

FAITH PROGRAM 2010-2011



DGM 102 - APOLOGETICS

Introduction to 'Apologetics'



- Apo = "from";
- logos = word, logic, reasoning
- The word for apologetics:
 - comes from the Greek word apologia,
 - refers to giving a reason or reply for our faith.
- It is defined as "the branch of theology that is concerned with defending or proving the truth of Christian doctrines."

Two Types of Apologetics



DEFENSIVE

OFFENSIVE

Apologetics in the Scriptures



- Our Lord himself engaged in apologetical argument.
 - "Believe me for the sake of the works themselves" (John 14:10)
- The Apostles did too.
 - "It seemed good to me...to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may *know the truth* concerning the things of which you have been informed" (Luke 1:3–4).

References About Apologetics in the Scriptures



Acts 22:1 - "my defense"	Acts 25:16 - "make his defense"
I Cor 9:3 - "my defense"	II Cor 7:11 - "vindication"
Phil 1:7 - "defense of the gospel"	Phil 1:17 - "defense of the gospel"
II Tim 4:16 - "my first defense"	I Peter 3:15 - "ready to make a defense"
Luke 12:11 - "your defense"	Luke 21:14 - "not to defend yourselves"
Acts 19:33 - "make a defense"	Acts 24:10 - "make my defense"
Acts 25:8 - "his own defense"	Acts 26:1 - "make his defense"
Acts 26:2 - "make my defense"	Acts 26:24 - "in his defense"
Rom 2:15 - "defending them"	II Cor 12:17 - "defending ourselves"
Acts 9:22 - "proving Jesus is Christ"	Acts 17:2 - "reasoned from the Scriptures"
Acts 18:4 - "persuade Jews"	Acts 19:8,9 - "reasoning and persuading"
II Cor 10:5 - "destroying speculations"	I Peter 3:15 - "ready to make a defense"

Why Study Apologetics?



1. God's Command
2. Reason's Demand
3. The World at Hand
4. Strengthening of Our Own Faith

The Importance of Reason in Our Life of Faith



- The apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:14 that, "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain."
- People deal in two dimensions of belief:
 - ✦ belief that
 - ✦ belief in

Words of Caution



- Apologetics can never actually force someone to make a decision for Christ.
- Apologetics can help someone to "believe that" Jesus is the Christ, but can never force one to "believe in" Him.
- We are lowering people's intellectual barriers so that the Holy Spirit can penetrate their heart.

How do we do Apologetics?



With "meekness and gentleness"
(1 Pet 3:15)



**A Study in Christian
Apologetics:
What We Believe & Why**

The Purpose of this study:



1. To understand the culture, to influence it
2. To Refute False Objections to Christianity (2 Cor 10:5)
3. To share the message of the Gospel with others (Acts 17)

Today's Culture



- It is a shift in paradigm, values, world-views and ways of life.
- This age has become a post-Christian and pluralistic age. Christianity has become nothing more than a troublesome oddity amidst diversity.
- It is a world characterized by the rejection of moral absolutes, skepticism, and a religious pluralism.

I-The rejection of moral absolutes



- "These are the days that anything goes." (Sheryl Crow's song, Every Day is a Winding Road)
- Rejecting the moral values of our society.
- Morality is relative (Cultural anthropologist Gene Veith)
 - "As we approach the twenty-first century, It doesn't take a rocket scientist to recognize that our entire culture is in trouble. We are staring down the barrel of a loaded gun and we can no longer afford to act like it is loaded with blanks" (J. P. Moreland, Love Your God with All Your Mind, p.21).

II-The skepticism of our society



- Skeptical: whether you and I can know anything as objectively true,
 - especially religious truth.
- Nowadays, people generally will not take what we say at face value as being true
- Evidence is needed; if something cannot be proven as true through the *scientific method of repeated observations*, it must not be true, or there is no way to verify that in fact it is true.

The skepticism of our society CONT'D



- If I was living at the time of Christ, I could make decisions about who Jesus is but it has been 2000 years, so we can not really make decisions like that any more"
 - (College student)

III-Religious Pluralism



- All religions are essentially equal and teach equally valid truths
- Promotes the notion of tolerance and unity
- The claim to have discovered an absolute truth is no longer the ideal, but is rather the problem

Religious Pluralism CONT'D



- Gene Edward Veith, in his book Postmodern Times, writes:
- "Today's universities, while devoted to cultivating truth, now argue that truth does not exist. This does not mean that the universities are closing their doors. Rather, the universities are redefining what learning is all about. Knowledge is no longer seen as absolute truth; rather, knowledge is seen in terms of rearranging information into new paradigms...Homosexuality is no longer considered a psychological problem; rather, homophobia is"
 - (Postmodern Times, pp. 56-7).

Our

Role