

Imagination and Arguments in Apologetics

This talk begins with a brief consideration of the idea of truth in the 21st century, where truth is not arrived at by argument, but merely a compliment paid to an idea that works for the moment. With exception to the hard sciences, this suggests that all truth claims enjoy equal value. Consequently, for many everyday citizens, arguments continue to lose convincing power. The last two thirds of the workshop deal with thinking how apologetics might regain some convincing power in the minds of our citizens for the sake of making Christ known. This provides a context within which to examine the apologetics of Francis Schaeffer and C. S. Lewis and their use of reality and imagination.

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I. The Loss of rational discourse

A. Misplaced arguments or emotive attacks.

1. Public discourse is undercut
2. Lack of civility arises

B. Anti- Metaphysical Realism (Naturalistic Realism)

1. There is a reality but is confined to the natural world
2. Loss of the universal means loss of unity
 - a. Warring tribes
 - b. Unity before diversity
3. Loss of the universal means nothing above experience
 - a. Fact equals truth
 - b. Information replaces knowledge

c. Science replaces philosophy

C. Anti-realism (postmodernism)

1. No worldview
2. All truth claims have equal status
3. Truth is confined to the individual or community

D. Both result in relativism

1. Man is the measure of all things—scientific realism (anti-metaphysical realism)
2. Objective reality denied – constructivism results – post modernity (anti-realism)

E. Consequences for apologetics

1. Theistic arguments lose traction in apologetics

II. The Power of Imagination

A. For C. S. Lewis, imagination was only possible because of realism, as imagination was only a rearranging of the real.

1. Lewis on imagination
 - a. Present the truth covertly
 - b. Imagination for supposal or “what if”
 - c. We seek to awaken the best in man because he is in God’s image

B. Imagination focused on Truth, Goodness and Beauty

1. We use the imagination to highlight Truth, Goodness, and Beauty

- a. Brings forth the longing for the way things ought to be
 - i. We were made for the Garden, not the Grave
 - b. Provoked the desire
 - c. Not escapism
- C. Schaeffer: “man is noble”
- 1. Christianity is the answer
- D. Examples of this

Suggested Readings:

Alistair McGrath. *The Open Secret*

C. S. Lewis. *The Pilgrim's Regress*

Francis Schaeffer. *The God Who Is There*