

## APOLOGETICS 1

### Apologetics and the Believer's Ambassadorship

Every believer has two spheres of responsibilities—one in his priesthood and one in his ambassadorship (cp. Eph 6:20; 2 Cor 5:20; Philemon 9). The priesthood includes everything in our vertical relationship with God. The ambassadorship includes everything in our horizontal relationship with others and the world. In our priesthood we represent ourselves to God. In our ambassadorship we represent God to others.

A passage which illustrates the fulfillment of the priesthood as well as the ambassadorship is

**2 Corinthians 10:3** For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, <sup>4</sup> for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. <sup>5</sup> *We are* destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and *we are* taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,

Aspects of our priesthood in this passage include walking by faith and taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, while aspects of our ambassadorship are in the destruction of human fortresses (of human philosophies) and *every* lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God. We indeed have two lives. We have a life before and toward God and a life toward others. In our life before God it is imperative to live in active fellowship with Him and grow in His doctrines—"all Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction into righteousness. . . ." As we grow in His truths we develop greater capacity for God and life as we advance spiritually and live in realm of grand doctrinal realities set down in Scripture for us. In our priesthood we live and grow in fellowship with Him and in so doing are brought under His progressive sanctification. In our priesthood we live our own lives before the Lord and are ultimately responsible to Him only. Our priesthood is all about our fantastic spiritual life with God—that life of growth in fellowship of walking before God, with God, and after God through the various grace resources in the Word of God.

Our ambassadorship is markedly different from our priesthood. Our ambassadorship has to do with others—our responsibilities in relationship to *all* of those in our periphery. It is one thing to represent ourselves (through His grace assets) to God as per our priesthood, it is quite another to faithfully represent God to all of those around us. Apart from really understanding our ambassadorship, the believer can become very unbalanced in life. Apart from understanding our ambassadorship, all the

believer thinks about is his own spiritual growth and tends to shy away from others and in effect shut himself away from the world—e.g. “as long as I listen to my tape every day, or read my Bible, I am fulfilling God’s will for my life.” Apart from growth in ambassadorship the believer can become so absorbed with his own spiritual life that he does not even care about those whom God has brought into his life. Like those fifth century ascetic hermits who cloistered themselves in caves as they studied the Scriptures, many Christians today who fail to interact with the world as ambassadors for Christ have cloistered themselves away in lopsided “theological” mental caves of their own making. A healthy Christian is not one who *merely* lives for his own spiritual growth, but is eager and *ready* to share God’s truth with others and in so doing be able to defend the Christian faith. It is unfortunate that there are perhaps millions of Christians who do not have the ability to defend Christianity before the world, let alone destroy any fortification or lofty human thought arrayed against God, Christ, and the Bible

The goal of this series is to help equip you in the area of your ambassadorship that deals with apologetics so you can not only defend Christianity and be equipped to “shut the mouths” of those who denigrate the Christian faith—just like the apostles and Christ did. A good grounding in apologetics will not only enable you to defeat the various arguments that are arrayed against the Christian faith, it will also strengthen your own faith

Let’s begin by noting what apologetics is. Apologetics, broadly speaking, is a defense of the Christian faith. This defense can range from being very simple to very sophisticated and complex. The defense is simply the giving of reasons and evidences for the truth of Christianity—whether those reasons are as simple as reading John 3:16 and explaining the gospel or as complicated as the rigorous complex philosophical arguments that deal with the nature of language, truth, history, metaphysics, ontology, cosmology, the soul, consciousness, and teleology. Even the most sophisticated logical arguments can be collapsed into a three tiered system of foundation (first principles, logic, reason, metaphysics), God (arguments for the existence of God), and Christianity (history, uniqueness of Christ, and inspiration of the Bible). The point is that you as an ambassador are commanded to be able to give reasons for the Christian faith. These reasons must *always* be according where the person you are speaking with is. You start where they are. If they already believe in truth, logic, and sound reasoning (i.e. not a postmodernist), then you can start with God. If they already believe there is a God then you need to begin on the third tier with the historicity of Christianity. One common problem people make is “putting too much on the table.” You must begin where the person is. When Paul spoke with the Jews, he focused on the Scriptures, when he

spoke with the Greeks, he quoted their own writings and shut their mouths through Christian philosophy.

So why are apologetics important? Why do I need to do apologetics? The simple and clear answer is that God has commanded you to do apologetics—the Bible commands us to give *reasons* for the Christian faith.

**1 Peter 3:15** but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, **always being ready to make a defense to everyone** who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;

**Titus 1:10** For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: **11 Whose mouths must be stopped**, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.

**Jude 1:3** Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you **contend earnestly for the faith** which was once for all delivered to the saints.

**Colossians 4:6** Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as *it were*, with salt, so that **you may know how you should respond to each person**.

Since the evidence for Christianity is extremely powerful—as it is overwhelmingly supported and corroborated by philosophy/logic, science, and history—it really is easy: all one needs to know is the evidence. By the time you finish this series you too will be able to shut the mouths of those who question, berate, and denigrate God or Christianity. Wouldn't it be cool to be able to marshal the evidence for Christianity in such a way as to be able to shut down all other arguments, put Christianity in the most favorable light before the world, and remove those mental impediments and excuses in the minds of unbelievers? What a powerful testimony for the Lord! What respect that could engender for Christianity and for our Lord Jesus Christ.

Doctrine matters!

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