

# STANDING STRONG

## DEFENDING OUR ISLAMIC FAITH AS MUSLIM STUDENTS

Have you ever found yourself in a heated discussion, grappling to defend your faith against a challenge from a professor, classmate, or close friend? As Muslims in the university setting, we are no strangers to these situations. In this article, we aim to empower you with strategies to counter and overcome misconceptions, protect your Islamic identity, and confidently stand up for your beliefs amidst the challenges of modern society.

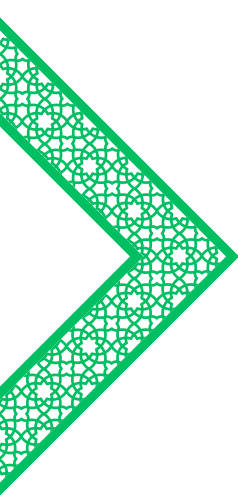
In this era of misinformation and propaganda, it is crucial that we equip ourselves with the tools to defend our beliefs and values against the onslaught of contemporary misconceptions. So, how do we navigate the intellectual challenges of our time? The answer lies in adopting a multi-faceted approach that encompasses two main areas: spiritual preparation and intellectual preparation.

First and foremost, we need to cultivate a strong relationship with Allah. This means practicing our religion with sincerity and seeking His guidance and protection. We can achieve this by engaging in regular prayer, recitation of Qur'an, and engaging in Dhikr (remembrance of Allah) throughout the day. Fasting during the month of Ramaḍān and performing acts of charity can also strengthen our connection with Allah. By placing our trust in Allah, we are better equipped to face the intellectual challenges that confront us. An essential component of building a connection with Allah is surrounding ourselves with good company. By associating with righteous individuals who are steadfast in their faith, we can reinforce our Islamic identity and find support in times of doubt and challenges.

Secondly, to build our intellectual base, we need to start by studying the various disciplines of Islamic studies, including 'Aqīdah (theology), Fiqh (jurisprudence), Uṣūl al-Fiqh (legal theory), Uṣūl al-Ḥadīth (Ḥadīth terminology), the Arabic language, and 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān (Qur'anic disciplines). This will give us a firm foundation of knowledge to rely upon, enabling us to defend our faith against intellectual attacks. To achieve this, we can attend local classes and seek out mentors who are well-versed in these disciplines. When engaging in online courses, we should enquire about the authenticity of the course and material from a trustable and reliable scholar in our community. By building a solid foundation in Islamic knowledge, we will be better equipped to address misconceptions and defend our faith with confidence..

Furthermore, we must develop a critical mind that can examine what is being said and distinguish between truth and falsehood. We should not accept claims that are not proven through clear evidence, and we should also be on the lookout for logical contradictions. This requires us to be vigilant and constantly question the objections that are raised against Islam.

A crucial part of critical thinking is specifying what our sources of knowledge are. We need to be mindful of the sources of knowledge we rely upon and the attitude we have towards them. We should distinguish between those sources that are infallible and are based on our religion and others that are prone to error. We need to realize that knowledge that is attained through our perception or induction can never be equal to knowledge from revelation. Knowledge we attain from revelation is infallible and can never be wrong, while other sources of knowledge are prone to human error. This will be a means of saving us from falling prey to misinformation.



It is also important to read books that address contemporary misconceptions. We should ensure that the misconceptions addressed in these books are serious and widespread and that the answers given are valid and well-argued. This will enable us to refute the arguments of those who seek to undermine our faith. There are good contemporary books dealing with these issues in an easy-to-understand fashion, drawing from traditional and contemporary ideas. A good book to start with is Hamza Tzortzis' "The Divine Reality."

Finally, we need to strengthen our group programmes that are intellectually and emotionally beneficial. Because, both, spiritual and intellectual strength are easier gained and fostered when we strive together towards our common goal. As the Qur'an tells us, "And cooperate in righteousness and piety." This includes participating in educational programs run by reliable teachers who are committed to strengthening our Islamic identity. By engaging in activities such as community service, attending lectures, and participating in study circles, we will discover our abilities. This will also provide us with a sense of identity and act as a psychological check against embracing false ideas.

We would like to mention that we at Markaz Manār al-Fikr are working towards offering an online course in the near future, covering some of these essential Islamic sciences and ways of developing our critical thinking. Further details will be made available closer to the launch of the course. Our objective is to ensure that you have access to reliable resources for strengthening your foundation in Islamic knowledge and critical thinking.

In conclusion, our faith is a powerful source of strength and guidance. By adopting a multi-faceted approach that encompasses the different strategies outlined above, we can defend our beliefs and values against the onslaught of contemporary misconceptions. As Muslims, it is essential that we stay vigilant, critical, and steadfast, thus allowing us to navigate the challenges of modern society while preserving our Islamic identity and standing strong in our faith.



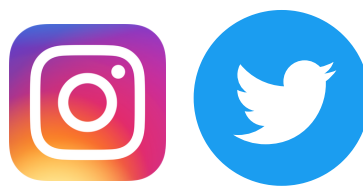
We welcome feedback and suggestions from our readers, and encourage anyone who has a topic they would like us to discuss, to contact us via email. By working together and sharing knowledge, we can strive to deepen our understanding of Islam and promote a more accurate and nuanced understanding of Islam. ■

### DROP US AN EMAIL



[markazmanaralfikr@gmail.com](mailto:markazmanaralfikr@gmail.com)

### FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM OR TWITTER



@markazmanaralfikr

