

# APOLOGETICS

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## I. The Word

- ✘ Greek root words: apo = "from"; logos = word, logic, reasoning
- ✘ The word for *apologetics* comes from the Greek word *apologia*, which is used in 1 Peter 3:15, and refers to giving a reason or reply for our faith.
- ✘ This word is a legal term that describes what a lawyer would do in defending his client. "Apologetics is offering each person evidence and reasons for the truth of Christianity"

## II. Definition

- ✘ It is defined as "the branch of theology that is concerned with defending or proving the truth of Christian doctrines."
- ✘ An apologetic is a well-reasoned or thought out defense, or an answer of a position one holds or wants to defend or prove. In this case the cause is Christ.
- ✘ Apologetics is a subdivision of Christian theology.

## III. 2 Types of Apologetics

### a. Defensive

- For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me (Philippians 1:7).

### b. Offensive

- We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2. Corinthians 10:5).

## IV. History of Apologetics

### a. New Testament

- Our Lord himself engaged in apologetical argument when he appealed to his miracles as proof that he was sent by the Father
- "Believe me for the sake of the works themselves" (John 14:10)

- "It seemed good to me . . . to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may know the truth concerning the things of which you have been informed" (Luke 1:3–4).

## V. Apologetics in the Scriptures

- 1) Acts 22:1 - "my defense"
- 2) Acts 25:16 - "make his defense"
- 3) I Cor. 9:3 - "my defense"
- 4) II Cor. 7:11 - "vindication"
- 5) Phil. 1:7 - "defense of the gospel"
- 6) Phil. 1:17 - "defense of the gospel"
- 7) II Tim. 4:16 - "my first defense"
- 8) I Peter 3:15 - "ready to make a defense"
- 9) Luke 12:11 - "your defense"
- 10) Luke 21:14 - "not to defend yourselves"
- 11) Acts 19:33 - "make a defense"
- 12) Acts 24:10 - "make my defense"
- 13) Acts 25:8 - "his own defense"
- 14) Acts 26:1 - "make his defense"
- 15) Acts 26:2 - "make my defense"
- 16) Acts 26:24 - "in his defense"
- 17) Rom. 2:15 - "defending them"
- 18) II Cor. 12:17 - "defending ourselves"
- 19) Acts 9:22 - (Paul) "proving that Jesus is the Christ."
- 20) Acts 17:2 - "reasoned from the Scriptures"
- 21) Acts 18:4 - "trying to persuade Jews and Greeks"
- 22) Acts 19:8,9 - "reasoning and persuading them about Kingdom of God"
- 23) II Cor. 10:5 - "destroying speculations "
- 24) I Peter 3:15 - "always ready to make a defense"

## VI. Why study Apologetics?

### a. God's Command

- "Always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." (1 Peter 3:15)
- St. Paul speaks of his mission as "**defending** and confirming the gospel." He adds in verse 17, "I am put here for **the defense** of the gospel."
- St. Paul makes Apologetics a requirement for church leaders. "holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to **exhort and convict those who contradict.**" (Titus 1:9)

- “And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, **in humility correcting those who are in opposition**, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth. (2 Tim 2:24,25)

### **b. Reason’s Demand**

- God calls upon his people to use reason (Isa. 1:18)
- To discern truth from error (1 John 4:6) and right from wrong (Heb. 5:14).
- The ability to use reason is part of the image of God in man (Gen 1:26)
- Love the Lord with all your mind

### **c. The World that we live in**

- C.S. Lewis says: “If all the world were Christian, it might not matter if all the world were uneducated. To be ignorant and -not to be able to meet the enemies on their own ground--would be to throw down our weapons, and to betray our uneducated brethren who have, under God, no defense but us against the intellectual attacks of the heathen. Good philosophy must exist, if for no other reason, because bad philosophy needs to be answered.” C.S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*, 28

### **d. Strengthening of our own faith**

- We are strengthened in knowing that our faith is founded on facts and truth

## **VII. The relationship between faith and reason**

- ✘ The apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:14 that, “If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.”
  - Therefore, our faith is only as valid as the object in which it is placed. In other words, what makes faith have merit is the object of that faith.
- ✘ Evidence of truth should precede faith.
  - No rational person steps in an elevator without some reason to believe it will hold him up.
- ✘ People deal in two dimensions of belief: **belief that** and **belief in**.
  - Belief that gives the evidence and rational basis for confidence needed to establish belief in.
  - Once belief that is established, one can place faith in it.

## VIII. Words of Caution

- ✘ The task of apologetics is not to reason someone into the kingdom. Apologetics can never actually force someone to make a decision for Christ.
- ✘ Christ said in John 6:65, "No one can come to me unless it has been granted him from the father."
- ✘ The Holy Spirit must work in their heart to move them towards faith in Christ.
- ✘ Therefore, faith and reason must work hand in hand to effectively reach others for Christ.
- ✘ Apologetics can help someone to "believe that" Jesus is the Christ, but can never force one to "believe in" Him.
- ✘ We are lowering people's intellectual barriers so that the Holy Spirit can penetrate their heart

## IX. How do we do Apologetics

- ✘ With "meekness and gentleness" 1 Pet 3:15
- ✘ People generally do not like to lose face when we confront them with Christ's true claims.
- ✘ As a result, we have to be very mindful of how we point out the inconsistencies in their worldview. We really need to come across like one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread.

## X. Conclusion

- ✘ Our lives serve as a powerful apologetic to the truth of Christianity.
- ✘ We have probably heard the expression, "You may be the only Bible that someone ever reads."
- ✘ Joe Aldrich says that evangelism is like music. The words of the Gospel are like the lyrics, but your lifestyle is like the melody of the song. The melody enhances the words just as our lives enhance the message of the gospel.
- ✘ In the same way, apologetics enhances the testimony of our lives, which is most likely what non-Christians will see first.

Glory be to God Forever