

The Importance of Apologetics in Missions



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The Importance of Apologetics in Missions

- Why?
 - The cultural environment
 - The church's need
- What?
 - The questions and the answers
- Where?
 - Overseas (foreign missions)
 - North America (home missions)
- When?
 - Now (the urgency)



Apologetics and Missions

- Roadblocks to Faith
- What is Apologetics?
- How do we determine Truth?
- Does our Truth match reality?
- How do we know the Bible is true?
- Evidence for Our Faith
- We can have Confidence in Our Faith
- The importance of Apologetics in Missions



Roadblocks to Faith in Christ

1. Lack of intellectual knowledge of God
2. Other Christians – their perceived hypocrisy
3. Sin: accepting Christ would require turning away from sin
4. If God is all-loving and all-powerful, why is there so much pain, suffering, and evil?
5. Perceived conflict between Science and the Bible, e.g. Creation v. Evolution
6. No answers from the church to the hard questions



The Statistics!

- According to pollster George Barna:
 - Only 9% of “born again” teenagers believe that absolute truth even exists
 - At least 60% of the children from evangelical homes are estimated to leave the church once they leave home
- Reasons:
 - No answers from the church for the hard questions asked by our youth
 - Indoctrination of our youth in secularism and evolutionism



Some Questions People Ask

- How come Genesis chapters 1 and 2 contradict each other?
- Were the days of Creation literal days?
- Where did Cain get his wife?
- Was the Flood global?
- Could God have used Evolution?
- Why did Jesus have to die for our sins?
- How do we know the Bible is God's Word?



The Solution

- **Teach The Truth in the Bible from the very first verse!**
- **Be ready to give, or find, an answer to the hard questions**

We Have A Missions Field
Right Here!



What Is Apologetics?

- Apologia (Greek) – speaking in defense
- Apologetics is a defense of beliefs by arguments, evidences, and reasons for why we believe what we believe
- Why Apologetics?
 - Explain basic Christian beliefs
 - Defend beliefs from those who attack them
 - Defend beliefs from heretical beliefs



Why Apologetics?

■ Why?

- Know what you believe
- Know why you believe
- Defend what you believe – **1 Pet. 3:15**

■ How?

- Rightly divide the word of truth – **II Tim. 2:15**
- Be a Berean, search the Scriptures daily – **Acts 17:11**
- Look for evidence of the Truth
- Answer the questions of believers & skeptics alike
 - **Acts 17:17**, “Therefore he [Paul] reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and with the Gentile worshippers, ...



Why Christian Apologetics?

- **1 Pet. 3:15**, “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;”
- **Matt. 22:37**, “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.”
- **1 Th. 5:21-22**, “Test all things; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.”
- **2 Cor. 10:5**, “casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,”



Apologetics in the NT

- The word “apologia” is used in the NT eight times:
 - **Acts 19:33**, Alexander’s defense to the people
 - **Acts 22:1**, Paul’s defense before the people
 - **Acts 25:16**, Paul answers the charges against him
 - **Acts 26:2**, Paul’s defense before King Agrippa
 - **I Cor. 9:3**, Paul’s defense to those who examine him
 - **Phil. 1:7**, in defense and confirmation of the gospel
 - **II Tim. 4:16**, Paul’s defense in a court of law
 - **I Pet. 3:15**, give a defense ... a reason for the hope



Defending God's Word

- **Col. 4:5-6** – know how to answer
 - “Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.”
- **Tit. 1:9** – be able to exhort and convince
 - “holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.”
- **James 1:22** – be doers of the Word
 - “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”

How Do We Determine Truth?

- Tradition – church, passed on
- Authority – expert, appointed
- Revelation – special, general
- Our five senses
- Human reason – logical arguments
- Science – evidence
- Presuppositions





How Do We Decide Truth?

- Is truth decided by our five senses?
[*hearing, seeing, smelling, tasting, touching*]
 - e.g. our feelings? [*touching the elephant*]
- Is our truth based on facts?
 - Does our truth match reality?
- Thomas asked the Lord about truth
- **John 14:6**, “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’”
 - Very exclusive statement
 - But, truth IS exclusive!



Three Views of Truth

- What does it mean for a statement to be true?
- Three different views on what truth is:
 1. Correspondence/Traditional view
 2. Relativism/Postmodern view
 3. Practical/Useful view
- The Test
 - Does your “Truth” match reality? i.e. Does “what you believe to be true” match reality?



1. Correspondence/Traditional View

- Any statement is true if and only if it corresponds to or agrees with factual reality
- Declarative statements are subject to verification and falsification
- A statement can be proven false if it can be shown to disagree with objective reality
- Truth is not a matter of subjective opinion, or majority vote, or cultural fashion
- Truth is objective and knowable, e.g. photo from outer space showing the earth as a blue sphere



Law of Non-Contradiction

- We live by the law of non-contradiction (P, not P)
 - Can't both be true in the same way, at the same time
 - Two contradictory statements cannot both be true
 - Can't be true that there both is and is not X in my room
- If I say XXX and my wife says not-XXX
 - One of us is wrong
 - We both can't be telling the truth
- Christians historically (traditionally) have affirmed the correspondence view of truth
 - Supports the concept of absolute truth
 - Logically self-consistent and supportable



An Example From the Bible

- There are good historical reasons to believe that Jesus rose from the dead in space-time history, showing His divine authority:
 - **Rom. 1:4**, “and declared to be the Son of God ... by the resurrection from the dead.”
 - **1 Cor. 15:1-11**, “... the gospel which I preached to you ...”
 - Factual evidence of Christ’s Resurrection (provided by Paul)
 - **1 Cor. 15:14**, “And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.”
- Illustrates the concept of “absolute truth”



2. Relativism/Postmodern View

- Statements about scientific facts, religious realities, or moral principles cannot be known to refer to objective states of affairs
- Language is contingently constructed through communities
- Language cannot transcend its own context and refer to realities outside itself
- All language fails to describe objective conditions because of its embeddedness in various cultures
- The truth of a statement depends on the views of persons or cultures, not on whether statements correspond to objective reality



More on Relativism

- For a statement to be true just means that a person or culture believes it to be true
 - “Well, if that’s true for you ...”
 - “We can’t judge other cultures ...”
- Accordingly, one can say “Jesus is Lord” and another “Allah is Lord”, and both statements will be true – NOT



Putting the Statements to the Test

- This is illogical and fails the law of non-contradiction
- The statements are mutually exclusive
 - **John 1:14**, Christians believe that Jesus is “God made flesh”
 - Muslims deny that Allah can or did incarnate
- The two statements cannot both be objectively true



Summary of Relativism View

- Relativism offers no means of verifying or falsifying any belief
- Relativism does not support the concept of “absolute truth”
- This view is self-refuting and logically unsupportable
- This view often referred to as postmodernism



Conclusion on Relativism View

- Relativism is false
 - It does not correspond to reality
- When truth is deemed to depend on a person or culture holding the belief, anything can become “true”
 - Which is absurd
- This attitude/view cannot be applied to medicine or science
 - Would be deemed ridiculous



3. Practical/Useful View

- This view holds that a belief is true only if it works for a particular person
 - Christianity may be “true for me” if it helps me, but false for another person if it does not help him
- This view confuses usefulness with truth
 - e.g. “mismanaging money” <-> “misplacing money” (belief) <-> “stolen money” (reality)
→ results in diligent management of his money



Truth v. Use Value

- The “truth value” of a belief is different than its “use value”
- Does not support the concept of “absolute truth”
- This view is self-refuting and logically unsupportable



Is Truth Knowable?

- Agnosticism – self-defeating, how do they know we can't know?
- Skepticism – self-defeating, do they even doubt skepticism?
- Rationalism – inconsistent – can't rationally prove that something is rationally inescapable
- Realism – we can know something



What is Truth?

- Truth is that which corresponds to reality
 - Thought applies to reality
 - Knowledge is possible
 - Logic is a necessary presupposition of all thought
 - It is undeniable that logic applies to reality
 - Self-evident principles cannot be denied
- Truth is absolute, correspondent, knowable, logical
- The Bible claims to be the Word of God & true
- Does the Bible correspond to reality?
 - Is the Bible true?



Is The Bible True?

- Some people say the Bible is full of errors or contradictions
- For most this is just an excuse for not believing
- Few who claim these errors have read the Bible and analyzed any of these alleged errors



Alleged Errors in the Bible

1. Law of non-contradiction
 - Fails truth test
2. Mistranslations
 - Not true to original language
3. So-called scientific errors
 - Authors used language of the day



1. Law of Non-Contradiction

- Bible was written
 - By 40 authors from many walks of life
 - Over a period of 1500 years
- Bible has ONE author – God
 - God is perfect, holy, true
- There are no contradictions in His Word, no matter what it seems at first
- Many supposed contradictions



Example of Non-Contradiction

- Many supposed contradictions result by placing two passages in false opposition to each other, e.g.
 - **Eccl. 7:29**, “God made man upright.” – Talking about Adam and Eve, who God originally created upright
 - **Ps. 51:5**, “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity.” – Here King David is speaking of his personal situation, as a fallen descendant of Adam
- There is no contradiction here



2. Mistranslation

- Translation of the books of the Bible can be a real challenge
- We have many translations
 - KJV, NKJV, AS, NAS, NIV, etc.
- Most translation problems have simple explanations
- You should always look at the original Hebrew and Greek words used



Example of Mistranslation

- **Lev. 11:13,19**, “And these you shall regard as an abomination among the birds; they shall not be eaten, they are an abomination: the eagle, the vulture, the buzzard, ... and the bat.” (NKJV)
 - Bats are not birds (a questionable word)
- The KJV uses the word “fowls” instead of the word “birds”
- The KJV used the word “fowls” in **Lev. 11:20** to describe “insects”



Explanation of Mistranslation

- The Hebrew word used is “*owph*,” which can mean anything that “has a wing,” i.e. a winged creature
- The Hebrew word “*owph*” includes birds, flying insects, and bats
- Going back to the Hebrew word explains the supposed translation problem



3. Alleged Scientific Errors

- Authors used the language of their day
 - The sun rising in the morning
 - The sun setting in the evening
 - The sun does not “rise” and “set”
 - The earth actually rotates
 - Our talk of the sun rising and setting is not “scientifically correct”
 - Spoken from perspective of the observer



Does Our Truth Match Reality?

- Does the Bible's Truth match reality?
- Does what you believe (your truth) match reality?
- We apply certain tests to biblical Truth
- What happens when we apply the same tests to your truth?
- Does the evidence match up?



Evidence For Our Faith

1. Jesus' Credibility – He Is God
2. Prophecies Come True – Messianic + Others
3. Christ Rose From the Grave
4. The Bible is God's Word
5. Archaeology Verifies the Bible
6. Science Supports Creation
7. The Bible Is Reliable Scientifically
8. If God is All-Loving and All-Knowing, Why Do We have Evil and Suffering?



1. Jesus' Credibility – He Is God

- Evidence of Jesus' life on earth
 - Biblical, Roman, Jewish
- Jesus in His humanity
- Jesus claimed to be God
- Jesus' attributes
- Jesus' actions (miracles)
- The Apostles taught the deity of Christ
- Four possibilities – which one was He?
 - Liar, lunatic, legend, or the Truth
- What are Jesus' credentials?



2. Prophecies Come True: Messianic + Others

- What is prophecy?
- Test of a true prophet
- The importance of prophecy
- Messianic prophecies
- The significance of messianic prophecies
- Messianic prophecy issues
- Probability of fulfillment of prophecies
- Other Old Testament (OT) prophecies
- End Time prophecies



3. Christ Rose From The Grave

- Jesus' Resurrection
 - Prophesied in the OT
 - Prophesied by Christ Himself in the NT
- Pertinent data to be considered
- Historical facts to be considered
- Accounting for the empty tomb
- More than a dozen appearances of the risen Lord
 - Includes more than 500 witnesses at once
- Paul teaches the importance of the Resurrection
 - Its significance to the Christian faith



4. The Bible Is God's Word

- The Bible is unique
- How we got the Bible
- Is Scripture inspired?
- Christ's teaching on the OT
- Christ's view of the NT
- Historical reliability of the OT
- Historical reliability of the NT
- Supernatural wisdom of the Bible



5. Archaeology Verifies the Bible

- What is archaeology?
- Some ancient archaeological finds
- The Dead Sea scrolls
- Evidence for the accuracy of the Bible
 - Internal, copy comparison, archaeology
- The Ebla tablets
- The divisions of Genesis
- Genesis and origins
- The walls of Jericho
- Other important archaeological finds
- Archaeology confirms accuracy of the Bible



6. Science Supports Creation

- What Does the Bible Say About Creation?
- What Do Jesus And The Apostles Say About Creation?
- What Does Science Say About Creation?
 - The Creation and Evolution Models of Origins
 - Which Model Best Fits The Scientific Evidence?
- Challenges to Evolutionism
- Does It Matter What We Believe About Creation?

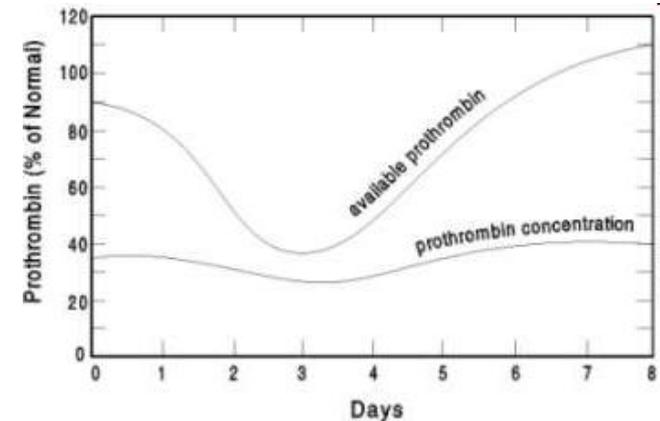


7. The Bible Is Reliable Scientifically

- Scientific statements in the Bible
 - Are they accurate?
- Reliability of the Bible established by:
 - Prophecy, history, geography, archaeology
- Laws of science consistent with the Bible
- Scientific statements/anticipation in the Bible
 - Astronomy, geophysics, geology, hydrology
 - Meteorology, biology, physics
- Alleged scientific errors in the Bible
- Scientific disciplines established by Bible-believing scientists

The Immune System

- **Gen. 17:12**, “He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant.”
 - Eighth day is the only day in the entire life of the newborn that the blood clotting element prothrombin is above 100%
 - Medical science has discovered that this is when the immune system is at its peak





8. Evil & Suffering Are Explained

- Death and suffering are everywhere
- View of history (and God):
 - Atheists/evolutionists have a wrong view
 - The Bible gives the proper view
- The role of man's free will
- What about “senseless suffering”?
- Suffering of believers
- God's purposes
- Is God doing anything about death & suffering?
- Our source of hope



Confidence in Our Faith

- We do have supporting evidence
- The Truth of the Bible matches reality
- The Christian faith is rational
- Believers can be confident in their faith
- Believers can defend their faith boldly
 - Know what you believe
 - Know why you believe what you believe
 - Learn how to defend your faith



The Importance of Apologetics in Missions

- Defense of the Faith is essential for
 - All church leaders
 - All believers
- Christian Apologetics is crucial for
 - Reaching new believers
 - Discerning the Truth
- Creation Apologetics is important for
 - Establishing the Truth from the very 1st verse
 - Explaining why Jesus came to Earth and died for our sins
 - Providing answers to the hard questions



Our Mandate In Missions

- **1 Pet. 3:15**, “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;”
- As missionaries/evangelists we need to:
 - Be ready to give an answer to questions about our faith
 - Be able to explain what we believe and why we believe this
 - Answer those who ask for an explanation



**Thank you
for your
attention!**

2 Tim. 2:22, “And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”

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