

How to Handle Public Q&A

Answering apologetic questions in public is a very different challenge to doing so in conversation. We have a limited time to respond to big objections without knowing any of the background of the questioner. A good Q&A is an exciting time that is enjoyed by Christian and skeptic alike. However, there are many ways in which they can go wrong! We will look at the many pitfalls and how to avoid them!

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I. The Value

- A. Shows the gospel is public truth
- B. Shows that we are not afraid of questions
- C. Ensures that we scratch where people itch
- D. Helps us gauge the audience's response and understanding of what we have said
- E. Trains and encourages Christians
- F. Is enjoyable for all

II. How is a public question and answer session different to a conversation

- A. We don't know the background to the question
- B. We can't ask questions back
- C. You must deal with big issues briefly
- D. There is more pressure to know the answer

III. Taking Questions

- A. Advertise and announce so that people know it is coming
- B. Hand up / Paper / Text
- C. Hosts to collate, filter, sort and read
- D. Keep to allocated time

IV. How to respond

- A. Be calm and gracious – shows that you are secure
- B. Be appreciative – thank them for the question
- C. Be understanding – feel the weight of the question
- D. Be humorous (if appropriate) – helps it from becoming too heavy and helps people to listen
- E. Be wise – anticipate people’s reactions
- F. Be focused on Jesus!
- G. Be positive – the gospel is good!
- H. Be prepared – anticipate the questions that may come
- I. Be honest – admit your limitations
- J. Be helpful - - further reading, another talk or online resources
- K. Be prayerful – answer prayers

V. What if...!

- A. No questions
- B. Not questions but statements
- C. Too many questions from one person
- D. People get angry
- E. Questions get off the topic
- F. Obviously Christian questions
- G. Other people try to answer
- H. The questions get stuck on one issue
- I. You don't understand the question

Suggested Readings:

What Kind of God? – Michael Ots
But is it true? – Michael Ots