

Applied Apologetics

“In defending the Christian faith, the most important question before us is ‘What sort of defense will best glorify our God (1 Cor. 10:31)?’ God forbid that in seeking to defend the faith before others we should in that very act compromise it.” John Frame.

Apologetics: A biblical defense of the Christian faith against the attacks of a sinful world with the purpose of spreading the Gospel.

Review:

1. We defend the faith in submission to our supreme authority, the Bible
2. What we defend is not religion in general but Christianity in particular

Applied (practical) apologetics is the outflow of theology. In other words, our apologetic efforts are the practical outworking of our prior theological commitments. We cannot set aside our theological convictions in order to defend the faith. Rather, our theological convictions must and do inform and shape the way we defend the faith.

Theology and apologetics are, in that sense, inseparable.

3. The world is not _____ but possesses a _____ disposition toward God.

Apologetics is “a biblical **defense** of the Christian faith against the attacks of a sinful world...”

Biblical anthropology

Even though man was created perfect and in the image of God (Gen. 1-2), the fall (Gen.3) produced a series of irreversible effects in the whole of his being to which he is now enslaved. No area of human existence can claim independence from sin and its consequences.

The _____ of sin

The popular expression that says, “no one is perfect” is intended to soften the more harsh-sounding truth that “all have sinned...” (Rom. 3:23). Moreover, the Bible has much to say about the universal nature of sin (Prov. 20:9; 1 Kings 8:46; Ps. 130:3; 143:2; Eccl. 7:20).

The _____ of our depravity

1. Our _____ is _____(Gen. 6:5; 8:21; Jer. 17:9; Ez. 36:26; Matt. 15:19; Mk. 7:21-23).
2. Our _____ is _____(1 Cor. 2:12-14)(Rom. 8:7; Eph. 2:1-3; 4:17-18; 5:8).
3. Our _____ is stained and in need of _____ Hebrews 9:9, 14; 10:22
4. Our _____ is bound by _____Jer. 13:23; John 8:34, 36; Rom. 6:17
5. Our entire _____, with all its members, is a _____ of unrighteousness (**Rom. 6:12-14**).

The myth of _____

“No one disbelieves the existence of God except the person to whom God’s existence is not convenient.” H. Bavinck

There is an active disposition at the core of our being that opposes God and his rule over us. We need to remember that Christians are called to defend the Christian faith in the midst of a sinful world, and sin is never passive but always produces fruit. In the final analysis, atheism, agnosticism, or any religion that opposes the God of the Bible are all different expressions or manifestations of the world’s rebellion against the One True God (Rom. 5:10).

The heart of the issue

God has not left himself without a witness

Romans 1:18-32 – _____ witness

Romans 2:14-16 – _____ witness

How should the teaching of Romans 1 & 2 (see also Psalm 14:1-3; 53:1-3; 19:1-4) inform our understanding of and response to the claims of atheism?

4. Our ultimate desire must be the _____ of souls not mere intellectual victory.

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“The knowledge of God-in-Christ is...life itself.” Herman Bavinck.

John 17:3 – “And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”

What the unbeliever needs

1. The Word of God

Because:

- It _____ sin (Rom. 7:7)
- It _____ the heart and conscience like nothing else (Hebrews 4:12)
- It _____ the dead soul as the Spirit works within (Ps. 19:7; 2 Tim. 3:14-15; 1 P. 1:23)
- It _____ the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Genesis – Revelation)

2. A call to repentance and faith

Because:

- 1 Corinthians 1:18-31