

Apologetics Introduction Handout

Worldviews:

- What is a worldview?
 - “A worldview is simply the total of our beliefs about the world, the ‘big picture’ that directs our daily decisions and actions.”
-Chuck Colson & Nancy Pearcey,
 - “A habituated way of seeing and doing.”
-Paul Shockley
 - core beliefs that determine how we live
- Who has a worldview?
 - Everyone. No exceptions.
- What are the components of any worldview?
 - View of View of God, Truth, Reality, Knowledge, Ethics, Humanity, Evil



Why We Do Apologetics:

Commands:

- 1 Peter 3:15-16
- 1 John 4:1

Examples:

- Matt 22:29 (Jesus correcting error)
- Matt 15:6-9 (Jesus Refuting false teaching)
- Acts 17:16-17 (Paul reasons with them)

- Titus 1:9 (Paul refuted opposition to truth)
- Phil 1:7 (Paul defended the gospel)

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- To preach the gospel
 - To remove false obstacles
 - To defend Christian doctrine
 - To have fun

Presuppositionalism vs Evidentialism:

Presuppositionalism

- examples of a presupposition:
 - When did you buy the book?
 - *You bought a book.*
 - Julie’s cat is cute.
 - *Julie has a cat.*
 - You are late again.
 - *You’ve been late before.*
 - In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
 - *God existed in the beginning.*
- “A neutral ground, criteria or standard that both believer and unbeliever can accept without compromising their system [does not exist].” - John Frame
- “For the Christian, all standards of rationality, truth, knowledge, and reality, are based on the nature and character of the God in whom they believe, therefore they share no ground with the unbeliever who accepts no God to establish such standards.” – Stephen Curto
- **Switzerland Does Not Exist.**

- Romans 1:18-23
- Jude 3
- 1 Corinthians 1:18-25
- Leading Presuppositional Apologists:
 - Cornelius Van Til, John Frame, Vern Poythress, James White, Abraham Kuyper

Evidentialism (or Classical/Traditional Apologetics)

- the Christian should argue in an unbiased, neutral, way that makes no religious assumptions
- The Christian should argue from criteria the unbeliever accepts (logic, facts, experience, reason)
- The Bible is not used as evidence until after it has been “proved” reliable
- Leading Classical Apologists
 - Justin Martyr, Thomas Aquinas, Norman Geisler, Ravi Zacharias, William Lane Craig, C. S. Lewis

Presuppositionalism and the Word of God:

- Jonah 2:9, “Salvation is from the Lord.”
 - If salvation is solely of God, then God has given us everything necessary to bring about that salvation.
- Testimony of John 6
 - Verse 37, “All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.”
 - Verse 44, “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.”
 - Verse 63, “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.”

- Evidence alone can do two things. It can help the unbeliever see the folly of his ways. Proverbs 26:5, “Answer a fool as his folly deserves, that he not be wise in his own eyes. It can also help reinforce the testimony of creation in Romans 1 (e.g. a scientist and his studies). But by itself it can never breathe spiritual life into a dead man.
- God’s Word always accomplishes what He sends it forth to do.
- Isaiah 55:10-11, “For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there without watering the earth and making it bear and sprout, and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.”
- Negatively—Acts 13:46, “Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, ‘It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.’”
- Positively—Acts 13:48, “When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.”
- Biblical evidence is consistent with the primacy of Scripture. Notice Peter’s extensive reference to the fulfillment of OT prophecy in his great Pentecostal sermon in Acts 2.

Summary: No amount of reasoning and debate by itself can bring the dead to life. It is the Spirit of God working through the Word of God that affects the salvation of God. Therefore as the believer is skilled in the Word of God, he is sufficiently equipped to reach the lost and defend the faith.

“Man’s mind is derivative. As such it is naturally in contact with God’s revelation. It is surrounded by nothing but revelation. It is itself inherently revelational. It cannot naturally be conscious of itself without being conscious of its creatureliness. For man self-consciousness presupposes God-consciousness. Calvin speaks of this as man’s inescapable sense of deity.” Cornelius Van Til, *The Defense of The Faith*, 113.