

## Introduction to Apologetic Evangelism

Before going into the Promised Land, the Lord gave the Israelites a few commands. These are found in the book of Deuteronomy. One of these commands is found in Duet 6:5 Love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

About 1500 years later, in the book of Matthew, Jesus was in the Promised Land. He was answering various trick questions from the Jewish leaders. After Jesus had answered and silenced most of the leaders, one more asks a question. He asks Jesus what the greatest commandment was. Jesus responded by quoting Duet 6:5, but added one more piece. Love the lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.

What I want to discuss today is when and why apologetics and evangelism meet.

Evangelism can be done without apologetics, but apologetics should not be done without the goal of evangelism.

Lets start with the 5 W's and H regarding apologetics.

- What is Apologetics

Apologetics – from the Greek word *APOLOGIA* meaning defense. This was used as a legal term, like a lawyer giving his case or defense for a client. When applied to Christianity, it is a defense of the faith. Why Christians believe the People, Places, and events recorded in Scripture are Historical fact, not mythology or legend.

- **17 verses**
- **Defending** the faith. Why I **believe** what I **believe**.
- Why do we do Apologetics
  - The **Bible** says we should defend the faith.
    - 1Pt 3:15
- ALWAYS BE READY TO GIVE A DEFENSE TO EVERYONE WHO ASKS YOU A REASON FOR THE HOPE THAT IS IN YOU.
  - Jude 3
- BELOVED, WHILE I WAS VERY DILIGENT TO WRITE TO YOU CONCERNING OUR COMMON SALVATION, I FOUND IT NECESSARY TO WRITE TO YOU EXHORTING YOU TO CONTENTEND EARNESTLY FOR THE FAITH WHICH WAS ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.
  - 2 Cor 10:5
- WE DEMOLISH ARGUMENTS AND EVERY HIGH-MINDED THING THAT IS RAISED UP AGAINST THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD
  - The NT shows **false teachers** will come
    - Jesus – Mt 7:15
- BEWARE OF FALSE PROPHETS, WHO COME TO YOU IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING, BUT INWARDLY THEY ARE RAVENOUS WOLVES.
  - Paul – All through his Epistles – we will see later
  - Peter – 2 Pet ch 2, most of 2pt
- BUT THERE WERE ALSO FALSE PROPHETS AMONG THE PEOPLE, JUST AS THERE WILL BE FALSE TEACHERS AMONG YOU. THEY WILL SECRETLY BRING IN DESTRUCTIVE HERESIES, EVEN DENYING THE MASTER WHO BOUGHT THEM, AND WILL BRING SWIFT DESTRUCTION ON THEMSELVES.
  - Jude – The entire book
- The **world** needs it
  - God created man in His image. God is a rational being. We are rational beings.
  - The world thinks Christians follow a blind faith. Same as a fairytale, myth, legend. See it as a crutch.
  - The Gospel is sometimes in need of pre-evangelism.

- People need to know there is a **REASON WE BELIEVE**
- Who does apologetics
  - Leaders
    - Titus 1:9 – **Leaders** in the Church
- HOLDING FAST THE FAITHFUL WORD AS HE HAS BEEN TAUGHT, THAT HE MAY BE ABLE, BY SOUND DOCTRINE, BOTH TO EXHORT AND CONVICT THOSE WHO CONTRADICT.
  - **Believers – Open to this Scripture**
    - 2 Timothy 2:24-26 – **Servant** of the Lord
- AND A SERVANT OF THE LORD MUST NOT QUARREL BUT BE GENTLE TO ALL, ABLE TO TEACH, PATIENT, IN HUMILITY CORRECTING THOSE WHO ARE IN OPPOSITION, IF GOD PERHAPS WILL GRANT THEM REPENTANCE, SO THAT THEY MAY KNOW THE TRUTH, AND THAT THEY MAY COME TO THEIR SENSES AND ESCAPE THE SNARE OF THE DEVIL, HAVING BEEN TAKEN CAPTIVE BY HIM TO DO HIS WILL.
- When to do apologetics
  - When we have the right spirit of love, humility patience.
  - Sometimes 1 on 1, sometimes in a group
  - After prayer
- Where should we do apologetics
  - Within the church
    - Our young people are leaving the church at alarming rates, because they find “rational” explanations for things outside of Christianity.
    - **80%** of once active teens are no longer in the church.
    - **62%** left because they doubt the Bible is real.
    - Doubts and questions start in **4<sup>th</sup> grade**
    - Jesus’ miracles were evidence of His Divine authority
    - When asked who He was by John’s disciples, Jesus pointed to His miracles as evidence
    - When asked for a sign by the Pharisees, Jesus told them the sign of Jonah, speaking of His resurrection would be enough.
    - When showing the Scribes who He was, Jesus told the paralyzed man to walk.
    - **Thomas doubted, he was given evidence.**
    - Paul in 1Cor 15 showed evidence of Jesus resurrection. He did not expect a blind faith.
    - The church can choose to either deal with questions, or look the other way.
      - If we respond to the need, we will see believers grow and mature, not walk away.
      - We will see others coming to know the Lord, as they will understand it is not a myth/fairytale.
      - If we don’t, people will continue to leave the church when challenged from the outside
      - People will continue to be stolen by cultic groups
      - The world will grow stronger in its open mockery of Christianity.
  - **Outside** of the church
    - Col 4:6
- LET YOUR SPEECH ALWAYS BE WITH GRACE, SEASONED WITH SALT, THAT YOU MAY KNOW HOW YOU OUGHT TO ANSWER EACH ONE.
  - Work
  - School
  - Home
  - If believes can have doubts, why should we treat unbelievers doubts differently?
- How do I do apologetics?
  - Share the Gospel first, use apologetics if necessary
  - Show the Bible is the word of God
    - Truth
    - God exists
    - Miracles are possible
    - The New Testament is historically reliable

- The New Testament says Jesus is God
- Jesus proved He is God by:
  - Sinless, miraculous life
  - Fulfilled prophecies
  - Resurrection
- Jesus is God
- Jesus taught the Bible was the Word of God
- Whatever Jesus teaches is true, because He is God
- The Bible is the Word of God!
- Share the Gospel
- What is Evangelism?
  - Evangelism – from the Greek work *EUANGELION* meaning the proclamation or sharing of good news. This term was used for those who would proclaim good news such as the birth of the King’s son, or the triumph over an enemy. In Christianity, the Good News being shared is the Resurrection of Jesus, preceded by His atoning death.
- So how do apologetics and evangelism meet?

To answer this question, we need to really think about what evangelism is. As we discussed earlier, evangelism is sharing the Good News. If you tell someone who Jesus is, what he did for them, and present the opportunity to respond to this good news, you are practicing evangelism.

But what happens if you cant make it that far? What happens if the mere mention of Jesus or God puts the roadblock up from the other person? If the other person does not accept the gospel, or even give you the opportunity to present it fully, are you really doing evangelism?

I like a different definition of evangelism. Dr. David Geisler, son of one of the greatest theological minds of this generation Norman Geisler puts it this way. Evangelism is every day, and in every way getting someone closer to making a decision about Jesus.

This is when apologetics and evangelism meet. You share the gospel, are met with a barrier, and work to remove the obstacle. Once removed, you continue to share the Gospel. This is done until there are no objections left , and only a decision to make.

Barriers typically fall in 3 categories:

- Intellectual – They see Christianity as an unacceptable option based on science, logic, etc.
  - Issues with Miracles, God’s existence, Trinity, Biblical authority and inerrancy, etc. It is the substance of Christianity that must be demonstrated as trustworthy to this individual.
- Emotional – They have some emotional barrier to hearing the truth, or accepting it.
  - Issues with Evil, Hell, hypocrisy in church, past hurts from the church. For these people, there are two major things that need to be demonstrated.
  - First we must show the failures of those *in the church* do not discredit the *teachings of* the church.
  - Second, we must talk about the nature of evil. Its definition, its source, and why it is still present.
  - Finally, the issue of Hell needs to be addressed. It is not a place God sends people, it is a place people choose to go. A judge does not send anyone to jail, he is simply delivering the sentence that is earned.
- Volitional – This barrier deals with the will of the individual. They want to be in control of their own life, and are willingly choosing to reject the gift of salvation. God does not force people to choose Him, this is why it is called a choice.

Apologetics aims to deal with the intellectual and emotional barriers.

Apologetics cannot remove pride from an individual, but we can continue to love them. ROMANS 5:8 BUT GOD DEMONSTRATES HIS OWN LOVE TOWARD US, IN THAT WHILE WE WERE STILL SINNERS, CHRIST DIED FOR US.