

The Art of Answering Questions

In Europe, a Gospel presentation is naturally met with objections and questions – and that is not something to be avoided. The New Testament says: “Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.” (Col 4:7) As evangelists, we are called to grow in the art of answering questions. In this session we will both look at principles that can guide us in developing answers and tackle some of the most common questions we face.

Stefan Gustavsson is a member of the European Leadership Forum Steering Committee. He is the director for Apologia – Centre for Christian Apologetics and makes his home in Stockholm. He was the founding General Secretary for the Swedish Evangelical Alliance. Stefan travels widely with apologetic teaching and training and is often involved in university evangelism and public debates. He is the author of several books on Christian apologetics and the Christian mind. Stefan is married to Ingrid and they have three grown children.

I. Introduction

“Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.” Col 4:6

II. Jesus in Conversations, Dialogue and Debate

A. Matt - John: “ask/asked” 303 times, “answer/answered” 144 times

B. Four Debates the Last Week in Jerusalem, Matt 22

III. Honest Answers to Honest Questions

A. Matt 21:23-27

IV. Six Strategies in Answering

1. Deconstruct Prejudices Behind the Question

a. Ex: Homosexuality

2. Define the Terms
 - a. Ex: Evolution

3. Contrast Available Alternatives
 - a. Ex: The Problem of Evil

4. Give Relevant Background Information
 - a. Ex: The Reliability of the Gospels

5. Show the Importance of Presuppositions
 - a. Ex: Miracles

6. Present the Bigger Picture
 - a. Ex: The Resurrection of Jesus

Case Study:

Discuss different ways to respond to the following objection, raised after an evangelistic presentation: We don't have any hard evidence for God or Christianity. Science have not been able to prove this kind of truth claims. Different cultures give different answers. In this situation, isn't the wise thing to remain agnostic instead of taking a leap of blind faith?