

An Introduction to Christian Apologetics

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Basic Questions this Course will address:

- Is truth absolute or relative?
- Can we know Truth or just truths?
- What *is* truth?
- Does God exist?
- Can we know that God exists, or is He “merely” an object of faith?
- Is belief in God irrational?
- If God exists, why is there evil in the world?
- Does science and evolution disprove God?
- Are miracles really possible? Actual?
- How do we know the Bible is historically reliable?
- Is Jesus really God?
- What did Jesus believe about the Bible?
- Does the Bible contain errors?
- What about other religions – are they all false?
- So what? What does it matter if Christianity is the only true religious faith?

Course Outline (proposed):

I. Introduction

The introduction will deal primarily with the questions of what is and why do apologetics. I will also briefly deal with the relationship between faith and reason, and why both are essential to the Christian life.

II. Establishing the Foundation

This section will confront today’s basic philosophical enemies to Christianity: relativism, agnosticism, scientism, and pluralism. It will be shown that it is undeniable that truth exists, that truth can (and is) known, that truth is objective, and that truth applies to all. It will also be shown that the idea of religious pluralism is a false notion that is damaging to the mission of the church and something that should be rejected by the Christian.

III. Establishing the Theistic Worldview

This section will deal with some of the classic arguments for the existence of God, particularly the cosmological, the teleological (design), and moral arguments. It will be shown how there are excellent reasons to conclude that the theistic worldview accurately describes reality. Once one grasps the point that reason itself demonstrates that atheism and pantheism are false, one realizes that there are only three major religions left that could possibly be true: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Any religion built upon the false worldviews of atheism or pantheism, such as Buddhism, Hinduism, and Humanism, etc., cannot possibly be true.

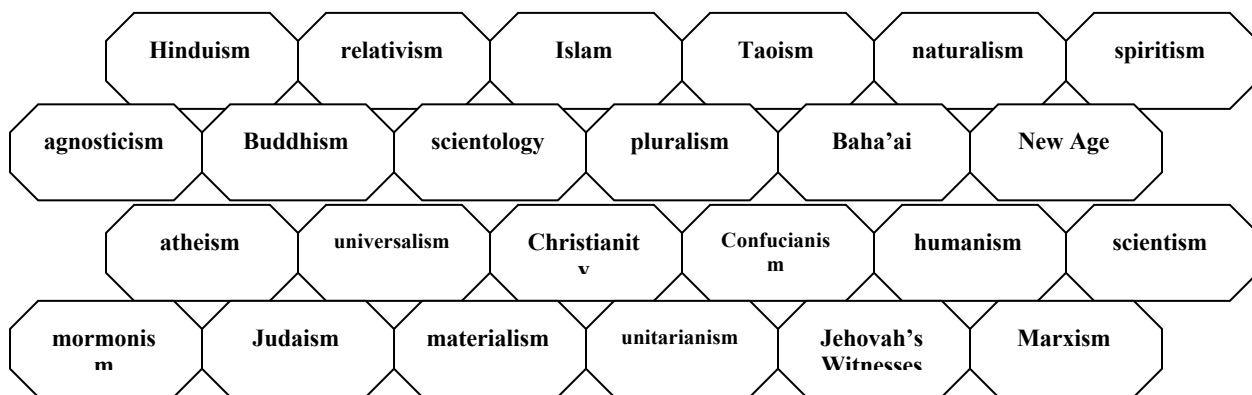
IV. Establishing the Evidences for Christianity

This section will start with the conclusion reached in part III: the theistic worldview alone explains the existence of the world. We will then examine the evidence that indicates that the New Testament is reliable and trustworthy as a historical document. Once that is established, we will look at what the New Testament records concerning the deity and resurrection of Christ. Our conclusion will be that Jesus is indeed God in the flesh and it is a verifiable historical fact that He rose bodily from the grave. Therefore, of the three great theistic religions, only Christianity could be true since it alone affirms these doctrines.

V. Conclusion . . .

Our concluding section will seek to answer the question asked by the present generation: *So what if Christianity is true? What does it matter to me?* Thus, we will conclude with a practical application of the things we have learned.

Is Christianity just one option among many?



Not according to the Bible . . .

"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." John 14:6

"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Acts 4:12

I. INTRODUCTION:

A. What is apologetics? _____

1. extra-biblical examples:

2. biblical examples:

1 Cor 9:1-3:
Phil 1:7:
1 Pet 3:15
Acts 22:1-21

NB: Christian apologetics is not just a defense of Christianity as one “player” in the “religious game,” but a defense of Christianity as the only true faith. Christianity is not “the best religion.” It is the only religion that is thoroughly true and salvific. That is what we are called to defend.

B. Why do apologetics?

• _____

2 Tim 2:17-18

Titus 1:9

Col. 2:6-7

Eph. 4:11-16

St. Augustine (?): “The heart cannot rejoice in that which the mind does not embrace.”

• _____

2 Cor 5:11a:

Acts 17:16-17

J. Budziszewski: "For in every life or way of life - whether lived simply, lived with the guidance of an ethical theory, or even lived in defiance of an ethical theory - given enough time, some concern eventually emerges as paramount. Eventually there is something to which every knee bows. This is the person's god." (From, *The Revenge of Conscience*)

- It is the job of the Christian apologist to (1) identify the false god to whom a person or a culture is bowing the knee and (2) to defend the notion that only the Triune God of the Bible is truly worthy of such worship, and in fact commands such worship

Acts 17:2, 17; 18:4, 13, 19; 19:26; 24:25; 26:25, 28; 28:24

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 - in a “positive” sense
 - to make clear exactly what it is that the NT commands all to believe

Jude 3:

1 Tim 3:15-16:

1 Pet 3:15

Worldly hope	No guarantees	“I hope the Astros win the World Series this year.”
Normal human hope	No guarantees	“These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly.” (1 Tim. 3:14)
Christian hope	Absolute guarantee – “earnest expectation of the fulfillment of a guaranteed, but not yet realized, promise of God.”	Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. (1 Pet 1:3)

- in a “negative” sense
- to refute any false notions that one might have about the content of Christian belief

2 Cor 10:3-5a

2 Tim. 2:25

1 John 4:1

- ---

Acts 18:4

Acts 18:19

Acts 19:8-9

John 20:31

- ---

- But what about . . .

John 20:29?

1 Cor 1:18?

Col. 2:8?

C. How should we do apologetics?

1. _____
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.

2. _____
 - John 6:44

3. _____
 - a. to show that Christianity is not merely _____, but _____.
John 19:35: “And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe.”
 - b. to show Christianity is not merely _____, but _____.
Phil 1:21: “For me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

Heb 4:12-13:
 - c. to refute pseudo-intellectual obstacles _____.

4. _____

****12 points in 3 steps****

Step One: Establishing the Foundation

1. Truth about reality is knowable
2. Opposites cannot both be true

Step Two: Establishing the Theistic Worldview

3. The theistic God exists
4. Miracles are possible
5. Miracles confirm a messenger of God

Step Three: Establishing the Evidences for Christianity

6. The NT is reliable
7. Jesus claimed to be God
8. Jesus' claim was confirmed by miracles
9. Therefore, Jesus was God
10. Whatever Jesus says is true is true
11. Jesus affirmed the Bible is the Word of God
12. Therefore, Christianity is true