PREPARING FOR IA: Year 1

(Impromptu Apologetics Topics and Sub-topics 2009-2010)

I. Purpose of Impromptu Apologetics

In order to prepare for impromptu apologetics, the students need to understand the purpose and means by which to accomplish understanding of the material. The purpose of the IA event is to prepare our young people to give a defense of their faith as they encounter issues in the 21st century. To accomplish this, a systematic 4-year plan of prioritized topics has been developed. Since it is the aim to bring to light the most relevant and current topics that young people may encounter, three main threads of topics will be followed throughout the four years to ensure a well-rounded apologetics education:

- Theology
- World Religions/Cults
- Current Issues

II. Schedule of Topics at Tournaments

Each thread will be represented by a specific topic for that year only with each topic to include four sub-topics. This is to encourage students to study fewer subjects at greater depth. A schedule for the topics/sub-topics will be followed for the tournament season, with the Final Tournament to have questions from all topics.

Questions will be posed to the students in each round. For each tournament these questions can originate from any sub-topic from that specified topic; sub-topics will not be repeated within a tournament and at least 3 of the 4 sub-topics will be utilized, thus a different sub-topic per round.

The schedule for year 1 of the rotation of IA topics is as follows:

Tournament 1: *Theology: Scripture*
Tournament 2: *World Religions/Cults: Islam*
Tournament 3: *Current Issues: Creation vs. Evolution*
Final Tournament: (to have new questions from the sub-topics)
- Round 1: any sub-topic from Theology: Scripture
- Round 2: any sub-topic from World Religions/Cults: Islam
- Round 3: any sub-topic from Current Issues: Creation vs. Evolution
- Final Round: any sub-topic from the tournament season

Any area hosting a practice event can choose to use any sub-topic they would like; however, it is suggested that they use a sub-topic preceding its use at a tournament.

III. Preparation for the event

To begin the process of learning apologetics, students are encouraged to read books and record quotes, verses and facts on 3 X 5 index cards and store them in the allowable 3 X 5 file box. This may be used during prep time to prepare the IA speech, so it behooves students to develop their own organization system in their card file box and to update and review their cards on a regular basis.

A study sheet has been developed (see IA study sheet) which may aid the student in the process of researching and recording pertinent information. To study for the various sub-topics, a recommended list of references has been keyed to the sub-topics (see V below). The student, of course, may choose any resource of their own to use.

IV. Sub-topics with narrowed areas of study

To adequately prepare for each sub-topic, the following list of narrowed concepts is suggested for study. These narrowed concepts simply expound on the sub-topic. (Questions will derive from these concepts as they relate to their sub-topic.)

Theology: Scripture

- Inspiration and Canonization: God's authorship and human authors, validation through miracles, rejection of other gospels (ie. Gnostic)
- Historical Accuracy and Reliability: how we validate the Bible and can rely on it as a credible source, internal evidence (within the Bible such as eye witnesses, prophecy, etc.), external evidence (outside the Bible such as number and dates of manuscripts, eyewitnesses, archaeology, etc.)
- Inerrancy: the process of how the Bible came to be, how the Bible is trustworthy, contradictions that seem to exist in the Bible (esp. between Old and New Testaments)
- Interpretation and Application: absolute truth vs. relativity, one meaning but many applications, various denominations from the same book

World Religions/Cults: Islam

- Five Pillars of Islam: investigate the five major doctrines of Islam and how they are contrasted to Christianity
- Allah vs. Yahweh: compare and contrast the god Allah with the true God YHWH, claims that He is the same for both
- Koran vs. the Bible: major differences between the two "holy" books, works vs. faith for salvation, contents of Koran which can lead to radicalism
- Mohammed the Prophet vs. Jesus: how Jesus is viewed in Islam, Mohammed the Prophet contrasted to Jesus the Son of God, the life of Mohammed vs. Jesus' earthly life

Current Issues: Creation vs. Evolution

- Role of Science: how science is used to support creation and evolution both, what the limitations of science are, science as a religion
- Evidence for Creation: scientific proof for creation, philosophical proof, Intelligent Design and the Big Bang Theory

- Evidence against Atheistic Evolution: how evolution theories are inadequate (fossil record, carbon dating, geologic record, etc.), philosophical and scientific evidence disproving process of evolution (irreducible complexity, law of causation, infinite regress impossible, etc.), Darwin and the origin of the theory of evolution
- Origin of man: where man came from, missing links, early man fossils

V. Recommended Study Resources

Theology: Scripture

- *From God to Us: How we Got Our Bible* – Norman L. Geisler and William E. Nix
- *Explaining Inerrancy* – R.C. Sproul
- *Evidence for Christianity: Historical Evidences for the Christian Faith* – Josh McDowell
- *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* – Norman L. Geisler and Frank Turek
- *Handbook of Christian Apologetics* – Peter Kreeft and Ronald K. Tacelli
- *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics* – Norman L. Geisler

World Religions/Cults: Islam

- *Answering Islam: The Crescent in Light of the Cross* – Norman L. Geisler and Abdul Saleeb
- *Unveiling Islam: An Insider's Look at Muslim Life and Beliefs* – Ergun Mehmet Caner and Emir Fethi Caner
- *The Truth about Muhammad: Founder of the World's Most Intolerant Religion* – Robert Spencer
- *The Compact Guide to World Religions* – Dean C. Halverson, General Editor

Current Issues: Creation vs. Evolution

- *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* – Norman L. Geisler and Frank Turek
- *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics* – Norman L. Geisler
- *Science and the Bible (Revised and Expanded)* – Henry M. Morris
- *Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution* – Michael J. Behe
- *Science and Evidence for Design in the Universe (Proceedings of the Wethersfield Institute)* – Michael J. Behe,
- *It Couldn't Just Happen* – Lawrence Richards

In addition to print material, there are several online resources, although not limited to these only:

answersingenesis.org
carm.org
reasons.org
Christianarsenal.com
Forananswer.org
RenewYourMind.org
nationalapologeticsconference.com (sponsored by Southern Evangelical Seminary; DVDs and CDs can be ordered from their conference)

Individual authors and seminaries may have their own web sites as well. The students are encouraged to visit a wide variety of appropriate web sites to gain information.

Final note: CCofSE does not wholly endorse any particular author, seminary or website, or theological opinion. It is up to the parent to decide which resources are appropriate for their students.