

MS & HS Summer Youth Retreat

- [2021 MS and HS Summer Youth Retreat](#)
- [2022 MS and HS Summer Youth Retreat](#)

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Goals:

- Answer and address hidden concerns, doubts and questions
- To lay a foundation for defending our faith
- To instill the idea that for any question, there IS an answer
- To give comfort that they can come to any of their servants with any of their questions judgment-free

Outline

- Sunday night Introductory Topic
 - What is Apologetics?
 - Can we know anything for certain?
 - How is faith involved?
 - What will we learn in this convention?
- Day 1: Does God Exist?
 - Station 1: Creation
 - How does the Creation account match with what we know?
 - Station 2: Science
 - How can we refute the false ideas presented as fact by science?
 - Station 3: Philosophical
 - What is our purpose in life? How does this convey the existence of God?
 - Station 4: Historical
 - What extra-biblical evidence is there for Christianity?
- Day 2: Which God? Proofs for Christianity
 - Station 1: Prophecy
 - How does the Old Testament point to the New?
 - Station 2: Logic
 - It is illogical that Christianity would have survived this long... unless it is true
 - Station 3: Resurrection
 - The Resurrection is the fundamental basis of Christianity... is there any proof for it?
 - Station 4: Miracles
 - Are there any signs in the modern day and time of the truth of Christianity?

Resources

- Timeless Truth in Truthless Times (George Bassilios)
- Evidence for Christianity (Josh McDowell)
- The Historical Jesus (Gary Habermas)
- The Resurrection of the Shroud (Mark Antonacci)
- Intelligent Design 101 (H. Wayne House)
- Case for Christ (Lee Strobel)

Below are some ideas for the above outline... they are just potentials and nothing is set in stone. It is impossible to cover all of the below, but we should cover at least one or two items in every station.

The important thing will be interactive delivery, activities, etc.

Introductory Topic:

- "Pretest": I think it would be good to give them a handout or something that has some of the below questions phrased as yes or no questions. We know that they will say the right answer for all of them. But then after they are done, tell them "Now go through each question you just answered and prove it."
 - "Does God exist?"
 - "Did God create the world?"
 - "Did God create man or did man evolve from animals?"
 - "Did Jesus rise from the dead?"
 - "True or False: Jesus is God"
 - "True or False: The Holy Spirit is God"
- What is Apologetics? When do we use apologetics? What are the categories or levels of apologetics?
 - Christ used apologetics!
 - The disciples taught us to be ready to give an answer (e.g. 1 Peter 3:15)
 - We see examples of defending the faith in Scripture (St Stephen's speech, Elijah)
- Can we know for certain?
- How is faith involved?
- Is probability involved? Difference between possible and probable

Day 1: Does God exist

Goal: At the end of the day, we have arrived at the conclusion, from four different and independent perspectives, that God exists.

Station 1: Creation (Bible)

- In this station, we will read the Creation account in Genesis 1-2
- **Activity:** Everyone goes outside and examines nature from the smallest to the biggest of things, from the different seasons, different materials, patterns, colors. Then sit down and write what order the world was created in based on your observations.
- We can compare the Creation account and especially the order of creation with what science has told us (i.e. light and then water, plants and then animals)
- Also the importance of time - science tells us that millions of years were needed for the world to get to what it is now... does the Bible Support that? Or is it seven 24 hour days
- This Genesis account that was written thousands of years before the first telescopes and microscopes were invented... what are the odds that it got it all right?

Station 2: Science

- What is science? What is the scientific method? What does science look like? Can science form a conclusion about something that's outside the physical realm?
- **Activity:** Do some experiment that collects data of some sort... and then let everyone form a conclusion from that data. Compare conclusions... see how the data is linked to the conclusion?
- How do we argue against science?
 - Challenge the Integrity of the Data
 - Identify a gap between the data and the conclusion
 - Offer an alternate conclusion based on the Data
- Origin of Life:
 - What is Evolution? What does science KNOW? What does science THEORIZE?
 - Challenge the data, identify the gap, offer an alternate conclusion
- Origin of Matter:
 - What is the Big Bang? What does science KNOW? What does science THEORIZE?
 - Challenge the data, identify the gap, offer an alternate conclusion

Station 3: Philosophical (Patristic)

- If God exists, why did He create man?
- What is my purpose in life?
- How does the existence of God give me purpose in life?
- What is free will? How do I know I have free will?
- Why does God allow people to suffer?
- George Bassilious covers this area very well in Timeless Truths
- We don't have to cover all of these points (since time is limited)

Station 4: Historical

- Extrabiblical sources of Christ
- Archaeology, Historical Documents, etc.
- Maybe the Shroud of Turin and Sudarium of Oviedo?
- Biblical Manuscripts (as compared with manuscripts of any other writing in the history of the world)

- <https://coldcasechristianity.com/writings/youth-writings/the-case-for-jesus-from-a-well-prepared-15-year-old/>

Day 2: Which God?

Goal: At the end of the day, we know how to defend our Christian faith against some of the common attacks

Station 1: Prophecies

- As part of Engagement/Activity, we can liken this to fingerprint evidence... maybe some sort of game where they are detectives and they have to find all the fingerprints
- How does the Old Testament point to Christ?
 - Typology
 - Shadows
 - Prophecies
- What are the odds

Station 2: Logical

- There are three ways to spread a message for it to be successful:
 - With Deceit (i.e. in secret) - Mormonism
 - With Power and Compulsion (i.e. forcefully) - Islam
 - Openly, with conviction, tolerating the consequences - Christianity
- It is illogical that Christianity would have survived or flourished:
 - The message was difficult to accept
 - You cannot join the group unless you believe the message
 - The message was spread at a time of no "freedom of speech" or "political correctness"
 - Christianity had many powerful opponents
 - Religious opponents in the Jews
 - Philosophical/Intellectual opponents in the Greeks
 - Political opponents in the Romans
 - Punishment is severe torture, imprisonment or death
 - Started with very few people (just 120 or so)
 - All of the leaders were martyred and killed publicly
 - If it was a lie, why would they die for it?
 - If it's a mass lie... really, no one gave in and said the truth? What did they gain?
 - To join you had to forsake your riches and forsake worldly pleasures

Station 3: The Resurrection

- What are the proofs of the Resurrection?
- What are the arguments against the Resurrection and how do we answer them? (e.g. Mass Hallucination... Jewish argument, etc.)

- “I know the resurrection is a fact, and Watergate proved it to me. How? Because 12 men testified they had seen Jesus raised from the dead, then they proclaimed that truth for 40 years, never once denying it. Every one was beaten, tortured, stoned and put in prison. They would not have endured that if it weren't true. Watergate embroiled 12 of the most powerful men in the world-and they couldn't keep a lie for three weeks. You're telling me 12 apostles could keep a lie for 40 years? Absolutely" - Charles Colson

Station 4: Modern-Day Miracles and Saints

- St Mary Zeitoun happened in the late 60s, went on for two years, there are photographs from before the days of Photoshop (some of them taken by Muslims), many people came from around the world to witness it
- Pope Kyrillos and the multitudes that witnessed to his miracles

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Key Verse

"If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

(John 8:31-32)

Goals

- Give them an opportunity to discuss, vent, and ask questions related to the modern day push of homosexuality, transgenderism, abortion, etc.
- Day 1
 - Provide a structure of defense against the issue of homosexuality in society
 - Provide some answers about where homosexuality comes from, the history and negative social effects
 - Address Current Events (e.g. House Bill 1557 "Don't say Gay Bill", Disney Supporting it, Schools Protesting it, etc.)
- Day 2
 - Clearly detail the role of men and women and their equality in God's eyes and in the Church
 - Provide a structure of defense against the issue of abortion in society
 - Address Current Events (e.g. Roe v Wade overturning)

Day 1 - Homosexuality

Resources

- 2022 SMF College book
- HG Bishop Youssef on Truth
 - [Truth - HG Bishop Youssef](#)
 - Very systematic lecture about the Truth, how the Truth is defined, how to deal with someone sick with homosexuality, etc.
- HG Bishop Youssef on Homosexuality
 - [Homosexuality - HG Bishop Youssef](#)
- Fr Antony Paul on Homosexuality

- <https://stbasil.net/the-st-basil-podcast/2015/10/30/homosexuality-and-the-orthodox-church>
- This lecture has a discussion on the role of "Nature" vs "Nurture" in homosexuality (among many other things)
- Dr Julie Harren Hamilton
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C54CIxm-w44>
 - This lecture discusses the psychological aspects of why someone may develop homosexual tendencies. How does genetics play a role (i.e. only in the sense that your genetics may make you more sensitive). How does early childhood development play a role? Etc.
- Voddie Baucham
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZkL3IT95vOU>
 - Dr Voddie Baucham is a Protestant Pastor who has been outspoken about the harm of Homosexuality, the fact that it is sin, and spoken against Christians who accept it
 - This lecture is about the political side of the argument, and why Christians should not support them, and more importantly HOW TO ANSWER the common arguments that come from that side
- Voddie Baucham
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SJG9CtaBXeM>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F2nPRV8dmOk>
 - These two videos are about how homosexuality harms society, children/families, persons practicing it, etc.
- Serving the Lost Sheep (STLS) 2019 Convention Material
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHD5sSnvcwQ>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9oySpetaj6c>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UMuFjGPZg18>
 - <https://www.dropbox.com/s/n6s88x23hazmtip/Understanding%20Same-Sex%20Attraction-STLS.pdf?dl=0>
 - Fr Makary Ibrahim (may the Lord repose his pure soul) presented these slides at the convention

Outline

- **Introductory Topic:** Truth
 - **Responsible Servants:** Morcoux
 - What is Truth? What is Absolute Truth? Where do we get Truth?
 - What about "that's just your opinion"?
 - *The goal is not to convince you that homosexuality is a sin - most of you are already convinced of that. The goal is to equip you with the tools and information needed to support your stance and to give a defense for your faith.*
 - Outline of the Day

- **Station 1:** Where does Homosexuality Come From?

- **Responsible Servants:** Lisa, Maria, Andrew
- Nature vs Nurture
- How does genetics play a role?
- How does the role of parents play a role?
- How does society and the media play a role?
- Is there a spectrum of sexuality?
- Don't forget to include Bisexuality and Transgenderism in this discussion

- **Station 2:** Biblical View of Homosexuality

- **Responsible Servants:** Morcoux, Christy, Mark
- What is Sin?
- Homosexuality in the Old Testament
 - A common argument is that Christians "pick and choose" from the Old Testament. HG Bishop Youssef addresses this in the "Truth" Q&A and Voddie Baucham in his lecture
- How is it addressed in the New Testament?
 - A common argument is that the New Testament Greek words for homosexuality are a bad translation and should be "pedagogy" or "paedophilia"

- **Station 3:** Social Effects of Homosexuality

- **Responsible Servants:** Mina, Reham
- Many people use the argument now of "it's not hurting you"
 - 
 - Homosexuality DOES hurt everyone; it hurts the person practicing it, it hurts the children and families (homosexuals and heterosexuals), and it hurts the whole society.
- Homosexuality harms the person practicing it (check SMF college book)
 - Spiritual harms
 - Social harms
 - Physical harms
- Homosexuality harms children and families
 - Distorting the meaning of a family
 - Many homosexuals end up alone or without a family due to their lifestyle
 - Preventing children from having the benefit of Father and Mother
 - Imparts homosexuality in the minds of their children
- Homosexuality harms society
 - Oversexualizing society and pushing their agenda
 - When the idea of a family is distorted, moral values are also distorted
 - Advocating and enticing many to sin under the idea of "finding their identity"
- Now that we know the harms of homosexuality what should we do?
- How do I hate the sin and love the sinner?
 - How about supporting the sin? (Romans 1)

- By not being dragged into the claims that victimizes homosexuals
- There are some ways that we support the sin without knowing (e.g. by putting pronouns on our profiles)
- Marching for causes we do not understand (i.e. school marching against Do not say Gay bill)
- Supporting celebrities/movies/shows with homosexual agenda
- **Station 4: The Holiness of Marriage**
- ◦ **Responsible Servants:** Jimmy, Mirolla, Ehab
- Definition of Marriage
- Biblical Marriage (Genesis + the Lord quoting Genesis)
- Church Rituals about Marriage
- **Closing Topic: Final Debate and the Apologetics of Homosexuality**
- **Responsible Servants:** Susan + All Servants Participation
- Common arguments and fallacies and how to answer them
 - Starting at 40:36 in the Voddie Baucham Video
- We should prepare certain questions to ask them and await their response
- If they are unable to answer, then we will give them the answers and the way to respond to them
- How to deal with the ad hominem fallacy

Day 2 - Feminism

Resources

- Feminism and Tradition - Fr Lawrence Farley
- St Mary & St Phoebe Consecrated Sisters
 - <https://sisters.suscpts.org/2016/04/06/a-response-to-feminism-2/#>
- St Mark ATL Lectures
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-bFj9Nn88kc> - The Role of Men and Women
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BRF593rNNtM> - St Paul's Attitude Towards Women
 - <https://youtu.be/4FS5GBExt7U>
 - Third video to come 5/29
 - This is a very good series from St Mark Atlanta titled "The Church has a Woman Problem??"
 - It is very basic about the equality of honor and dignity, and the difference in roles
- Stephanie Gray
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RGPodL_GQ3Y
 - Abortion Apologist
 - Most Anti-Abortion arguments center around the fact that the Embryo is a living human being and terminating him/her is murder. Unfortunately, now many pro-abortion people are saying "yes the Embryo is a living person, but the right for bodily

autonomy is more important" - how do we answer that? - Stephanie Gray addresses that here

- Orthodox talks
- <https://youtu.be/fwCNj7eIM-A>

Outline

- **Introductory Topic:** Introduction to Feminism
 - **Responsible Servants:** Morcoux
 - Relate Homosexuality to Feminism via Transgenderism - many feminists are supporting Transgenderism even to the point of not being able to "define woman"
 - What is Feminism
 - Feminism is defined as "Advocacy for women's rights" and yet it has devolved to oppressing women...
 - They want men who call themselves women to use girls bathrooms, to play in girls' and women's sports, etc.
 - They want abortion and argue that it is a fundamental right and they can't function without it
 - Importance of studying the topic of Feminism for Boys and for Girls
 - Outline of the day
- **Station 1:** Does it fight for women's rights?
 - **Responsible Servants:** Lisa, Mark, Mina
 - God made man and woman
 - The role and **equality** of man and woman designed by God in the church
 - Priesthood only for men?! Deaconship only for men?!?!?
 - The apostles would go to St. Mary for prayers and blessings, but St. Mary would go to them for Eucharist. I feel that if the servants and the youth have this concept clear in their minds, it's a good door for the rest of the topic
 - And this is the equality God has for us. And equality doesn't delete the fact that women has a role as well as men. No person on earth was/is greater than St. Mary, but she was never a priest, never administered any sacraments. The apostles also know and appreciate St. Mary so much that they would go for her opinion/blessings/prayers. St. John never left Jerusalem until her body's assumption.
 - God picked men to be the apostles, but also the women to anoint his body. But He also picked EVERYONE to be His disciple (you mentioned this part)
 - Similarities and differences in men and women
- **Station 2:** Does it fulfill God's will?
 - **Responsible Servants:** Morcoux, Mirolla, Andrew
 - Feminism is the advocacy of women, and God's will is for the equality of men and women... so is feminism fulfilling God's will?
 - This station should focus on the topic of Abortion
 - Some believe that abortion is fundamental to the functioning of a woman... (e.g. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yZYQpge1W5s> 12:00 "I think abortion rights are

fundamental to women being able to function as full humans in society") and they call this feminism

- Some people ask why do we let a person live without a father? abortion is a solution for this. Why would someone that got raped live with a baby that she didn't want? abortion is a solution

The real answer for these is that God has a plan (even if it seems unclear)

- **Station 3:** Is it fair to everyone?

- **Responsible Servants:** Rafeek, Maivel, Maria
- Historically, Christianity was the first institution in the world to be openly for women and liberating to women...
 - Jesus accepted women to be His disciples, they had a very specific ministry (i.e. Luke 8) in providing financial support, meals, etc. He appeared to them first after His Resurrection
 - Christianity was open about accepting women and this attracted many women to join the faith in the Early Church
 - "There is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28)
- The feminist movement disregards all of this and calls the Church unfair to women and oppressive to women
- The feminist movement is unfair in its judgmental attitude towards the church

- **Station 4:** Does it help build society?

- **Responsible Servants:** Jimmy, Christy, Ehab
- Promotion of independence and individuality

- **Closing Topic:** Final Debate

- **Responsible Servants:** Susan + All Servants Participation
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