

Tactics: A Game Plan for Discussing Your Christian Convictions

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Introduction: Often Christians can feel overwhelmed when an unbeliever challenges their faith. They are afraid of not knowing what to say or having their beliefs ridiculed. To combat this common fear, Greg Koukl wrote *Tactics*.¹ Through his book, Koukl desires to equip Christians to engage unbelievers in a more thoughtful manner. The goal of our teaching time will be to summarize Koukl's concepts and offer contextualized suggests for reaching those around you.

Foundation: 2 Corinthians 5:20 *Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.*

- Christians are ambassadors for Christ.
- God is at work.
- Christians have the freedom to be persuasive.

Ambassador Attributes:

- Ambassadors Must Possess Basic Knowledge: Accurately Informed Mind.
- Ambassadors must be tempered with wisdom: Artful Method.
- Ambassadors must have character: Attractive Manner

The Goal: Trust God and share Christ. Practically, Christians need to be OK with putting a gospel pebble in the shoe of the unbeliever.

The Colombo Tactic: Getting in the Driver's Seat.

Learn the art of asking questions. "This is the value of using a tactical approach: staying in the driver's seat in conversations so that you can productively direct discussion, exposing faulty thinking and suggesting more fruitful alternatives along the way."

The Art of Asking Questions:

- Questions Clarify:
- Questions Invite Dialogue:
- Questions Advance the Conversation:

The Columbo Tactic:

- Question #1: What do you mean by that?

¹ Gregory Koukl, *Tactics: A Game Plan for Discussing Your Christian Conviction*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009).

- Question #2: How did you come to that conclusion?
- Question #3: Are you saying?

Question #1 What Do You Mean by That?

- There are no such thing as absolutes.
- You can't take the Bible too seriously because it was written by men.
- Christianity is basically the same as all other religions.
- It's wrong to force your views on other people. You can't legislate the more morality.
- I can't believe in God because it requires too much faith.

Question # 2: How Did You Come to That Conclusion?

- **Getting Out of the Hot Seat:**
- **The Professors Ploy:**
- **Suicidal Views: Concepts that Self-destruct:**
 - There is no truth.
 - There are no absolutes.
 - No one can know any facts about religion.
 - Talking about God is meaningless.
 - Never take anyone's advice on that issue.

Question # 3: Are You Saying?

"First, adopt the other person's viewpoint for the sake of argument. Next, give his idea a test drive. Try to determine where you will end up if you follow his instructions faithfully. If you arrive at an odd destination, point it out and invite the person to reconsider his starting point."

Biblical Example from Matthew 12:24-28.

- Assertion: Jesus casts out demons by the power of Satan.
- Answer: If Satan is the source of Jesus' power, then Satan is casting out Satan, destroying his own kingdom. This is absurd. Therefore: Jesus' power must not come from Satan, but from God who opposes Satan. Those who oppose Jesus, then, are not opposing Satan, but God.

Making the Facts Clear:

- Assertion: "More wars have been fought and more blood has been shed in the name of God than any other cause. Religion is the greatest source of evil in the world."
- Answer: "Since oppression and mayhem are neither religious duties for Christians nor logical applications of the preaching of Christ, violence done in the name of Christ cannot be laid at His door. This conduct may tell you something about people. It tells you nothing about God or the Gospel."
- The Facts: Actually, more people have been killed by institutionalized atheism. 66 million at the hands of Lenin, Stalin, and Khrushchev | 32-61 million in Communist China | 2.7 million in Cambodia's Khmer Rouge!