



CHRISTIANITY

COURSE NOTES



TOPIC 1: INTRODUCTION

Aims and Objectives:

- How to apply the GO-RAP method when talking to Christians.
- Dealing with common contentions from Christians.
- Why referencing the Bible is unnecessary in our discussions

Using the GO-RAP

Two important parts: Common Sense Agreement & God's Existence

Common Sense Agreement

The topic of Jesus' divinity / trinity - "it's a mystery" "you can only understand with or through the guidance of the Holy Spirit".

If we have agreed on common sense as our premise, then this belief in man-god is irrational.

God's Existence

To confirm and reinforce the strength of our common sense premise.

Going through God's Existence in the GO-RAP allows us to show how God is separate and distinct from the universe and not part of it. The universe is a creation of God - it is limited, finite and necessitates the existence of an uncreated eternal Being.

Creator and creation are separate.

Jesus is part of the observable universe and displays all the characteristics of a finite limited being, so he cannot be God or some part of God.

Attributes are not the same:

- God is eternal, without beginning and without end. Jesus had a beginning and an end.
- God is ever living and never dies. Jesus (at least according to Christians) died.
- Jesus according to Christians was killed. You can't kill God.
- God has power over everything, and there is nothing that has power over Him. Jesus had no power of his own, all of it came from God.

God is One who is worshipped, He is not a worshipper. Jesus prayed to and worshipped God.

TOPIC 2:

JESUS IS 100% God & 100% HUMAN

The Creator is not the same as Creation

- Christian belief: Jesus was both completely God and completely human.
- Essential attributes that make God God are the opposite of attributes of a human.
- Rules of logic tells us that something cannot be its opposite. it is impossible.
 - Hot is not cold
 - Up is not down

“Can God do something evil?”

- “Can God do something evil?”
- “No, God cannot do anything evil”
- “But you said God can do anything”
- “Why? Why is it impossible for God to do something evil?”
- “God is good, He only does good things. It is not in the nature of God to do evil.”
- “God could do something evil if He wanted but He wouldn’t because He is good.”
- “Exactly! God is good and He only does what is good. That is one of God’s attributes that makes Him God, but this applies to ALL of God’s attributes, not JUST his attribute of goodness. God is also self-sufficient, He doesn’t become temporary, or needy, or finite or get born or die. This in not the nature of God”

Can God stop existing? No, because He is the ever living.

For these exact same reasons it means nothing to say God became a man. This goes against the nature of God.



TOPIC 3: JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD...

The Belief That God Has Offspring.

“They say, “The Most Compassionate has a son.” You have certainly made an outrageous claim, by which the heavens are about to burst, the earth to split apart, and the mountains to crumble to pieces in protest of attributing a son to the Most Compassionate. It does not befit the majesty of the Most Compassionate to have children. There is none in the heavens or the earth who will not return to the Most Compassionate in full submission.” (19:88-93)

“and to warn those who claim, “Allah has offspring. They have no knowledge of this, nor did their forefathers. What a terrible claim that comes out of their mouths! They say nothing but lies.”

The Jews say, “Ezra is the son of Allah,” while the Christians say, “The Messiah is the son of Allah.” Such are their baseless assertions, only parroting the words of those who disbelieved before them. May Allah condemn them! How can they be deluded from the truth?

“The son of Adam, he insults Me and has no right to do so. His insult to Me is his saying that Allah has begotten a son, while I am The One, The Eternal Refuge, who begets not nor was He begotten, and there is none like unto Me.” (Bukhari)

Why do humans have children?

Reason: to continue our bloodline after we die.

Reality: Allah is ever living and never dies

Reason: It is a simple biological drive.

Reality: He is far above having biological needs and impulses.

Reason: We need children to look after us in our old age.

Reality: Allah never gets old and never loses His strength and power.

Reason: We need children to inherit from us.

Reality: Allah is the owner of everything.

And say, “All praise is for Allah, who has never had any offspring; nor does He have a partner in governing the kingdom; nor is He weak, needing a protector. And revere Him immensely.” (7:111)

TOPIC 3: JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD

What do you mean by Son of God? Biological?

- “What do you mean by claiming Jesus is the son of God? How exactly is he God’s son? Do you mean that Jesus is a literal, real begotten son of God?”
- ...

Definition of begotten: product of a sexual act that takes place between a man and a woman. God had sex?

What do you mean by Son of God? Adopted?

- “I’d like you to meet Flappy the Fish. ...my son”
- That’s a fish. It can’t be your son.
- What do you mean? I love him like a son. He has his own room. We eat together. He’s my son!
- You are human. That is a fish. The two are not alike.
- We are human. Allah is God. The two are not alike.

A common form of insult to equate people with animals

- your wife is a snake,
- your mother is a cow,
- “You son of a dog!”
- Saying Allah/God has a human as a son is insulting Him.

Visual Mental Exercise

We are just small, little, limited, finite beings like specks on this earth. Fly up high in an aeroplane, or climb a mountain and you can’t even see us, and if you keep travelling out into space, even our whole, vast planet earth would be a speck, and if we kept travelling out the solar system, even our galaxy would be a speck.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: “The seven Heavens compared to the Kursee (the footstool) is like a ring which is thrown into a desert. And such is the magnitude of the ‘Arsh (the Throne of Allah) compared with the Kursee.”

It is not for Allah to take a son! Glory be to Him. When He decrees a matter, He simply tells it, “Be!” And it is! (19:35)

Continue with the rest of the GO-RAP from here.

TOPIC 4:

CLARIFYING THE PATH TO SALVATION

Misconception: Allah unjustly and randomly chooses people for paradise and Hell.

They may refer to: “We have not sent a messenger except in the language of his people to clarify ‘the message’ for them. Then Allah leaves whoever He wills to stray and guides whoever He wills. And He is the Almighty, All-Wise.” [14:4]

Clarified via context

As for those who struggle in Our cause, We will surely guide them along Our Way. And Allah is certainly with the good-doers. So God guides those who strive towards him, and leads astray those who choose the path of misguidance. [29:69]

Are they only awaiting the coming of the angels or the command of your Lord ﷻ Prophetﷻ? So were those before them. And Allah never wronged them, but it was they who wronged themselves. Then the evil ﷻconsequencesﷻ of their deeds overtook them, and they were overwhelmed by what they used to ridicule. [16:33-34]

So when they ﷻpersistentlyﷻ deviated, Allah caused their hearts to deviate. For Allah does not guide the rebellious people. [61:5]

Misconception: Salvation in Islam is only through works

‘It is’ the Day they will be fiercely shoved into the Fire of Hell. ‘They will be told,’ “This is the Fire which you used to deny. Is this magic, or do you not see? Burn in it! It is the same whether you endure ‘it’ patiently or not. You are only being recompensed for what you used to do.” Indeed, the righteous will be in Gardens and bliss, enjoying whatever their Lord will have granted them. And their Lord will have protected them from the torment of the Hellfire. ‘They will be told,’ “Eat and drink happily for what you used to do.” [52:13-19]

The Prophet ﷺ said: Observe moderation (in doing deeds), and if you fail to observe it perfectly, try to do as much as you can do (to live up to this ideal of moderation) and be happy for none would be able to get into Paradise because of his deeds alone. They (the Companions of the Holy Prophet) said: Allah’s Messenger, not even you? Thereupon he said: Not even I, but that Allah wraps me in His Mercy, and bear this in mind that the deed loved most by Allah is one which is done constantly even though it is small.

TOPIC 4: CLARIFYING THE PATH TO SALVATION

Crucifixion as a means of salvation

> Common Christian Belief

JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED AND THIS WAS A TYPE OF SACRIFICE FOR OUR SINS

By accepting this, they claim, our sins are forgiven and we are saved.

> Contradicts Justice

GOD KILLED AND TORTURED A COMPLETELY INNOCENT PERSON AS AN ATONEMENT FOR OUR SINS.

This belief contradicts any real and tangible idea of justice.

Most Christians believe that Jesus was crucified and that this was a type of sacrifice for our sins. By accepting this, they claim, our sins are forgiven and we are saved.

This belief contradicts any real and tangible idea of justice.

God killed and tortured a completely innocent person as an atonement for our sins.

Argument: "God can't just forgive our sins just like that. A price has to be paid."

Counter-argument: Whatever happened to "God can do anything?"

God can't just forgive our sins just like that. A price has to be paid.

I thought you said earlier "God can do anything?"

...

"God gave his only son for sacrifice, so that we may be saved."

> Common Sense Agreement

JUSTICE DEMANDS THAT THE PERSON WHO COMMITTED THE CRIME IS PUNISHED FOR THE CRIME.

To punish an innocent person for the crimes of others is in fact injustice.

Visual Mental Exercise

Imagine a criminal goes to a court and is sentenced by the judge, but the the judge says "Don't worry you don't need to pay, my son will pay"

Imagine the criminal's sentence was death, and the judge killed his own innocent son instead of the criminal.

Even if the judge's son willingly volunteered for this, no right minded person would consider this just or fair or even reasonable.

Add to this the fact that you are giving a free licence to every criminal to do whatever they want! As long as they accept the sacrifice they get off! This is entire and complete madness and anyone attributing such a thing to God is clearly insulting Him!

TOPIC 4: CLARIFYING THE PATH TO SALVATION

Repentance as a means of salvation

- “Do you ever sin?”
- “Yes”
- “What do you do? How do you repent?”
- “I ask God to forgive me”
- “Exactly! That’s exactly what Islam teaches.

Conditions for repentance in Islam

1. Remorse.
2. Sincerely ask God to forgive you.
3. If your sin involved harming another person, you try to make it right.
4. Try your best not to do it again.

No one needs to be put on a cross and killed.

Visual Mental Exercise

What will we say when we stand before God on the Day of Judgment?

I believed you became a man

I believe you are a perfect being

TOPIC 5:

Why you should avoid using the Bible in your discussion with Christians.

1. Opens the doors to many contentions and arguments.

If you use the Bible as a reference point, Christians may say that you must accept that he was crucified. Why not just leave it out altogether in the first place?

2. It might come across as disingenuous.

How would you feel if a Christian used the Quran to try prove that Islam is false and that Jesus has divine attributes?

3. They will be better at interpreting the Bible than you

Better at interpreting, coming up with explanations for verses, even if you feel they've twisted and spun the verses to suit their argument.

4. Reinforces their incorrect assumptions about the Bible

It would be better to go back and discuss why using the Bible as a point of reference is not the practical way to come to an understanding of the truth.

5. Time consuming!

A lot of time and effort to study, memorise and contextualise all these Biblical verses! (More than on the Quran!) This was not a method used by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

Our duty is to only invite people to Islam in the best way, not to spend hours and hours in debates and futile discussions. If a person is refusing to accept that they should use reason and common sense to make such important decisions, then you are talking to a self confessed irrational person!

