

College Evangelism Training

Introduction to Terrorism & Religious Perspective Survey

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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:

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Meekness and Truth Ministries trains College ministries to more effectively reach skeptics using the Conversational Evangelism methodology (See our web-site) and this survey.