

The Biblical Mandate for Apologetics

This is an introduction to the biblical understanding of apologetics. The session deals with a definition of apologetics, rooting it firmly as a spiritual exercise indispensable to and indivisible from evangelism.

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I Defining Apologetics

- A 1 Peter 3:15 & 16 “But in your hearts, set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you for the reason for the hope that you have, but do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience...”
- This passage gives insight into what Apologetics is. It is really about evangelism. The word apologetics comes from the Greek word “apologia”, which literally means a reasoned defence.
- B The lordship of Christ: the term “heart” does not just refer to the seat of our feelings, but also of our thoughts. Every part of us needs to be under the authority of Christ. Under Christ’s lordship our lives and attitudes are different and thus will lead people to ask questions.
- Just as the church being addressed in this letter is encouraged to have an answer, the same remains for us today. We are to be prepared to give an answer for those who ask questions.

II Doing Apologetics

Since there are numerous questions one could be asked, it is useful to have a structure in mind when dealing with certain issues. After all, apologetics is not only *what* you answer but also *how* and *when* you answer.

A Getting people to think

- In the Gospels we gain insight into how Jesus interacts with people. From reading, we understand that He asked well over 100 questions of his critics and his questioners. Why? Asking a question forces people to think.

B Exposing contradictions

- Asking questions is also a gentler way of exposing contradictions e.g. Relativism.
 - 1 Eg. “There is no such thing as truth. If there was, then I would have a reason to live.”
 - 2 “You say that there is no such thing as truth – tell me, is that statement true?”

C Moral Complaints Against God

- It is important to know that when people express questions of this nature the questions are often emotionally charged.
- We find good examples of how to deal with these questions in certain books written by Ravi Zacharias, C.S.Lewis and Alister McGrath.