

*In your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to mak a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you: yet do it with gentleness and respect.
1 Peter 3:15 (ESV)*

Stoa Apologetics is designed to help students understand the core issues of their faith. Students will craft a response considering their audience may or may not accept the Bible as truth. The speech is not intended to be a sermon, and it is not necessarily a presentation of the Gospel or an overtly evangelistic opportunity. Therefore, the presentation should be a thoughtful response to the question/topic and the reason(s) why it is important for theological truth and Christian living.

* New Questions

Category 1: The Character and Nature of God

1. What does it mean that God is triune? Why is this important?
2. What does it mean that God is omniscient? Why is this important?
3. What does it mean that God is omnipresent? Why is this important?
4. What does it mean that God is immutable? Why is this important?
5. What is the meaning of the sovereignty of God? Why is this important?
6. Christians often argue for God's existence by suggesting the universe needs an initial cause. But what caused God?
7. What does the virgin birth of Jesus Christ mean? Why is this important?
8. What evidence is there for the existence of God in our physical universe?
9. What does it mean that Jesus Christ is the Messiah? Why is this important?
10. Is there historical evidence for the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus? Why is this important?
11. Why is it important that Jesus Christ is both fully God and fully man?
12. *What is the role of the Holy Spirit in salvation? Why is this important?
13. Respond to the critique that the Holy Spirit God is just the manifestation of God's divine power.
14. *Is it important to speak of God in masculine pronouns? Why or why not?

Category 2: Foundations of Christianity

1. What does it mean that man is totally depraved? Why is this important?
2. What does it mean for man to repent from his sins? Why is this important?
3. Compare and contrast justification with sanctification.
4. What is redemption? Why is this important?
5. What does it mean to forgive? Why is this important?
6. In John 10:10, Jesus said, “I have come that you may have life and have it more abundantly.” What did He mean?
7. What is the grace of God? Why is this important?
8. How can a Christian have assurance of salvation?
9. Respond to the question: “Jesus said He would return soon. So, where is He?”
10. What is the importance of prayer?
11. If Christians are saved by faith, why do works matter?
12. What does it mean to call Jesus Christ the “Lamb of God”? Why is this important?
13. What is the importance of the resurrection of Jesus?
14. *Respond to the critique that the Christian faith is a blind faith.

Category 3: Scripture

1. Why are the unity and the sufficiency of Scripture essential to the Christian faith?
2. Respond to the critique: “The Bible is archaic and out of touch with our modern world. Why should I care what it says?”
3. What does the inspiration of Scripture mean? Why is this important?
4. Respond to someone claiming the Quran is the true word of God.
5. How does the Book of Mormon compare to the Bible?
6. What is the Gospel, and why is it the core of the Christian faith?
7. Is the Bible historically reliable? Why is this important?
8. Does science contradict the Bible?
9. What does it mean that the Bible is inerrant? Why is this important?
10. Does the Bible condone slavery?
11. Respond to the statement: “The Bible is full of contradictions.”
12. Respond to the statement: “The Bible is simply the work of a great conspiracy where people sought to create a religion of their own.”
13. Respond to the statement: “It doesn’t matter if the Bible is taken literally. We can just appreciate it for its moral value.”
14. How did we get the biblical canon we have today, and how can we trust that it is truly the Word of God?

Category 4: God and Man

1. Does God reveal Himself to man? And if so, how?
2. What does it mean to be holy? Why is this important?
3. How can God be both merciful and just?
4. Can morality exist without God?
5. What do secular theories of human origins get right and wrong about human nature?
6. How could a loving God send man to Hell?
7. Explain what is meant by the statement, “God hates the sin but loves the sinner.”
8. *How can a person find purpose in life?
9. When does human life begin? Why is this important?
10. How is it possible for an individual to have a personal relationship with an almighty God?
11. Can a person do enough good in their life to get into heaven?
12. If God is omnipotent and holy, how could He allow so much sin and suffering in the world?
13. Respond to the statement by St. Augustine: “You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.” *Augustine, St, Bishop of Hippo, Augustine’s Confessions, 1.1.1, 397*
14. Respond to someone who asks, “Is there judgment after death?”

Category 5: Christian Worldview Application

1. Respond to the critique that Christians are intolerant and unloving.
2. What will happen to the people who have never heard about Jesus and the Gospel?
3. Why was Jesus known for associating with sinners? To what extent should Christians follow His example?
4. Compare and contrast God's view of marriage with the world's view of marriage.
5. Respond to the statement by Debasish Mridha: "There is no absolute truth. There is only your truth."
6. Respond to Dwight L. Moody's quote: "Church attendance is as vital to a disciple as a transfusion of rich, healthy blood to a sick man."
7. Respond to the belief that everyone will be saved eventually because of God's unconditional love.
8. Compare and contrast the modern environmental movement's view with the Christian view regarding caring for the earth.
9. *Compare and contrast the world's view of identity with God's view of identity
10. Respond to the statement: "Evolution disproves Christianity."
11. Is **all** human life valuable, and if so, why?
12. Respond to the Karl Marx quote: "Religion is the opium of the people." Marx, Karl, *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, 1843
13. Respond to the critique that "God, the Father" is a sexist term that demeans women in general and mothers in particular.
14. Respond to the critique that Christians care more about ideology than people.

Category 6: Christianity Compared

1. Compare and contrast the Muslim view of God with the Christian view of God.
2. Compare and contrast the Hindu view of the nature of man with the Christian view of the nature of man.
3. Respond to the statement by Buddha: “No one saves us but ourselves. No one can and no one may. We ourselves must walk the path.” Translation of Dhammapada. No. 165. *Karma: A Story of Buddhist Ethics*. Chicago: Carus Publishing Co. 1984
4. Is karma a biblical concept?
5. Respond to the criticism that Christianity is narrow-minded and dangerous.
6. Are Jehovah’s Witnesses Christians?
7. Are Mormons Christians?
8. Is there more than one way to heaven?
9. Compare and contrast Scientology with Christianity.
10. Respond to the Stephen Hawking quote: “There is a fundamental difference between religion, which is based on authority, and science, which is based on observation and reason. Science will win because it works.” [Abcnews.go.com](http://abcnews.go.com) 6/4/2010
11. Respond to the statement by Ernest Hemingway: “All thinking men are atheists.”
Hemingway, Ernest. *A Farewell to Arms*. New York: Scribner, 1929.
12. Respond to the quote from Michael Shermer: “Play hard, work hard, love hard... The bottom line for me is to live life to the fullest in the here-and-now instead of a hoped-for hereafter.” Michael Shermer, quoted in Johnson, Chris. *A Better Life: 100 Atheists Speak Out on Joy & Meaning in a World Without God*. Cosmic Teapot, Inc., 2014.
13. What are the unique features of Christianity that set it apart from all other religions of the world?
14. Respond to the claim that Jesus was a socialist.