Lecture 1: An Introduction

An Introduction to Apologetics and Worldview

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What is it mean to be a Christian? What is the main goal of a Christian?
The word Christian was initially a derogatory term used by the people of Antioch meaning, “Little Christ” in terms of being an imitator of Christ (Acts 11:26).

The main goal of a Christian is to glorify God. We glorify God by imitating Him. This is also known as being “godly.” What are ways that one can become godly?
How does one become more godly?

By obedience to the knowledge of the truth that leads to Godliness

Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ to further the faith of God’s elect and their knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness

Titus 1:1
Sanctification is the process of becoming more holy. To be holy means to be “set apart” for God. In Leviticus 11:44, God himself says to “Be holy as I am holy.” Here, Jesus says that the sanctification brought about by the truth makes us more holy. To strive for holiness is equitable to striving for godliness.
Sanctification is the process of becoming more holy. To be holy means to be “set apart” for God. In Leviticus 11:44, God himself says to “Be holy as I am holy.” Here, Jesus says that the sanctification brought about by the truth makes us more holy. To strive for holiness is equitable to striving for godliness.
Every Thanksgiving morning, I would go and play some two-hand touch football. It is one of my favorite holiday traditions. Let’s say, after winning a couple games as quarterback, I decided, “you know what? I am pretty good at this football thing!” Then, in the next game, we are matched with a team that contains professional football players. I could try and compete in a football game with professional football players, but without proper training, I will never be able to perform like they do. It has nothing to do with my level of effort. I might try hard to compete against an NFL player, but because they are trained, they would be able to do it with little to no effort. It is the same with studying God’s word.

Training involves committing to rearrange our lives around the practices of Jesus. This includes studying scripture, prayer, sacrifice, service, fasting and other spiritual disciplines. Trying without training results when one tries to reach a goal without the proper tools and often results in failure.
What is Worldview?
What is it mean to be a Christian? What is the main goal of a Christian? The word Christian was initially a derogatory term used by the people of Antioch meaning, “Little Christ” in terms of being an imitator of Christ (Acts 11:26).

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Worldview determines: How we spend our time, our life goals, our purpose, what we believe will make us happy, how we spend our money, how we treat others, we we find our value and etc.

Studying other worldviews is like studying another language. It allows you to communicate with other worldviews. Another analogy is that Worldview is like a road map that determines the decisions that we allow ourselves to make.

Are all worldview’s equal? No! There are both good/bad road maps. There are Good Worldviews and Bad Worldviews
Viktor Frankl, MD PhD:
A holocaust survivor of Auschwitz concentration camp

“... that the gas chambers of Auschwitz, Treblinka, and Maidanek were ultimately prepared not in some ministry or other in Berlin, but rather at the desks and in lecture halls of nihilistic scientists and philosophers.”

Victor was a very famous psychiatrist and neurologist who was sentenced to prison for treating Jewish people with suicidal tendencies.
Bad worldviews have dire consequences

**Nihilism**: A worldview that denies any objective ground of truth and especially of moral truths

“I freed Germany from the stupid and degrading fallacies of conscience and morality …. We will train young people before whom the world will tremble. I want young people capable of violence, imperious (dominant), relentless and cruel.”

-Adolf Hitler
Bad worldviews have dire consequences

Human hair from Auschwitz concentration camp. Over 15,000lbs have been collected at Auschwitz alone.
Over 40,000 pairs of shoes have been recovered at Auschwitz alone. Over 1.1 million people were murdered at Auschwitz.
Over 1.1 million children were murdered during the Holocaust
Over 60 million Jews were murdered during the Holocaust
What is Apologetics?
What is Apologetics?

**Definition:** Comes from the Greek word *apologia* which means defense in the context of a court of law.

Related to worldview because one must have a good understanding of one’s own worldview to give a defense of it.
What is Apologetics?

### Types of Apologetics

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<td>Theistic Arguments or Evidential Arguments</td>
<td>Stresses need for evidence: Rational, historical, archeological, and experiential</td>
<td>Experience as evidence for faith</td>
<td>Use of history as a basis for demonstrating truth</td>
<td>Affirms that one must defend Christianity from the foundation of certain basic presuppositions</td>
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Classical Apologetics: stresses arguments for the existence of God in either theistic arguments or evidential arguments

Evidential Apologetics: Stresses the need for evidence in support of Christian truth claims. Relies on rational, historical, archeological, and even experiential

Experiential Apologetics: Experience as evidence for faith

Historical Apologetics: Use historical apologetics as evidence as the basis for demonstrating truth of Christianity

Presuppositional Apologetics: Affirms that one must defend Christianity from the foundation of certain basic presuppositions.

From: Geisler, Norman L.. The Big Book of Christian Apologetics
Biblical use of *apologia*

But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,

1 Peter 3:15 (ESV)

Always be prepared to make an *apologia*
Biblical use of *apologia*

I answered them that it was not the custom of the Romans to give up anyone before the accused met the accusers face to face and had opportunity to make his *defense* concerning the charge laid against him.

Acts 25:16 (ESV)

...And had opportunity to make his *apologia*
...whether I am in chains or *apologia* and confirming the gospel...

...I am put here for the *apologia* of the gospel...

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Biblical use of *apologia*

4 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy...

7 It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God’s grace with me.

15 Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel.

Philippians 1:4, 7, 15-16 *(ESV)*
Apologetics is not listed as a spiritual gift for teachers, preachers, or evangelists, as though only some ought to become apologists. Rather, all Christians are called to be ready with an answer. We all make a case for Christianity in some fashion or another— but are we doing it well? Beyond the specific Christian calling to have a ready defense for the faith, there is a sense in which everyone is already an apologist for something. The question is not whether we are apologists, but what kind of apologists we are.

Many Christians claim to believe in Jesus, but only a minority can articulate good reasons for why their beliefs are true. Yet when Christians learn good evidences for the truth of the Bible, for the existence of God, or how to respond to tough challenges to the faith, they gain confidence in their beliefs. People naturally have questions. They always have and always will. One of the key functions of apologetics, then, is to respond to questions in a clear way.

“Do not underestimate the role you may play in clearing the obstacles in someone’s
spiritual journey. A seed sown here, a light shone there may be all that is needed to move someone one step further.” - Ravi Zacharias
Here, Jesus says that the harvest is plentiful but he laborers are few. There are so many people that are looking for the truth. There are so many people who are searching for meaning.

The Harvest

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

Matthew 9:36-37 (ESV)
The Harvest

How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”

Romans 10:14-15

People will not hear the truth unless they are given it.
From Pew Research Center:
• In 1991, 6% of Americans identified their religious affiliation as “none”
• In 2018, 25% of Americans claim no formal religious identity
• The 18-29 y/o age group have gone from 10% in 1986 to 39%
• The Southern Baptist have lost more than one million members over the past decade.
  - In 90 years, there will only be 12,000 Southern Baptists nationally (currently 15,216,000)
  - In 90 years, there will be 62 million Mormons nationally (currently 15,882,000)

From Albert Mohler in October 2005, President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Boyce College:
• Fewer than half of all adults can name the four gospels
• 60 percent of Americans can’t name even five of the Ten Commandments
• According to 82 percent of Americans, “God helps those who help themselves,” is a Bible verse
• 12 percent of American adults believe that Joan of Arc was Noah’s wife
• One survey of graduating high school seniors revealed that over 50 percent
thought that Sodom and Gomorrah were husband and wife
From Dr. William Lane Craig:

"Today the authority of the Bible in general, and of Jesus Christ in particular, is widely disregarded. The general attitude, even among many of Christ’s own followers, is that while Jesus Christ is holy, powerful, and so forth, the worldview he taught and from which he lived is no longer credible for thinking people..."

Dr. William Lane Craig is a professor in philosophy and apologetics at Biola university. He is well know for his work in apologetics
Dr. William Lane Craig is a professor in philosophy and apologetics at Biola university. He is well known for his work in apologetics.
The Bereans, or the Jews mentioned in this passage, were listed as more noble than other because they received Paul’s message and compared it with scripture. They engaged themselves in regular and active study of God’s word and Paul blesses them for it.
Here, Paul encourages Timothy to study as if he were studying for God. He tells him to work in a way that he need not be ashamed. That is the beginning of how to be an effective apologist.
Stop Reading your Bible. You heard me say that right. Stop reading your bible.

Instead, you need to study your bible, not just read it. We don’t bestow upon the bible the same honor that we would a text in school. When we studied biochemistry, mathematics, anatomy, physiology, we did not just read 10 min in the morning and call it a day. We would flunk all our classes if we did that. Why do we read and not study the Bible
How does one become and effective apologist?

Study!
- Don’t read the bible, STUDY and MEMORIZE your bible
- Read commentaries and books on apologetics
- Listen to lectures, debates and audiobooks in your spare time and during commutes
How does one become an effective apologist?

Speak with Gentleness, Respect and Love

- An eagerness to convince non-believers causes us to state things with more certainty than they actually are.
- **Remember the goal:** convince the audience. You must show genuine love, even when critiquing an opponent’s case.
- You have no business doing apologetics if you are doing it to humiliate other people.

From: McDowell, Josh; McDowell, Sean. *Evidence That Demands a Verdict: Life-Changing Truth for a Skeptical World*
How does one become an effective apologist?

Use Effective Communication:
- Effective communication takes practice
- Smile, look them in the eye, and be genuine
- Humor during appropriate times is particularly powerful
- Thank people for their question, acknowledge that it is a good question
- Precision and clarity is more important than use of big words.
- Be willing to admit when you don’t know the answer

From: McDowell, Josh; McDowell, Sean. Evidence That Demands a Verdict: Life-Changing Truth for a Skeptical World
What’s next?

• Common Misconceptions and Questions About the Faith
• Religious Experience, Naturalism and the Supernatural
• The Historical Reliability of the Bible and its Claims
• Engaging The Culture: Homosexuality, Transgenderism, Feminism, Abortion, Bioethics, Racism, and etc.
• Science and God
Here is a book list of books used in creating this introductory series:

2. The Bible’s Answers to 100 of Life’s Biggest Questions, by Norman L Geisler and Jason Jimenez
3. Evidence that Demands A Verdict, by Josh and Sean McDowell
4. The Big Book of Christian Apologetics, by Norman L. Geisler
5. Understanding the Culture, by Jeff Myers
6. More than a Carpenter, by Josh and Sean McDowell
8. On Guard, by William Lane Craig
9. Somewhere under the Rainbow, by Norman L. Geisler and Doug van Gordon
10. Signature in the Cell, by Stephen C. Meyer
11. I Don’t Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, by Norman L. Geisler and Frank Turek
12. Philosophical Foundations for the Christian Worldview, by J.P Moreland and William Lane Craig
13. Seven Days that Divide the World, by John Lennox
15. The Case for Life, by Scott Klusendorf
16. Understanding the Times, by Jeff Meyers and David Nobel