

## Introduction

Apologetic: Defending by words or arguments; excusing; said or written in defense, or by way of apology; as an apologetic essay.

Throughout the history of the church, Christians have been called upon to explain why we believe what we believe. The apostle Paul spoke of his ministry as "the defense and confirmation of the gospel." Peter said - (1Peter 3:15 but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to everyone who asks you a reason of the hope in you, with meekness and fear; 16 having a good conscience, that while they speak against you as evildoers they may be shamed, those falsely accusing your good behavior in Christ. )

This activity of the church came to be known as apologetics which means "defense." But, if it is important that we defend the faith, how do we do it?

In this essay I will not provide a lot of evidences and arguments. I will rather look at some basic principles that will guide us in defending the faith. We will talk about

1. our starting point Lesson 1
2. the important matter of thinking logically. Lesson 2
3. the specific charge of elitism which is prevalent on college campuses today. Lesson 2
4. the question of presenting a case for Christianity. Lesson 3

So, what is apologetics, anyway, and what is it supposed to do? Apologetics has been defined as "the science and art of defending the faith." It is chiefly concerned with the question of the truth of Jesus Christ. In the days of the Greeks, when someone was summoned to court to face a charge, he would present an "apology" or a defense. For Christians, this might mean answering the question, "Why do you believe that Jesus is God?" or a question more often heard today, "Why do you think Christians have the truth?"

**So, apologetics is first of all defense.** It has come to include more than just defense, however. Not only is the truth of our beliefs an issue, but also the beliefs others hold. **A second task of apologetics is to challenge other people to defend their beliefs.**

**A third task of apologetics is to present a case for the truth of the biblical message.** One might call this task "proving" Christianity (although the matter of proof must be qualified). If this seems to be too ambitious a goal, we might speak simply of persuading people of the truth of the biblical message.

**In all of this our goal is to let the light of God's truth shine in all its brilliance.** It is our ambition also to bring unbelievers to a recognition of the truth of Jesus Christ and to persuade them to put their faith in Him, therefore apologetics is a doorway for the Gospel. Even if we can win arguments that, does not mean we can win souls! That is why Peter tells us to give our answers with meekness and fear, or gentleness and respect, this opens the door to an effective witness.

Apologetics is typically a response to a specific question or challenge, either stated outright or just implied. Paul reasoned with the Jews for whom the cross was a stumbling block, "explaining

and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead." In the second century, apologists defended not only Christian beliefs but also Christians themselves against such charges as atheism and cannibalism and being threats to the state. In the Medieval era, more attention was given to the challenges of Judaism and Islam. In the era of the Enlightenment, apologists had to defend Christianity against the narrow confines of scientific rationalism. Today the challenge has shifted again, this time from attacks on specific doctrines to the question of whether Christianity has any claim to final truth at all.

Like our forebears, we must answer the challenges of our day. We must respond to our contemporaries' questions as difficult and uncomfortable as that might be.

Let's take a closer look at 1 Peter 3:15-16, "but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to everyone who asks you a reason of the hope in you, with meekness and fear; 16 having a good conscience, that while they speak against you as evildoers they may be shamed, those falsely accusing your good behavior in Christ. "

Peter is speaking to those who are suffering because of their faith and telling them it is OK to suffer for doing what is right and that the best way to endure suffering is to first "sanctify the Lord God in your hearts. This is to give Him the first place, to set your heart aside for only Him. If your heart is not set aside for Him, you will not be an effective witness. If your heart is set aside for Him, you will have a desire to know Him and study His Word, you will learn the answers to the questions about your faith, you will have a good attitude, you will have a good conscience, not doing what you know is wrong. **In other words, your best apology is not words, but a godly life that is characterized by behavior that glorifies God!**

1. Define apologetics: \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. The first task of apologetics is: \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. The second task of apologetics is: \_\_\_\_\_  
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4. The third task for apologetics is: \_\_\_\_\_  
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5. What is the goal of the apologist? \_\_\_\_\_  
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6. What is the best apologetic? \_\_\_\_\_  
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