

I. Why study apologetics & our goal for this course?

1. To be better equipped to fulfill the great commission. (**1 Peter 3:15**)
2. That you may guard against the many false religions and philosophies in our day.

Eph 4:11-14

¹⁴so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

a. Guard against false teachers & the philosophies of men

- Jude, intending to write and encourage the believers concerning our common salvation, felt it necessary to warn them against false teachers instead (**Jude 1:3**)
- Being rooted in Christ and not the philosophies of men (**Col 2:6-9**)
- Exposing Satan's disguises (**2 Cor 11:13-15**)

b. Understanding our ungodly & unrighteous culture will help us to live wisely in this age

- We live in a lawless age, where everyone does what is right in his sight (**2 Tim 3:1-5**)
- Here is **God's counsel** as to how we should live in this age:
 1. Follow apostolic example & teaching (**3:10-13**)
 2. Be assured of the inspiration & sufficiency of scripture. (**3:14-16**)

• **Definition of the word**

The word, "**apologetics**," comes from the Greek word, "apologia,"

- It means "a **reasoned defense**." (i.e. the case a defense lawyer would make on behalf of a client)
- It is used eight times in the NT: Acts 22:1, 25:16, 1 Cor. 9:3, 2 Cor. 10:5-6, Phil. 1:7, 2 Tim. 4:16, and 1 Pet. 3:15.

• **The task of an apologist is to show the compelling evidence of the NT**

- Our faith is both rational and reasonable
 - coming to Christ is not a blind leap of faith
 - Like some scientist told a priest "give me your faith and I'll give you reason"
 - Our faith is based on propositional truths about God, sin & a savior.
- We are not following some fables and myths (**2 Peter 1:16-21**)

II. Types of apologetics:

A. Evidential (or classical) & presuppositional

- Evidential deals with the evidence for Christianity:

- Jesus' resurrection,
- The Biblical manuscripts,
- fulfilled prophecy,
- Miracles, etc.

- **The book of Luke and Acts seem to be overtly apologetic in purpose.**

- In His prologue (Luke 1:1-4), Luke tells us that his work is based on careful historical research and will present an accurate record of the origins of Christianity.

- **Jesus and the apostles used evidential apologetics to show that Christ is the Messiah**

- **Jesus, 4- fold witness John 5:30-40**
- John the Baptist (:32-33)

- The works which the Father gave Him to do (:35-26)
- The Father bears witness to Christ (:37-:38)
- The prophets in OT scriptures (:39)

- **The apostles (Acts 2:14-36)**

Peter shows that Jesus is the promised Messiah because he fulfilled the old testament prophecies by rising from the dead and sending His Spirit on all flesh.

B. Presuppositional apologetics:

- All men know that there is a God because of the internal and external evidence of His deity, but they suppress this knowledge. **(Rom 1:18, 28)**
- His creation declares Him **(Rom 1:19-20 & Ps 19:1-6)**
- The law of God written on man's conscious **(Rom 2:15)**
- This knowledge of God has been corrupted by sin **(Rom 1:21-23)**

III. Effective apologetics

- **know your audience**

- what is their presuppositions
- Where do they get their moral and ethical beliefs & values.

1. What do they believe about God

- Is He the God of the Bible
 - Creator, lawgiver, savior and judge
 - is He the triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit
 - Is He personal and knowable?

2. What do they believe about the Lord Jesus Christ- His person and works

- Is He the Son of God or just a prophet & moral teacher
- Why did He come? to set a moral example
- Did He die on the cross as a substitute for our sins and rose again on the third day, & ascended to heaven?

3. The scriptures

- Inspired By God
- Inerrant
- Sufficient

4. Man

- Made in the image of God
- Fallen- original sin

5. How are we saved

- personal human effort or
- by grace thru faith alone in the finished work of Christ.

6. Life after death and Heaven and Hell

- Reincarnation or death and judgment
- Inhalation or eternal torment
- Heaven, physical or spiritual delights

IV. Principles to keep in mind when witnessing

- 1. Not about winning an argument, but about winning a person to Christ. (Acts 26:16-18)**
- 2. The problem is not intellectual but moral.**

- They suppress the truth about God, their understanding becomes darkened (**Rom 1:21**)
 - God revealed Himself in: Creation, His Word, His Son & their conscience
- 3. Convincing the mind is necessary, but it does not change the heart. That is the work of the Holy Spirit**
 - They need to know the objective truths about Christ in order to believe on Him
 - Pray while witnessing for the Holy Spirit to do His work of converting the heart.
- 4. Must be done in humility & gentleness & love**
 - Remember that you yourself were in their shoes not long ago, and it was only the Lord's mercy in your life that you are where you are now. (**Titus 3:1-8; 2 Tim 2:24-26; 1 Peter 3:15**)
 - If you come across as arrogant and proud, people will be turned off to your message.
 - Jesus was gentle with the common folks. He looked at them as distressed sheep and had compassion on them and taught them.
- 5. Must be done in a context of a righteous life- sin will shut our mouths.**
 - You've Sanctified Christ as Lord in your heart- You've submitted to His rule in your life.
 - Stephen was a man filled with the Holy Spirit, no man could withstand him
 - Paul lived in good conscious before God and men
- 6. Learning and using everything we will teach in this course will not exempt you from suffering for your faith.**

V. A brief Course overview: Just to whet your appetite

A. Answering the culture part 1

2. A ready defense (1 Peter 3:13-17).

- Always ready to give a reasoned defense for the hope that you have

3. Apologetics in Church History

- Looking at different philosophical and religious movements in history, and seeing how they affected the church and society..
 - **Gnosticism , Arianism, The Middle ages , The protestant reformation, Enlightenment (rationalism- skepticism), Modernism Existentialism , Neo orthodoxy, Pantheism & Pantheism**
 - **Post modernism & relativism- where we are presently**

4. Classical, evidential, presuppositional apologetics and Fideism.

- Fideism- Faith and reason incompatible

5. Logic Rules in giving an answer

- Knowing some logic rules and falsies will enable us to see inconsistencies in peoples arguments, and avoid doing the same ourselves.

6. There is no God (cosmological argument)

- Answering an atheist.

7. What makes you Right and everyone else wrong? The exclusive claims of Christ.

8. The problem of Evil

- God can't be good and all powerful at the same time.

B. Answering the culture part 2

This session will address beliefs of the various cults and false religions of our day, and how to effectively reach them with the gospel.