the lines? What would you say to him?

My response

When we finished the survey I interjected this thought. I told Alex that a student had said this to me a few months ago: "I know that everything you are saying is true (About Jesus). But I got to be real honest with you. I've just got some things in my life that I don't want to give up." I told the guy, "I can respect your desire to do what you want to do and appreciate your willingness to be honest with me." But I left him with this thought. Jim Elliot (a martyred missionary) said it this way, "He is no fool to give up what he can not keep, to gain what he cannot lose."

Then I asked Alex if his real problem with Christianity was a lack of evidence or rather was it more a matter that he wanted to live his life his own way. He then admitted to me that he did know what I was saying was true, but he just wasn't ready to make a decision. I pointed out that we don't clean up our life morally before we come to Christ. We make the decision to turn around 180% and go in God's direction and invite Christ to come into our life and ask him for the strength to change our wants and desires from the inside out (Phil 2:13). He seemed to soften quite a bit after this.

Chris, the student I was with, invited him to the Baptist Student Ministries luncheon the following week, though he did not take up the offer. My prayer is that God would bring more Christian friends into Alex's life who would show him genuine love.

Situation 2

Mary represents what the average post-modern woman on a college campus with some kind of religious background believes today. First she was suspicious of anything that sounds too preachy. She said to me

she would do our survey as long as we were not trying to "recruit" her. Second, though she was raised Catholic, she did not really believe in anything. She said that she saw growing up a lot of "Sunday Christians" and that it really just turned her off towards religion in general. She believed Jesus was no more than an amazing man, but really had no desire to form any other conclusions about him. This is very typical of the kind of attitude I see a lot on campus with those that know from their religious training that Jesus did something miraculous.

Now imagine that you were friends with Mary. How do you think you could help her to take one step closer to Jesus Christ? What would you say to motivate her to think more deeply about these matters and come to grips with the issue of sin in her own life?

My response

After the survey was over, I asked Mary what would motivate her to be interested in exploring the answer to the questions I raised in the survey. She didn't seem to know. This deeply grieved me. I asked her for permission to share why I thought this was important. I shared the story about my sister giving up her belief in God. This contributed to her depressed mindset and eventually led to her committing suicide, because she had nothing else to live for. I pointed out to Mary that it really does matter what you believe. My prayer is that God will show her how much He loves her in ways that will connect with her deep skepticism.

Situation 3

Fred represents one of the more radical post-modern groups on campus. After my conversation with him, I found out that he was the guy that yells at Apologist Cliffe Knechtle when he comes to U.T. Austin every year. I am told that he even once "mooned" the camera. He told us that because we didn't try to "preach" to him like a lot of other Christian groups on campus, he liked talking to us, even though we were challenging his beliefs and asking him to defend what he believes and why.

He told us that he did believe there is some evidence for the miraculously surrounding Jesus' life, but couldn't say what that really implies about who Jesus is. He also indicated an interest in participating in a panel discussion sometime with other groups on campus.

Now imagine that you were friends with Fred. What are some of the things that you could say to him to help him take one step closer to Jesus Christ?

My response (I did not get to follow up with him because he had to leave!)

My prayer is that we will keep "bumping" into Fred on campus and that we will develop a friendship with him and lead him and his radical friends one step closer to Jesus Christ.

Situation 4

Tony grew up in a Christian home, but rejected Christianity for reasons that were not very clear to me. One of the things he did say was that he was never given any intellectual basis for the Christian faith and drifted (my words) further away. He answered most questions to the survey in a skeptical manner.

Now imagine that you were friends with Tony. What kinds of things could you say to him to break through his skepticism?

My response

After the survey was over I asked him one question. I asked him that if it was possible for him to know the truth about religious issues, would he want to know it?

He took at least 30 seconds to think about the question before he responded yes. I told him the reason why I asked him that is because the "truth" may have implications that he may not personally like. Then I told him the story about former investigative reporter Lee Strobel's desire to disprove Christianity, how it

led him to the truth, and that he became a Christian. I asked him if he would be willing to read the first 120 pages, and that we would get back with him in a month to see what he thought about the book. He said he would. My prayer is that God uses the book and other Christians to tear down the intellectual walls that Tony has constructed and to help him take steps towards Christ.

Situation 5

Kirk is a philosophy student. He said he knew U.T. Austin Christian Philosophy Prof. Rob Koons. At first he suggested there is no afterlife. I asked him what his reasons were for believing that there is no ultimate reality, whether it be Theistic or Pantheistic (all is God), especially since most people believe in some kind of ultimate reality. I pointed to things he studied in philosophy like the Cosmological Argument for the existence of God (that every effect must have an adequate cause) and the Kaalam Cosmological Argument (specifically arguing that you can't have an infinite amount of moments because today would have never arrived), and how they point to a creator. He seemed to soften a little after this. He seem to understand the problem with saying that the Bible is not recording reliable history if we accept that certain historical books written at that same time period can be reliable. He also understood that Jesus was at least a special man. He could not easily escape the idea of how difficult it would be for someone to tell a lie for 2000 years and no one be able to expose it.

Now imagine that you were friends with Kirk. What resources might you suggest for him to read? What would you say to Kirk?

My response

When we were done with the survey, again I asked Kirk if he could know the truth about religious issues, would he want to know it. He said yes. I gave him Lee Strobel's book, "The Case for Christ" and told him we would get back with him in a few weeks. He also knows Christian Philosophy Prof. Rob Koons and I encouraged him to talk to him about this. My prayer is that God will use this book to expose his false beliefs and help him see that his problems with Christianity are not intellectual, but moral. Remember that people tend to believe what they want to believe so they can do what they want to do! My prayer is also that God would bring some intellectually grounded Christians into his life who will model what a Christian should be.

Situation 6

We got to the end of the survey with Paul and he said, "if no one can measure up to God's standard of perfection, this is not good news!"

What would you say to Paul at this point?

My response

I shared with Paul the good news about how Christ died in our place for our benefit and erased all our bad and gave us all His good. Perhaps an illustration can be helpful here. Let's say Paul has terminal cancer. What is going to happen to Paul? He is going to die, right? This is just an analogy, but Christ dying for Paul is like Jesus taking Paul's cancer cells and putting it into his own body. What is going to happen to Jesus in this case? He is going to die, right? And what is going to happen to Paul? He's going to live. This is just a picture of what it means that Christ died in our place and for our benefit (Rom. 5:8).

He also said that the thing that is keeping him from making a decision to accept Christ is that he is not convince Jesus is the only way to God (Though that is what he was raised to believe).

What would you say to Paul to help him see that Jesus is the only way to God?

Additional Responses

You can point out that the Bible teaches that Jesus is the only way to God (Jn. 14:6; Act 4:12; I Tim. 2:5) and that there is good reason to trust the Bible.

Secondly, help them to remember that, "Buddha pointed to the way, Muhammad claimed to be a prophet of God, but Jesus Christ is the only major religious leader that ever claimed to be God, who fulfilled prophecy, lived a sinless life, and then died on the cross and rose from the dead to prove he was God."

My response

We gave him the Lee Strobel book, and he agreed to read it. Dan (a student with the Baptist group) is going to contact him in a few weeks to see what he thinks. My prayer is that God would use this book and other Christians to draw him to Himself.

Situation 7

Abdul is a Muslim student from Pakistan. I asked him if he prayed five times a day and he said he didn't. I asked him if he thought he was going to heaven even though he did not pray five times a day. He said he thought so but I can tell the question really hit him hard. He believes that the Bible is corrupt, as all Muslims are told.

What would you say to Abdul? How would you help him see that the Bible is not corrupt?

My Response

I asked him if he could show me some evidence that the Bible had been corrupted. (I've asked three Muslims for evidence and so far no one has bothered to respond by e-mail, even though they said they would).

Additional information

First, the Qur'an never says the Bible was corrupted.

The Qur'an says some people of the Book were hypocrites (Sura 5:61-63) who perverted what they heard. However, it never said that God's word, given to the people of the Book, was changed. God has the power to give His word, and God has the power to guard His word from corruption.

Mohammed read the Gospels in Arabic according to his wife 'Aisha in *Bukhari* 4:605. While the Qur'an says Jews and Christians were hypocrites (Sura 5:61-63) who perverted what they heard (Sura 2:75), the Qur'an never says every copy of God's scriptures was corrupted. As a matter of fact, Christians are called the people of the Gospel in Sura 5:46. Since Sura 5:47 says, "Let the People of the Gospel judge by what Allah hath revealed therein..." it acknowledges that the Gospels, at least in Mohammed's time, contained the truth.

Sura 2:75 says of some people (Jews of Medina?), "Hear the Word of Allah, and perverted it knowingly after they understood it."

Sura 3:48 says, "And Allah will teach him [Jesus] the book and Wisdom, the Torah, and the Gospel.

"And in their [the prophets'] footsteps we sent Jesus the son of Mary, confirming the Torah that had come before him: we sent him the Gospel; therein was guidance and light. And confirmation of the Torah that had come before him: a guidance and an admonition to those who fear Allah." Sura 5:46

Now this verse of the Qur'an is remarkable. If God sent Jesus to confirm the Torah (first five books of the Bible's Old Testament), then at least in Jesus' time, the Torah that people could read and Jesus could confirm was the same Torah God sent.

So, if Jesus were taught the Old Testament, and we have the Old Testament from the time of Jesus, then Jesus was taught what we have.

So when did the Bible become corrupt? It had to be after the time of Jesus.

Not only does the Qur'an not teach that the Bible is corrupt, it teaches:

That the previous revelations contained in "the book" to be authoritative and authentic revelations from God (Surah 2:136; 4:163)

And since the Qur'an states that "None can change His word." (Surah 6:115; see also 6:34; 10:64), how did the bible become corrupt?

Ask them specifically when it was corrupted, where it was corrupted, how it was corrupted?

My Response

I told Abdul I was going to send him some verses in the Koran where Muhammad speaks favorably about the bible.

Here are some examples of verses that might help.

Sura 29:46 "Dispute ye not with the people of the book, except in the best way, unless it be with those of them who do wrong but say, 'We believe in the revelation which has come down to us and in that which came down to you; our God is your God is One; and it is to Him we submit (in Islam).'"

Sura 3:184 "Then if they reject thee, so were rejected messengers before thee, who came with clear signs, and the scriptures and the book of enlightenment." The footnote says that scriptures (*zabur*) may refer to all of the Bible or just Psalms.

Sura 5:46 "And in their [the prophets'] footsteps we sent Jesus the son of Mary, confirming the Torah that had come before him: we sent him the Gospel; therein was guidance and light. And confirmation of the Torah that had come before him: a guidance and an admonition to those who fear Allah"

Sura 5:48 says, "To thee (People of the Book) We sent the scripture in truth, confirming the scripture that came before it, and guarding it in safety: so judge between them by what Allah hath revealed, and follow not their vain desires, diverging from the truth that hath come to thee...."

My prayer is that God will put Christians in Abdul's life that will keep asking him the tough questions about his faith and will model God's grace.

Situation 8

Sam grew up in a very legalistic Church. His view tends to be a mixture of Theism and Pantheism (All is God and God is all). This is a typical of college students today living in a post-modern world. They tend to pick and choose from different belief systems, rather than holding some internally consistent worldview. He understood being a student of anthropology and studying archeology that the Bible is pretty reliable and accurate. He even said the Discovery Channel has some really good things to say about the Bible in archeology. He also realized the problems with rejecting Jesus' claim to be the only way to God, since he accepts the Bible as somewhat reliable. Again he realized like others have said how difficult it would be for someone to tell a lie for 2000 years and no one be able to expose it. He wavered on whether people would be held accountable for what they do in this life. He agreed to read the Strobel book. However, he admitted to us he wasn't that motivated to want to know the truth.

Now imagine that you were friends with Sam. What would you say to him? What could you say or do to help him become more motivated to know the truth?

My response

I thanked Sam for his honesty with us. I told him that it was very refreshing to me personally because I feel that I deal with students all day who lie to themselves and lie to me about what really is keeping them from embracing Christianity. My prayer is that Sam would read the Strobel book and that God would bring into his life Christians that show genuine love and grace, something he didn't see much growing up in church.

Situation 9

Thomas grew up with a religious background but never really understood what is meant that Christ was our substitute who died in our place and for our benefit (Rom. 5:8).

What would you say to Thomas? How would you illustrate to him more clearly that Jesus was our substitute?

My response

I went through with him the balance sheet idea asking him how do we get rid of our bad no matter how much "good" we do in life. I think for the first time it started to make sense to him. My prayer is that the things we shared about Christ will make more sense to him and that his Christian friend who was with him, will help him to get answers to his questions.

Situation 10

Susan was visiting her friend at U.T. Austin from California. She goes to U.C.L.A. She told us her boyfriend is a Christian and has been trying to witness to her. She said she believed in God, but not heaven or hell. Going through our survey questions, she realized that she had some things to think about.

Now imagine that you were friends with Susan. What would you do to help her take one step closer to Jesus Christ?

My response

We gave Susan Lee Strobel's book, *The Case for Christ*, and she promised she would read the first 100 pages. We got her e-mail address. Judy (from the student organization *Frequency*) is going to follow up with her in a month via e-mail.

Additional responses

Man's underestimating the nature of his offense against God.

"The biblical understanding of sin revolves around the idea of offending God, and it is this that makes it serious." We must make judgments about the seriousness of an offense in relationship to the thing or person offended. For example, if a man is digging in his yard and in the course of swinging his spade he injures a **worm**, he will probably not give the incident much further thought. If however, he swings his spade and accidentally injures a **passing bird**, he may have it on his mind as he goes to sleep that night. Suppose, however, that in swinging his spade he **injures a dog**. The man would feel an obligation to stop working and take the dog to the vet. But if in a wild swing of his spade he injured a **passing pedestrian**, he may find himself in court. The measure of the seriousness of sin is that it is an offense against Almighty God."

Collin Smith in *Telling The Truth: Evangelizing Postmoderns* P. 185

"When talking about sin and its conciseness, I often use this illustration.

I ask what would happen if you hit your brother.

(let them answer)

I ask what would happen if you hit your Dad.

(let them answer)

I ask what would happen if you hit your Mom.
(let them answer)
I ask what would happen if you hit your Mayor.
(let them answer)
I ask what would happen if you hit your God.
(let them answer)"

Mark Miller (Works with Arab Ministries)

Answers to questions about Hell

Note: These answers were taken from *Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics* by Norman Geisler. It can be ordered at: www.normgeisler.com

Jesus taught not only about the existence of Heaven, but also about the existence of Hell

Jesus warned, "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28).

"If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out" (Mark 9:43).

Hell will last as long as Heaven does

Heaven is described as "everlasting" in the Bible. But the same Greek word (*aionion*) used in the same context also affirmed that Hell is "everlasting" (Matt. 25:41 cf. Matt. 25:46, 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Rev. 20:10).

Isn't an eternal Hell overkill?

Only eternal punishment will suffice for sins against the eternal God. The sins may have been committed in time, but they were against the Eternal One. Furthermore, no sin can be tolerated as long as God exists, and He is eternal. Hence, punishment for sin must also be eternal.

What is more, the only alternative to eternal punishment is worse, viz. to rob man of his freedom and dignity by either: forcing him into Heaven against his free choice which would be "Hell" for him since he doesn't fit in a place where everyone is loving and praising the Person he wants most to avoid. Or, God's other choice is to annihilate His own image within His creature. But this would be an attack of God on Himself.

Finally, without an eternal separation there could be no heaven. Evil is contagious (1 Cor. 5:6) and must be quarantined. Like a deadly plague, if it is not contained it will continue to contaminate and corrupt. If God did not eventually separate the tares from the wheat, the tares would choke out the wheat. The only way to preserve an eternal place of good is for God to eternally separate all evil from it. The only way to have an eternal Heaven is to have an eternal Hell.

All those in Hell don't desire it, but decide it by their own choice!

Situation 11

Ahmad is a Muslim who believe that Jesus did not die on the cross.

What would you say to Ahmad?

My response:

I asked Ahmad for information other than is stated in the Koran as to why Muslims believe Jesus didn't die on the cross, since secular sources and even Jewish sources say he did. He also said he would send me information on why he believes the Bible is corrupt. My prayer is that he will respond to my request and that God would use it to drive him towards the truth.

Jewish Source: The Talmud

"On the eve of Passover Yeshua was hanged, For forty days before the execution took place, a herald went forth and cried, 'he is going forth to be stoned because he has practiced sorcery and enticed Israel

to apostasy. Any one who can say anything in his favor, let him come forward and plead on his behalf.' But since nothing was brought forward in his favor he was hanged on the eve of the Passover."

The Talmud, Sanhedrin, 43a

(cf. John 11:8, 16)

Roman Source: Flavius Josephus

This 1st century Jewish historian and Pharisee wrote: "Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. He was the Christ, and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principle men among us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for he appeared to them alive the third day; as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him."

(Antiquities.xviii.33).

APOLOGETIC RESOURCES

Expanded Evangelism and Apologetics Resource List of Hill Country Bible Church (HCBC) and Meekness & Truth

Compiled by
Chuck Barber, Evangelism Pastor, HCBC & Dave Geisler, Meekness and Truth Ministries

BOOKS AND ARTICLES

Level 1

You're just starting out! You need the basics of the Christian faith at a level you can comprehend. You may also have a non-Christian friend who would benefit from resources that are easier to understand.

- Doctrine:**
- * *Know What You Believe*, P. Little
 - * *Basic Christianity*, J. Stott
 - * Faith Foundations, a 6-week class offered by HCBC
- Relational Evangelism:**
- Becoming A Contagious Christian*, B. Hybels
 - Becoming A Contagious Christian Training at HCBC
 - How-To Book On Personal Evangelism*, L. Moyer
 - Out of the Saltshaker*, B. Pipert
- Apologetics:**
- Meekness & Truth Articles*, D. Geisler www.meeknessandtruth.org
- Who is Jesus?:**
- * *More Than A Carpenter*, J. McDowell
 - * *Is Jesus God?*, J. Maisel
- Common Questions:**
- * *Know Why You Believe*, P. Little
 - * Great for non-Christians too!

Level 2

You've been at it for a while! You need to go a bit deeper because you have been sharing your faith regularly and you're often running into deeper questions.

- Doctrine:**
- A Survey of Bible Doctrine*, C. Ryrie
 - Charts of Christian Theology & Doctrine*, W. House
- Relational Evangelism:**
- Living Proof*, J. Petersen
 - Inside the Mind of Unchurched Harry & Mary*, L. Strobel
- Apologetics:**
- New Evidence That Demands A Verdict*, J. McDowell
- Who is Jesus?:**
- * *A Case For Christ*, Lee Strobel

- Common Questions:** *I'm Glad You Asked*, K. Boa & L. Moody
 * *Mere Christianity*, C. S. Lewis
 * *A Case For Faith*, Lee Strobel
- Faith & Reason:** *Love Your God With All Your Mind*, J. P. Moreland
- Dealing with Hard Passages:** *Hard Sayings of the Bible*, Kaiser, Davids, Bruce, Brauch
- Dealing with Evolution:** *Defeating Darwinism*, P. Johnson
- Dealing with Mormons:** *Speaking the Truth in Love to Mormons*, M. Cares
 "Witnessing with the Book of Mormon" HCBC Audio Tape + Workbook
- Dealing with Watchtower:** *Jehovah's Witnesses Answered Verse by Verse*, D. Reed
 "The Dating Game" HCBC Audio Tape + Workbook
Reasoning from the Scriptures with the Jehovah's Witnesses, Ron Rhodes
- Dealing with New Age:** "The New Age Movement" HCBC Audio Tape + Workbook
- Dealing with Islam:** *Reaching Muslims for Christ*, W. Saal
- Dealing with Atheism:** *A Shattered Visage: The Real Face of Atheism*, R. Zacharias
Can Man Live Without God?, R. Zacharias
- * Great for non-Christians too!

Level 3

You're beginning to give your life to reaching the lost and constantly find yourself in tough witnessing situations all the time!

- Doctrine:** *Major Bible Themes*, L. S. Chafer
- Relational Evangelism:** *Telling The Truth: Evangelizing Postmoderns*, D. A. Carson
Evangelism Made Slightly Less Difficulty, by Nick Pollard
Finding Common Ground, by Tim Downs
True For You, But Not For Me, by Paul Copan
- Apologetics:** *Reasonable Faith*, W. L. Craig
Baker Encyclopedia of Apologetics, N. Geisler
Handbook of Christian Apologetics, Kreeft & Tacelli
- Dealing with Relativism:** *Relativism*, F. Beckwith & G. Koukl
- Common Questions:** *When Critics Ask*, Geisler & Howe
When Skeptics Ask, Geisler & Brooks

Dealing with Cults:	<i>When Cultists Ask</i> , Geisler & Rhodes <i>Kingdom of the Cults</i> , W. Martin
Who is Jesus?:	<i>The Cross of Christ</i> , J. Stott
World Religions:	<i>The Compact Guide to World Religions</i> , G. Halverson
Dealing with Islam:	<i>Answering Islam</i> , N. Geisler

Level 4

Apologetics:	<i>Christian Apologetics</i> , N. Geisler
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Helpful Apologetic WEBSITES

- *Stand to Reason*, Greg Koukl: <http://www.str.org>
- *Let My People Think*, Ravi Zacharias: <http://www.rzim.org>
- *Christian Research Institute*, Hank Hannegraff: <http://www.equip.org>
- *Probe Ministries*, Kerby Anderson: <http://www.probe.org>
- *Reasons to Believe*, Hugh Ross: <http://www.reason.org>
- *Access Research Network*: <http://www.arn.org>
- *Apologetics Index*: <http://www.apologeticsindex.org>
- *Christian Answers Network*: <http://www.christiananswers.net>
- *Dr. William Lane Craig*: <http://www.leaderu.com/offices/billcraig>
- *Leadership University*: <http://www.leaderu.com>
- Websites for working with Muslims: <http://answering-islam.org.uk>, <http://www.gnfcw.com>
- Websites for working with Hindus: <http://www.karma2grace.org/>
- Website for working with Mainland Chinese (For helpful evangelistic tools for working with mainland Chinese check out Bridges international):
<http://www.bridgesinternational.com>
- *Dr. Norman Geisler*: <http://www.normgeisler.com>
- *Meekness and Truth* (Dave Geisler): <http://www.meeknessandtruth.org>
- *Watchman Fellowship, Inc.* (For help with cults): <http://www.watchman.org>
- *Christian Apologetics & Research Ministry*: <http://www.carm.org>