

## **Struggles Most Apologists Face and How to Overcome Them**

One of the best apologetic arguments ever is Paul's brilliant speech at the Areopagus. There, we see a smart man who is able to bring great culturally-rooted arguments. All seems clear and easy. The problem is that when we stand on our own "Areopagus," sometimes we feel unprepared; we realize that we are arguing with people who are smarter than us; we struggle with low self-esteem; or we become aware that our arguments have certain limits and that we are only able to bring good, but not great, answers. Every apologist must struggle not only with his opponents, but also with his or her own inner self. What are these inner fights? How do we overcome them?

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### **I. Too many areas we should know or at least to be aware**

In apologetic discussions, people ask about ethics ("For example, what about premarital sex, gay marriage etc.?"), history ("Why there are so few mentions about Moses in Egypt historiography?"), theology ("Was Jesus really God?"), religion ("How you can be sure that Christianity is the best religion? What is the difference between Christianity and...?"), biology ("What about evolution?"), logic ("If you claim this, it means that..."), psychology ("What is the difference between Jesus's healing and placebo?"), philosophy ("Why suffering? What is the difference between Christian and secular humanism?"), etc.

### **II. We will never have a "final answer"**

Apologetic is not math or an equation with a clear result at the end. Our answers should make sense, but they are not able to bring 100 percent truth. There will always be "maybe" or "certain probability". We also need to know that apologetics mostly bring rational reasons, but humans are not just reasons. Many of our decisions or even beliefs are based on emotions.

### **III. We don't like conflict**

Part of apologetics is disagreement, and we often come with ideas that our opponents disagree with or even don't like. No one likes to disagree, and because of that it can become an obstacle for our conversation that causes us to discuss an issue only to a certain point. We are able to discuss about God... but as soon as the discussion comes to a point where we talk about Jesus there

is often tension. And so we stop. We must be ready to go into conflict. Intelligent, decent, polite, but still conflict.

#### **IV. We are living in a hyper-correct world**

By hyper-correct I mean that as soon as you have a clear opinion about almost anything, you look like very intolerant person, especially in areas of ethic. Very often we hear the saying, “Don’t look at what divide us, look at what unite us”. We are not looking for division, but in the same time there are different opinions, different life views, and different religions. The goal of apologetics is not to ignore these differences and to pretend that all opinions are equal.

#### **V. We can look arrogant**

As soon as we say “we know the truth” we will be called arrogant people. As soon as we quote Jesus and his words about being the “only way and truth and life” people will call him arrogant. Any apologist has some experience with this.

#### **VI. Indifference**

This is one of the most difficult areas we will deal with because it is almost impossible to break through this attitude. Indifferent people are not discussing or quarrelling; they just don’t care. Their answer is, why not? Or so what? Or I don’t care...

#### **VII. Our own doubts and questions**

Sometimes we experience times when we need to hear good answers, to quiet our own doubts, etc. To be an apologist doesn’t mean we do not have questions and doubts. Sometimes the more answers we have, the more questions we have, and we should not ignore these questions.