

PIZZA & GOD

What is it?

Pizza and God is an informal outreach that opens the door to spiritual issues with students all over campus. The idea is to gather students (maybe your friends or classmates) by letting them know that you are having an informal discussion where people can freely express and discuss their thoughts and ideas about God and spirituality.

Why have one?

This outreach will help you connect with non-believing students and provides an opportunity where they can be heard and understood. It is meant to open up dialogue about spiritual issues. It helps students realize that it is okay to talk about spiritual things. It also helps them know that we are open to hear what they think as well.

The 5 Essentials...if nothing else!

- Advertise *and* invite friends (<http://www.jerseymetro.com/resources.htm>)
- Prepare the Christians: read the purpose statement of Pizza & God at your weekly meeting.
- Choose the questions ahead of time that you would like to discuss.
- Prepare comment cards to use at the event. (<http://www.jerseymetro.com/resources.htm>)
- Order the pizza far in advance so the pizza place isn't surprised by your order. The pizza *must* arrive on time (before it begins).

How can someone do a Pizza & God outreach? (The details to pulling it off!)

- **Pray:** Ask that God would use the outreach as an opportunity to open doors and bring people to Christ. Also, pray that God would use you and build *your* faith through it.
- If it is in a dorm, ask the RA if they have money in their program fund to pay for all or part of the pizzas. Sometimes they are given university money to fund these kinds of programs.
- Decide on a time and place to have the event.
- Book the room and confirm as it gets closer.
- Make posters to hang up and small invites to personally give to people.
- Communicate to the Christians that this is an opportunity for us to be listeners. We are *not* to say the truth is, the correct answer is, or the Bible says. The Christians can *occasionally* say "in my opinion..." or "my experience has been...". We *don't* want to dominate the discussion or turn it into a debate.
- Several days before, call the pizza place and let them know your order.
- Make copies of the comment card and bring pens to the event.
- Review the many questions, and rank them in order of ones you would like to ask.
- The day of: show up early to set up the room. Be ready 15 minutes prior in case people come early.

During the Program:

- Open up by reading what Pizza & God is. (Below)
- The format is *informal!* Remember this outreach is unique.
- Begin by introducing yourself as the moderator and then open up the program with the first question. Your main job during Pizza & God is to *listen*. You & the other Christians present are *not* there to lecture or dominate the conversation. Ask clarifying questions if you do not understand what someone is trying to communicate. Use your judgment, trying to refrain from flooding the discussion with your opinions. The purpose here is to allow students to feel heard.
- Make sure people are heard and understood.

- If there seems to be someone dominating the conversation, ask “who else wants to share” or “what are other people thinking?”
- Allow the discussion to go on for 30-45 minutes depending on the flow and the size of the group (make sure to stick to the time you advertised).
- Pass out comment cards. Tell them we would love to get their feedback
- Tell them the discussion is over, but if they would like to stick around to hear what our opinion on God, we would love to take 3-4 minutes to share that with them. Thank people for coming!
- Trust God with the results! He changes lives and hearts, we don't!
- Keep talking about God with people and follow up with those who expressed interest.
- You can have invites near the door with the meeting times on it and some Bibles if people want one.

Opening statement - What pizza & God is (read aloud):

“Thank you so much for coming to Pizza & God. This event is sponsored by Campus Crusade for Christ. We wanted to provide an environment where we could hear from people on campus what their thoughts are on God and spirituality. This will be an open discussion where everyone is free to share their opinion. This is not a debate or where we the hosts are telling you what we believe. Please enjoy the pizza, the conversation, and share your thoughts.”

Other ideas with Pizza & God:

- Pizza and God could be a great spring-board into beginning an investigative Bible study. You may want to mention the possibility at the end of the program or you could have the students indicate their desire to be involved on their comment card from the program.
- Plan a series of Pizza and God programs with specific topics.

PIZZA & GOD

Sample Questions

Questions on God:

1. What is your perception of God? Is God real?
2. Is God a personal God?
3. How do you form your beliefs?
4. Have your opinions or thoughts about God changed since you came to college?
5. Do you think God is a relevant issue in peoples' lives on campus?
6. What one question do you really want to ask God?
7. What happens after we die?
8. If you were standing before God and God was to asked you, "Why should I let you into Heaven," what would you say?

Questions on Christianity and God:

(Watch your time carefully here. You want to make sure you at least discuss questions 1, 4 & 5. You might want to introduce this last section by saying something like, "We are going to spend the largest amount of time on this last section, because we really want to hear what you have to say in this area—positive AND negative.")

1. **What do you perceive to be the basic message of Christianity?** [Your best answer to these questions is "OK." You are not agreeing or disagreeing, you are just listening.]
2. **What do you like about Christianity as you understand it?** [Looking for answers like it give people peace, security, typical things non-Christians would say about religion.]
3. **What do you dislike about it/its teachings/its followers?** [Looking for controversial stuff here. Let them get into abortion or intolerance or hypocrisy...but when it does, be sure not fight back or even disagree. Just listen. Let them have their say without trying to defend it. This will (believe it or not) help you greatly in ministering to these folks later.]
4. **Do you believe there is a heaven?**
5. **If there is a heaven, how—in your opinion—does someone get there?**
[Be SURE to get to this question. This is a great one, because many many people think by being a good person. Look for opportunities to ask "How good do you have to be?" And "Is that fair?" And if someone responds that a division would not be fair, maybe everyone goes, you can say "Hitler? Manson? etc..." You want to get them to see that there is no fair standard. You can definitely do this by just asking questions... Hopefully this will leave them hungry to hear what you believe later on. Often students will debate about this and come to the consensus that they have no idea what would be fair.]
6. **If God were one of us, and you could sit down and interview God over a cup of coffee, and ask him any one or two questions, what would they be?**
7. **What is your opinion of Christians at __[school name]__?**

Questions on Life:

- 1. What do you want out of life?** [If they say happiness: How do you define happiness? How do you know it will last? What will it take to ensure that you are happy for life? etc...]
- 2. Are most [school name] students satisfied with their lives?** [Why? Why not? If overwhelming no's, "What is missing?"]
- 3. Are some things always right and wrong?** [How do you determine that/how do you know?]
- 4. How do you decide what is right or wrong?** [Look here for all sorts of opportunities. For example: someone says "You have to be true to yourself, and look inside for what is right." you could ask "Are you always true to yourself/do you always do the right thing in your own heart?" Why not? If someone says there is nothing that is always wrong, you could say "What about torturing one year-old babies for your personal pleasure?"]
- 5. What would you characterize as a wasted life?**

Questions on Relationships:

- 1. Do your friends know the real you?** [If no, 'Why not?' or 'What holds you back?']
- 2. Do people love you for what you do or how you perform--or do they love you without condition, just because you are?** [Is college different than high school in that respect?]
- 3. Are you more a giver or a taker in your relationships?**
- 4. Have you ever had anyone love you unconditionally? How did/would it effect you?**
- 5. What do you look for in someone you want to date?**

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Open discussion and then short presentation at the end

“Welcome to our Pizza & God open discussion, and thanks for coming. Whether the topic caught your eye, or you just stopped in to get some free food, we hope you’ll stick around and share your thoughts. The point of this discussion is to find out what YOU think. The one rule here is, no criticizing someone else’s belief. You can believe something different, but this is a ‘safe’ place to share, not the right place for a debate.”

Questions:

1. Are most people satisfied with life?
2. What is your perception of God? What is He like?
3. If you could sit and hang out with God, what questions would you ask Him?
4. Do you believe in absolute truth? Is anything *always* right or wrong?
5. What is the basic message of Christianity?
6. What do you like/dislike about Christianity?
7. Do you believe in heaven and/or hell? Why or why not?
8. How does one get there? How sure are you of your answer?

“Thanks for coming, and for sharing today. I hope you enjoyed it. This is the end of the Pizza & God open discussion, but I encourage you to continue the discussion with someone else you meet here today. For those interested, you can stay now to hear a 10-minute presentation of how the Bible answers those questions. The answers may surprise you!”

Presentation:

Points to briefly explain, using the **KNOWING GOD PERSONALLY** booklet:

God loves you (John 3:16)

The problem of sin – separation from God (Romans 3:23, 6:23)

Jesus Christ is our only provision for our sin (Romans 5:8, John 14:6)

(You can use a JUDGE ILLUSTRATION.)

You can receive Jesus Christ personally through prayer (Ephesians 2:8-9)

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KGP Questions followed by KGP Presentation

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Questions:

1. Does life have a purpose?
2. What is your perception of God? What is He like?
3. Is the world as it should be? If not, what examples do you see that something is wrong?
4. Is there such a thing as right and wrong? Is anything *always* right or wrong for everyone?
5. Have you tried any religions in your life? What was the basic point it taught?
6. Who do you think Jesus is/was? What was He trying to do?
7. What happens when you die? If there’s a Heaven, why should God let you in?
8. If God existed and wanted a relationship with you, rate your desire to know *Him* 1-10.

“Thanks for coming, and for sharing today. I hope you enjoyed it. This is the end of the Pizza & God open discussion, but I encourage you to continue the discussion with someone else you meet here today. For those who would be interested to know God, you can stay now to hear a 10-minute presentation of how the Bible answers those questions. The answers may surprise you!”

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