

SESSION 1:

THE WHAT AND WHY OF APOLOGETICS

*"I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen:
not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else."*

—C.S. Lewis

I. WHAT IS APOLOGETICS?

A. A BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING

The word has no connection to our modern idea of apologizing for something as an expression of _____.

The word "apologetics" comes from the Greek word "*apologia*" which means "_____."

It is used eight times in the New Testament: Acts 22:1; 25:16; 1 Corinthians 9:3; 2 Corinthians 10:5-6; Philippians 1:7; 2 Timothy 4:16, and most famously in _____.

***"but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared
to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you;
yet do it with gentleness and respect,"***

What do we notice?

- Apologetics starts with God "_____ " in our heart.
- Apologetics doesn't start _____, it gives _____.
- Apologetics is to be done with _____ and _____.

Though the word *apologia* is only used _____ times in the New Testament, we see it exemplified by _____ (Luke 24:25-27; John 14:11), the _____ (Acts 2:14-29; Acts 17:22-31), and Christians throughout church _____.

B. A COMPREHENSIVE DEFINITION

Christian apologetics is the personal _____...

- of bearing witness to
 - the _____ of the Christian worldview in _____ and
 - the _____ of the gospel of Jesus Christ in _____
- by means of
 - _____ argumentation
 - and _____ communication,
- with the two-fold goal of
 - removing _____ to belief in anyone who _____ and
 - supplying _____ for belief to anyone who _____,
- with careful attention paid to both
 - faithfulness to _____ and
 - consideration of _____ and _____ context.

C. PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

PRE-EVANGELISM

Apologetics _____ the way for the message of the gospel—removing obstacles to belief and supplying reasons for belief.

There was a time when religion was _____ and the gospel was _____, but we do not live in that world anymore.

"The heart cannot rejoice in what the mind rejects as false."

Apologetics is getting people to the gospel as soon as possible. It may be more than that, but it should never be less than that.

SANCTIFICATION

We should not be surprised or ashamed if _____ are the one "who asks you for a reason."

"A faith without some _____ is like a human body without any antibodies in it...A person's faith can collapse almost overnight if she has failed over the years to listen patiently to her own doubts, which should only be discarded after long reflection." –Timothy Keller

Apologetics is a powerful tool to produce _____ and _____ in our apprenticeship to Christ.

II. WHY DO WE DO APOLOGETICS?

A. A BAD REASON: TO SHOW THAT CHRISTIANS ARE THE BEST

Many Christians act as though the best support for our beliefs is how much Christians have done for the world.

Christians have done a lot of _____ in the world, but we have also done a lot of _____.

However, this should not _____ us since we know that we are sinners in need of God's grace.

We need to remember:

- The goal is not to win _____; the goal is to win _____.
- It is not a matter of "_____ vs. _____." It is a matter of truth vs. error. It is matter of hope vs. hopelessness.

B. A NOT-AS-BAD REASON: TO SHOW THAT CHRISTIANITY IS THE BEST

Many Christians act as though the best support we have for our beliefs is that Christianity provides the most _____ belief system and the best _____ for why things are the way that they are.

Christianity may have the most explanatory power among competing belief systems. However, one may believe this and still not have a _____ with God.

"All the ideas of Christianity might be discovered in some other religion, yet there would be in that other religion no Christianity. For Christianity depends, not upon a complex of ideas, but upon the narration of an event." –J. Gresham Machen

We need to remember:

- Christianity rests on, not something, but some_____.
- The gospel is not just preferable; it is _____.

C. THE GOOD REASON: TO SHOW THAT CHRIST IS THE BEST

The one thing that Christianity has that no other belief system has is _____.

He is “the beginning and end” of everything...including our defense of the faith and hope we have in him!