

## **A Transforming Vision: Motivation for the Privileged Task of Apologetics**

Knowing 'why' we do anything is of core importance. Where is our confidence to be found? What motivates us and sustains us in the long road of service? This session aims to inform and inspire us in the apologetic task, the great and exciting task of sharing our faith at this pivotal time in European History.

Andy Witherall has served in full-time ministry for 15 years. He spent 7 years as an evangelist with London City Mission before becoming an Outreach Worker for a church in Bournemouth. Currently, Andy is ministering with the Methodist Church in Ireland as a Lay Evangelist. He serves as an Associate with the Centre for Christianity in Society, which enables him to write and speak on areas relating to apologetics and cultural issues. He holds two masters degrees, the first in Philosophy and Religion from Heythrop College and the second in Theology from the Irish Baptist College. Andy lives in Dungannon, Northern Ireland, with his wife Melanie and two young children, Ben and Hope.

### **I. The Vision for Apologetics: Engaging our culture as outsiders**

- A. 1 Peter 2:9-12;
- B. The Christian's goal: to proclaim the praises of Christ (v. 9)
- C. The Christian's identity: a people belonging to God but alien to our culture (v. 9-11)
- D. The Christian's task: to engage the culture well (v. 11-12)
- E. 1 Peter 3:15; Daniel 1:8
- F. The foundation: setting apart Christ as Lord and the example of Daniel
- G. The importance of context
- H. The polytheism and political adversity facing Daniel and Peter's hearers
- I. Nietzsche, the death of God and political adversity facing 12th century western culture
- J. Living Biblically; the Christian's goal, identity and task in a Godless culture

## **II. The 'Why' of Apologetics**

- A. Considering key beliefs of a post-God culture
- B. The importance of asking and engaging questions
- C. Case study 1: When questions fail
- D. Secularism: a worldview that fails
- E. Christianity: a worldview that succeeds
- F. Case study 2: When questions succeed

## **III. Our Confidence in Apologetics**

- A. 1 Peter 3:15
- B. The foundation of honouring Christ as Lord
- C. The importance of being ready
- D. Considering Dan Strange's 'subversive fulfilment'
- E. 2 Cor. 4:1-6
- F. Understanding the problem (v. 4)
- G. What apologetics is and is not (v. 2)
- H. Our confidence in God alone (v. 6)

## **VI. Our Motivation and Sustenance in Apologetics**

- A. 1 Peter 3:15
- B. Jesus Christ is honoured as Lord in our hearts
- C. Passion for truth
- D. Passion for salvation
- E. Desire for self-growth
- F. 1 Peter 4:1-2
- G. The sufferings of Christ and the sustenance of the Christian

### **Further Reading**

Guinness, Os (2015) *Fool's Talk: Recovering the Art of Christian Persuasion* Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press

Lennox, J. (2015) *Against the Flow: The Inspiration of Daniel in an Age of Relativism* Oxford: Monarch Books

Strange, D. (2021) *Making Faith Magnetic* The Good Book Company

Trueman, C. (2020) *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self* Crossway