

Week 1: What Is Apologetics?

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What Apologetics Is NOT

- Not a philosophy class
- No special training needed
- Not attacking others

Definition of Apologetics

Greek: *apologia* - a reasoned defense

- Not arguing or being arrogant

1 Peter 3:15 (NIV) “But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,”

- ESV “always being prepared to make a defense”

Why Apologetics?



Why It Matters

Biblical Mandate

- 1 Peter 3:15 “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.”
- Jude 3 “urge you to contend for the faith”
- 2 Cor 10:5 “destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God,”

Strengthens our Faith

- Luke 1:1-4 “so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.”
- Isaiah 1:18 “let us reason together, says the Lord”

Why It Matters

Helps reach others

- Acts 17:2-3 “reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving”

But be careful!

- Proverbs 15:28 “ponders how to answer”
- Colossians 4:5-6 “make the most of every opportunity... always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”
- Keller: ‘A faith without some doubts is like a body without antibodies.’

Apologetics equips us for conversations in a skeptical world

Common Misconceptions

“Faith is blind” - but biblical faith is evidence-based

- Hebrews 11:1 “Now faith is the certainty of things hoped for, a proof of things not seen.”
- C.S. Lewis “*Faith aligns us with reality; it is not blind belief.*”

“Apologetics is only for intellectuals”

- At its core, apologetics is simply explaining *why* you trust God in a way that connects with others.

“You can’t argue people into faith”

- Goal is not to win arguments but remove barriers

Common Misconceptions

“Faith without reason isn’t biblical faith (spiritual truth requires no evidence)”

- The Pharisees and the Poll Tax (Matthew 22:15-22)
- The Sadducees and the Resurrection (Matthew 22:23-33)
- The Greatest Commandment (Matthew 22:34-40)

Benefits of Apologetics

- Strengthens personal faith
- Helps answer tough questions
- Equips us to mentor youth
- Builds confidence in outreach

Illustration: Foundation

A foundation

- Your faith's foundation determines stability
- Storms reveal what is secure
- Apologetics helps believers stand firm

The hard question:

If someone asked you today why you believe Christianity is true, would you answer with clarity - or habit?

Assignment for the Week

- Write one question you have about Christianity
- Talk to someone about why you believe
- Memorize 1 Peter 3:15

Closing Thought

- Apologetics strengthens faith and opens doors
- Truth withstands examination
- Become a reasonable and faithful witness

Next week...

Does God Exist? Design & Creation