

## Every Brief Encounter

Most of the opportunities we will have to share our faith will not be public debates or lectures. They will come at times when we have little time to plan and a prepare right there. Yet if we have taken the time to equip ourselves carefully, we will be able to translate these moments into meaningful steps in the lives of others. Good apologists are good personal evangelists. This session will examine what this might look like and how we can progress better towards it.

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- I. Aim: To make a case for the use of Christian apologetics
  
- II. What is Apologetics? [James A. Sire, 2006] How it is used in Scripture
  - A. Apologetics as response to Persecution
  - B. Apologetics as explanation and proclamation [Acts 2:1-42]
  - C. Apologetics as deliberate argument [Acts 17:1-9]
  - D. Apologetics as confrontation [Acts 17:16-34]
  - E. Apologetics as humble spiritual demonstration [1 Cor 2:1-5]
  - F. Apologetics as personal participation [1 Cor 9:19-23]
  - G. Apologetics as correcting error and misbehaviour [2 Cor 10:1-5, Jude 3]
  - H. Apologetics as presenting Jesus Christ as God [ John 20.:30]
  
- III. Suggested definition [Lars Dahle, 2001] 1 Peter 3:15 – both defense and instruction
  - A. “the rational justification of Christian truth claims over against specific questions, objections, and alternatives, in order to establish ‘the epistemic permission’ and ‘the epistemic obligation’ of the Christian faith for both Christians and non- Christians”

IV. In defense of apologetics – why we believe it to be necessary and appropriate

A. God’s word commands it

B. Human reason requires it

C. Society needs it

[See pre-reading and plan for discussion on this article.]

V. The need in Europe in the 21th Century

A. The gap and how to reconnect with our culture

B. The difference between contact and connection

C. Making contact through need, connection through our conversation and question

D. The Journey...How we arrived! The Flow of western Thought.

E. The destination...

1. See [www.stmarys.ac.uk/research/centres/benedictxvi](http://www.stmarys.ac.uk/research/centres/benedictxvi) report Europe’s young adults and religion

VI. ELF: the vision and the strategy

A. Educate

B. Equip

C. Encourage

***Suggested Readings:***

Brown, Colin: *Christianity and Western thought: A History of Philosophers, Ideas and Movements*, volume 1: From the Ancient world to the Enlightenment, InterVarsity press, 1990

Cowan, Steven B. (ed.): *Five Views on Apologetics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000).

Craig, William Lane: *Reasonable Faith: Christian Truth and Apologetics* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2008; 3. utgave).

Kreeft, Peter, and Ronald K. Tacelli: *Handbook of Christian Apologetics* (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1994).

McGrath, Alister: *Bridge Building: Effective Christian Apologetics* (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1992).

Sire, James: *Why Good Arguments Often Fail: Making a More Persuasive Case for Christ* (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 2006).

Sire, James W.: *A Little Primer on Humble Apologetics*. InterVarsity Press, 2006

Web Resources:

[www.euroleadershipresources.org](http://www.euroleadershipresources.org)

[www.bethinking.org](http://www.bethinking.org)

[www.rzim.org](http://www.rzim.org)

[www.reasonablefaith.org](http://www.reasonablefaith.org)

[www.labri.org](http://www.labri.org)

[www.garyhabermas.com](http://www.garyhabermas.com)

[www.damaris.org](http://www.damaris.org)

[www.paulcopan.org](http://www.paulcopan.org)

[www.peterswilliams.org](http://www.peterswilliams.org)