



Christian Apologetics

An Introduction

What is apologetics?

- **We often use the word “apologize” today to say “I’m sorry”**
- **But this is not the idea behind apologetics**
 - **Apologetics not being sorry for being a Christian**
 - **Apologetics is not making the other guys sorry that you’re a Christian**
- **Apologetics is saying “I’m not sorry for being a Christian, because Christianity is true and here is why it is!”**

What is apologetics?

- “Apologetics (from the Greek *apologia*: a defense) is that branch of Christian theology which seeks to provide a rational justification for the truth claims of the Christian faith. Apologetics is thus primarily a theoretical discipline, though it has a practical application. In addition to serving, like the rest of theology in general, as an expression of loving God with all our minds, apologetics specifically serves to show the unbelievers the truth of the Christian faith, to confirm that faith to believers, and to reveal and explore the connections between Christian doctrine and other truths. As a theoretical discipline, then, apologetics is not training in the art of answering questions, or debating, or evangelism, though all of these draw upon the science of apologetics and apply it practically. This implies that a course in apologetics is not for the purpose of teaching you, ‘If he says so-and-so, then you say such-and-such back.’ Apologetics, to repeat, is a theoretical discipline that tries to answer the question, What rational warrant can be given for the Christian faith?” (Craig, Reasonable Faith. P.15)

Main Areas of Apologetics

- **Theology**
 - Includes concepts of God, Scripture, etc.
 - More to theology than reading the Bible
- **Philosophy**
 - Everyone uses philosophy
 - Primary philosophical issues: morality, logic
- **Science**
 - Most popular area of apologetics today
 - Definition of science is important
 - Includes evolution v. design, astronomy/cosmology, neuroscience

Biblical Case for Apologetics

- **1 Peter 3:15**
 - Christians are expected to be able to defend the faith
 - Must be done with the right attitude
- **Many examples of apologetics in the NT**
 - Luke 1:1-4 – Luke wrote to Theophilus so that he would have certainty
 - John 20:30-31 – John wrote things down so people would believe
 - Acts 17:22 (etc.) – Paul is seen reasoning with people about Christ
- **Early Christians understood the need to be able to defend their faith!**
- **We have both doctrine and example concerning the Christian's ability to answer objections**

Practical Case for Apologetics

- **Reasons to study apologetics**
 - Our relationship with God will grow
 - We will be more likely to draw people to Christ
 - We will learn skills that will make us better in other areas
- **Simply put, there are many good reasons to study how to defend our faith, and the Christian who does not make this a part of their spiritual walk is more likely to hurt the cause of Christ than to help it!**
 - This doesn't mean everyone has to be a deep thinking intellectual
 - It just means that, as Jesus says in Matt. 22:14, God gave you a mind and you need to use it to His glory!

Some Objections to Apologetics

- **“I just want a simple faith”**
 - Sometimes connected to what Jesus said in Matt. 18:1-4
 - It is true we need to be “like children” but there is an important distinction
 - See 1 Cor. 14:20 - We need a pure faith, not a childish faith
- **“If they don’t believe the Bible, I can’t help them”**
 - It can be very discouraging when people reject Scripture
 - But people can be brought to Christ through a reasoned defense
 - Peter’s first sermon (Acts 2:14-36)
 - Paul before Agrippa (Acts 26:1ff)
 - If it would have no effect, why did the apostles bother with it?
- **“I’m not smart enough”**
 - Can seem legitimate in our minds sometimes
 - But we have seen that God gives us doctrine and example
 - He won’t expect you do something that you can’t do
 - Remember that most of the apostles were originally just fishermen!

Resources for Further Study

- Books
 - J.P. Moreland, *Scaling the Secular City*
 - William Lane Craig, *Reasonable Faith*
 - Lee Strobel, *The Case For...*
 - Stephen Meyer, *Signature in the Cell*
 - C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*
- Blogs
 - Apologetics 315 (<http://apologetics315.blogspot.com>)
 - Uncommon Descent (www.uncommondescent.com)
 - Christian Cadre (<http://christiancadre.blogspot.com>)
 - Thinking Christian (<http://www.thinkingchristian.net>)
- Websites
 - Reasonable Faith (www.reasonablefaith.org)
 - CARM (www.carm.org)
 - Tektonics (www.tektonics.org)
 - Veritas Forum (www.veritas.org)
 - Apologetics Press (www.apologeticspress.org)
- Podcasts
 - Unbelievable (Premier Christian Radio)
 - Reasonable Faith
 - Stand to Reason
 - Apologetics.com