



Apologetics

Approaching the topic of apologetics begins with defining it. In 1 Peter 3:14-15 we read:

14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, 15 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.

The basic definition of apologetics is to have done the pre-work to be "prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you." Apologetics is not primarily going on offense, but making a gentle, respectful defense for our hope in Jesus Christ.

This hope is the Gospel—what all Scripture tells us of God's great work of salvation. This is briefly stated by God, through Paul, in the "Roman's Road," Romans 3:23, 6:23, 5:8, 10:9-10,13 and Romans 8:1. (Further theological study of God's great work of salvation is found in the "Ordo Salutis." The logical, not necessarily chronological, order of the rationales behind our salvation.)

Apologetics is our "reason for hope." Meaning, it is a reasonable basis for an "I know so" hope, a confidence in God's existence and work in this world. Here, we encounter the problem of apologetics. Sin has obscured the overwhelming evidence of God to the unregenerate mind: man's foolish heart is darkened (Romans 1:21), every imagination of man's heart is continuous evil (Genesis 6:5), God's ways and thoughts are not our own (Isaiah 55:8-9). But God has solved this problem. While creation adequately proves the existence of a creator—God (Psalm 19:1 and

Romans 1), it is by the gift of faith that God opens the eyes of the blind and sets them free from the prison of sin's blindness (Isaiah 42:6-7). With this gift, God calls man to reason, along with Him, though our sins are like scarlet, they are by His power washed white as snow (Isaiah 1:18).

This done, we can re-look at Creation's evidences and see God everywhere. Using the cosmological, teleological, and moral arguments, we see it is a sin-darkened heart that resists confessing God's existence. Further, the fact of God's existence changes how we think, live, what we desire, how we treat other people, and what our priorities are. It changes everything.

With a regenerated mind, we trust the whole of Scripture, and it all becomes our "apologetic" — man survives and thrives by every word that has come out of God's mouth (Matthew 4:4). From Scripture, we glean a worldview about man's sinful condition, the person and work of Jesus, God's commands to obedience, and especially, how Scripture teaches it is God's power to create the universe that is a basis to see His desire to save sinners (Colossians 1:16-22, Hebrews 1:1-3).

This helps us develop a full "apologetic"—the reason for our confident hope in Christ—to answer every human objection. It can be helpful to see basically two objections the unregenerate mind has to God's sovereignty. Firstly, from the modern scientific, faith-based religion, and secondly, from the misunderstandings commonly held of the moral assertions and positions found in Scripture. From both creation and revelation, we gently, respectfully answer man's questions and objections to placing faith in the existence and goodness of a sovereign God.

Mark Kozak

| this week | events | | volunteer schedule |
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| Sunday's sermon: | Congregational Luncheon 5/3 after service | Circle #1 5/5 at 10:30 am | <u>Infant Nursery</u> Jennifer Forrest and Brittany Neely |
| <i>When the Call Comes In...</i> | Girls Discipleship Group 5/3 at 4:00 pm | Diaconate Meeting 5/5 at 7:00 pm | <u>Toddler Nursery</u> Cullie Mounts and Ann Falls |
| Exodus 3:1-6 | Youth 5/3 at 5:00 pm | BCA Board Meeting 5/5 at 7:00 pm | <u>Worship Training</u> Abby Chidester and Kay Jackson |
| | Men of the Covenant 5/4 at 6:00 pm | | |