

1 Peter Series

Lesson #085

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Dean Bible Ministries

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GIVING AN ANSWER – PART 3

KNOWLEDGE; BIBLICAL EXAMPLES

1 PETER 3:15



1ST PETER

LIVING IN LIGHT
OF ETERNITY

Introduction to Apologetics

1. **What is *Apologetics*?**
2. **Why should we learn about apologetics?**
3. **Why do some people object to apologetics?**
4. **The Bible doesn't use apologetics, why should we?**
5. **What is the difference between Apologetics and Christian Evidences?**
6. **On what basis do we defend, support, argue, that Christianity is the one and only TRUTH?**

1. What is *Apologetics*?

ἀπολογία apologia

① a speech of defense, *defense, reply*

② the act of making a defense, *defense; as*

in court, or an eager activity to defend oneself, 2 Cor. 7:11

③ claim of extenuating circumstance,

excuse,

BAGD

“17× the noun or verb appears in the New Testament with the sense of either vindication or defense in every use.

(Boa, Faith has its Reasons)

“*Apologia* describes a carefully reasoned defense in response to a line of questioning or wrongful accusation by recognized authorities. The word may also refer to a more informal defense outside of the courtroom against personal questioning or accusation (1 Cor. 9:3; 2 Cor. 7:11; 1 Pet. 3:15). The intent of an *apologia* is to win over the person being addressed, to change his mind about what is true.”

~Clough, *Theology and Apologetics*

“From this we see that the definition involves the knowledge of facts and determination of truth. Over the century the meaning of knowledge, facts, and truth have been intensely debated. Underlying this discussion are assumptions about a specific view of reality. How one person understands reality is directly related to his worldview. This includes an understanding of the ultimate nature of reality, how we know anything and how we validate or justify that knowledge, how that knowledge affects our understanding of truth, which in turn impacts ethics and the determination of right and wrong, or even if right and wrong exists.”

~Clough

Introduction to Apologetics

1. What is *Apologetics*?
2. Why should we learn about apologetics?

2. Why should we learn about apologetics?

a. Because it is commanded in Scripture!

Titus 1:9, “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.”

2. Why should we learn about apologetics?

- b. Because it strengthens our own understanding of what we believe and builds our confidence in God, the gospel, the Scripture, and Jesus.**

2. Why should we learn about apologetics?

c. It advances us spiritually.

2 Cor. 10:4, “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,

2 Cor. 10:5, “casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,”

2. Why should we learn about apologetics?

d. Apologetics was a priority for the apostle Paul.

Phil. 1:7, “just as it is right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace.”

Phil. 1:17, “but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel.”

2. Why should we learn about apologetics?

e. Both thought and communication require it.

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3. Why do some people object to apologetics?

a. Some people do not understand it, either from a misunderstanding of the concept or from a fallacious epistemology.

- The Bible does not need to be defended.**
- God can't be known by human reason.**
- Natural humanity can't understand.**
- Jesus refused to give signs for evil men.**

3. Why do some people object to apologetics?

b. Some people argue from a false perception of the biblical presupposition.

The Basis of Knowledge

	SYSTEM	STARTING POINT	METHOD
Autonomous Systems of Perception	RATIONALISM Classic Apologetics- Logic and reason	Innate ideas Faith in human ability.	Independent use of logic & reason
	EMPIRICISM Evidentialism- Facts, history, science	Sense perceptions External experience; Scientific method; Faith in human ability	Independent use of logic & reason
	MYSTICISM Fideism-just believe, apart from reason or evidence	Inner, private experience; intuition Faith in human ability	Independent, nonlogical, nonrational, nonverifiable
Divine Viewpoint	REVELATION Presuppositionalism- Presupposes the truth of Scripture	Objective revelation of God	Dependent use of logic & reason

Prov. 26:4, “Do not answer a fool according to his folly, Lest you also be like him.

Prov. 26:5, “Answer a fool according to his folly, Lest he be wise in his own eyes.”

Prov. 26:4, “Do not answer a fool according to his folly, Lest you also be like him.”

Do not answer the fool (the one who rejects the existence of God—Psa 14:1) based on his presupposition.



**Christian
Missionary**

Common Ground

**Reason?
Facts?
Intuition?
Revelation?**



**The Fool
Human Viewpoint**

Prov. 26:5, “Answer a fool according to his folly, Lest he be wise in his own eyes.”

Expose the flaws with his human viewpoint reasoning by asking questions which will reveal an inability to consistently live with his foolish assumptions.

“A (ANY) critical question comes with its own interpretation of history, of what is possible and not possible, and of what is right and what is wrong. It brings its own agenda to the table about the basic building blocks of reality. If we try to answer it without perceiving this unbiblical baggage, we may unconsciously adopt its alien viewpoint. Paul warned the Church about being deceived by pagan notions of the fundamental categories of reality (Col. 2:8).”

~Clough, *Theology and Apologetics*

“These basic categories or *stoichea* in ancient times could be earth, fire, water, air, or other created things that paganism falsely interpreted as cosmic sources and sustainers. Over against this pagan viewpoint Paul directs us to build upon the truths revealed in Christ. Christ, says Paul, created the entire cosmos, sustains every so-called natural process, and fully reveals God’s Person (Col. 1:15–17). Verbal revelation, not human speculation, is the key to interpreting history, what is and is not possible, and what is right or wrong. In Him ‘are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge’ (Col. 2:3).”

~Clough, *Theology and Apologetics*

Elements in Apologetics

- 1. Apologetics addresses specific issues, challenges, or misrepresentations of biblical truth.**
- 2. Apologetics provides a justification or vindication for believing the Bible over other beliefs.**
- 3. Apologetics helps expose the flaws in non-biblical worldviews.**
- 4. Apologetics seeks to persuade people of the truth.**

Apologetics Involves Communication



Christian
Missionary

What is their
common ground?
language?
culture?
religion? (what
do they each
mean by “god”)?
truth?
values?
reason?
experience?



Pagan aborigines

Apologetics involves communication



Christian
Missionary
DVP

Do they mean the
same thing by:
god?
truth?
life?
creation?
right and wrong?



Pagan aborigines
HVP

The Basis of Knowledge

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Four Basic Issues in Apologetics

- 1. How do we know anything? Do we know things as they are or only as we perceive them? Is truth knowable absolutely or only probabilities, or only perceptions?**
- 2. Do the theistic proofs actually prove anything?**
- 3. What is the role of evidences in apologetics?**
- 4. Is there a common ground between Christian thought (DVP) and non-Christian thought (HVP)? If so, what is it?**

Classical Apologetics

Common ground: Logical criteria (law of non-contradiction, self-consistency, coherence).

Refute HVP truth claims and then establish DVP truth on theistic proofs.

First a case for theism, then a case that God is revealed in the Bible and Christ.

Key people: Thomas Aquinas, Norm Geisler

Classic Apologetics

What is their common ground?



Christian
Missionary

Logic/reason

Law of non-contradiction:

Something cannot be both true and not true at the same time in the same context.

Problem: Effects of sin on logic and reason.



Pagan
aborigines;
Your neighbor

Evidentialism

Common ground: Empirical and historically verifiable facts.

DVP has a high degree of probability of being true comparable to scientific laws.

Evidence is not proof, but it is sufficient to show that belief in Christianity is rational and justifiable.

Key people: Joseph Butler, John Warwick Montgomery

Evidentialist

What is their common ground?



Christian
Missionary

Historical and empirical evidence provides highest probability of truth.

Evidence for God, inspiration, deity of Christ all point to the reality of the biblical God.

Problem: Effects of sin on logic and reason.



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aborigines;
Your neighbor

Fideism

Common ground: Intuition; a personal existential encounter with God which is not rational, empirical, historical, or scientific.

Just believe in God or Christ apart from any reasoning or evidence

Fideism rejects apologetics, “just believe.”

Key people: Lutheran pietism, Soren Kierkegaard, Karl Barth, Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Fideism

What is their
common ground?

Existential,
subjective
encounter with
“God”.

Rejects rational,
empirical evidence
and usually has a
weak view of
Scripture.



Christian
Missionary



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Revelational

Common ground: Infallible General and Special Revelation; convicting work of the Holy Spirit.

Rational and empirical approaches give too much credit to unaided human ability.

Focus should be on exposing inadequate presuppositions and that only the Bible provides a valid basis for reason, history, fact, and truth.

Key people: John Calvin, Abraham Kuyper, Cornelius Van Til, and Francis Schaeffer to some degree.